



Spring 2010

La Peninsula

The Journal of the San Mateo County Historical Association, Volume xxxix, No. 1



Hillsborough's Centennial
and the San Mateo County
Historical Association's 75th Anniversary

Table of Contents

Hillsborough, California: One Hundred Years of Gracious Living	3
by Joanne Garrison	
Hillsborough: One Hundred Years of Grand Architecture	9
by Caroline Serrato	
San Mateo County Historical Association 1935 - 2010	20
by Mitchell P. Postel	

Our Vision

To discover the past and
imagine the future.

Our Mission

To enrich, excite and
educate through
understanding, preserving
and interpreting the history
of San Mateo County.

Accredited by the

American Association of
Museums



The San Mateo County Historical Association operates the San Mateo County History Museum and research archives at the old San Mateo County Courthouse located in Redwood City, California, and administers two county historical sites, the Sanchez Adobe in Pacifica and the Woodside Store in Woodside.

The San Mateo County Historical Association Board of Directors

Keith Bautista, *Chairman*; Karen McCown, *Immediate Past Chairwoman*; Peggy Bort Jones, *Vice Chairwoman*; Phill Raiser, *Secretary*; Brian Sullivan, *Treasurer*; John Adams; June Athanacio; Paul Barulich; Tom Brady; Roberta Carcione; Herm Christensen; Shawn DeLuna; Celeste Giannini; Umang Gupta; John Inglis; Doug Keyston; Joan Levy; Gene Mullin; Barbara Rucker; Patrick Ryan; Cynthia L. Schreurs; Paul Shepherd and Mitchell P. Postel, *President*.

President's Advisory Board

Albert A. Acena; Arthur H. Bredenbeck; Frank Baldanzi; John Clinton; Robert M. Desky; T. Jack Foster, Jr.; Georgi LaBerge; Greg Munks; John Schrup and Tom Siebel.

La Peninsula

Carmen J. Blair, *Managing Editor*

Publications Committee: Joan Levy, *Publications Chairwoman*; Albert A. Acena, PhD; Carmen J. Blair; Herm Christensen, Gene Mullin and Mitchell P. Postel.

Address correspondence to: Editor, *La Peninsula*, San Mateo County Historical Association, 2200 Broadway, Redwood City, CA 94063 or lapeninsula@historysmc.org.

Copyright © 2010 San Mateo County Historical Association.

Hillsborough, California: One Hundred Years of Gracious Living copyright © 2010 Joanne Garrison.
Unless otherwise noted, photographs are from the San Mateo County Historical Association.

Front Cover: *El Cerrito*, home of the Howard Family.

Back Cover: The *Carolands'* Gatehouse, 2010. Photograph by Caroline Serrato.

Hillsborough, California:

One Hundred Years of Gracious Living

Joanne Garrison



The Howard-Poett family picnic at El Cerrito.

A teenaged mother and her 31-year-old husband were the unlikely founders of Hillsborough, California, one of America's wealthiest towns, located approximately 20 miles south of San Francisco. In 1850, newlyweds William Davis Merry (W.D.M.) Howard and Agnes Poett Howard became the sole owners of *Rancho San Mateo*, 6,500 acres of rolling hills, creeks, and prairie grass that covered all of today's Hillsborough as well as northern San Mateo and southern Burlingame. The mid-Peninsula *rancho* wasn't the couple's only property. Howard, who possessed the successful businessperson's instincts to foresee the future, as well as the daring to act on his instincts, had been buying property on the continent's west coast for years. Thus, in the summer of 1849, after the start of California's Gold Rush, W.D.M. was already well-to-do when 16-year-old Agnes stepped off her ship onto a San Francisco pier. Howard liked to meet the ships at the pier, ever alert for new business opportunities. When he first saw Agnes, however, he saw opportunity of another sort. Within one month, they married, and within a year, Agnes gave birth to a son, William H. Howard.

Joanne Garrison

Joanne Garrison is the author of *Burlingame Centennial: 1908-2008*.

Rancho San Mateo comprised about 6,500 acres. By way of comparison, Golden Gate Park is approximately 1,000 acres.

During the summer of 1849, Dr. Poett and his family, residents of Chile, were *en route* to England accompanying his son, Alfred Poett, who was about to begin an apprenticeship in civil engineering. The ship captain took a detour to San Francisco, hoping to drop off provisions for a quick profit at Gold Rush prices. This proved to be a big mistake. The entire crew jumped ship, stranding the entire family, including oldest daughter Agnes, and her younger siblings.



George Howard, Sr.

W.D.M. died in 1856 at the age of 36. Within a year, Agnes married W.D.M.'s brother, George. George was only five years older than Agnes, compared to W.D.M., who was almost 15 years her senior.

El Cerrito means "little hill" or "mound" in Spanish. Today, pillars mark the entrance to De Sabla Road (off El Camino Real across from St. Matthew's Episcopal Church in San Mateo). They bear the name of the old estate *El Cerrito* once located there.



San Mateo Young Ladies Institute, c. 1860s.



William Davis Merry (W.D.M.) Howard and Agnes Poett Howard Howard Bowie.

During Agnes and W.D.M. Howard's brief seven-year marriage, they contributed extensively to San Francisco's nascent institutions, including the police and fire departments, schools and hospitals—enough so that a street south of Market was named after them. However, it was during Agnes's second marriage, to W.D.M.'s younger brother George, that the newly configured Howard family left its biggest legacy on the mid-Peninsula community they helped create.

From 1856 until Agnes's second husband George died in 1878, George and Agnes turned their mid-Peninsula ranch home, *El Cerrito*, into an epicenter of local society life and philanthropy. Their home was the gathering place of Agnes's extended family. Her father Dr. Joseph Henry Poett, her brother Alfred Poett, and her sister Julia Poett Redington and their families all lived in what is now Hillsborough.¹ The extended Howard family became pillars of the growing community of wealthy estate holders on the Peninsula. The Howards donated the land and construction costs for St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, where both W.D.M. and George are entombed. Later, George and Agnes also donated land for the formation of the Congregational Church of San Mateo on Tilton Avenue and San Mateo Drive. Among other philanthropic activities, they also helped finance the San Mateo Young Ladies Institute (Laurel Hall), an early Peninsula school for educating young women.² Agnes's brother Alfred, a civil engineer, laid out a number of roads still in use in Hillsborough, as well as St. John's Cemetery in San Mateo where Agnes is interred.³



Tree-lined Robla Avenue (now Roblar Avenue), 1915. Photograph by A.G.C. Hahn.

Perhaps the Howards' most lasting legacy, however, resulted from their decision to hire John McLaren as *El Cerrito's* landscaper. For fifteen years, from 1872 to 1887, McLaren planted hundreds of thousands of Monterey pine, Monterey cypress, blue gum eucalyptus, as well as many other genera and species of trees and shrubs, literally transforming the native barren, dry grasslands of this area into the lush landscape of mature trees and beautiful plantings that mark the mid-Peninsula today. In addition to landscaping the Howards' estate, *El Cerrito*, McLaren also provided landscaping services to other estate owners, including the *Mills Estate* in north Burlingame/Millbrae and the Eastons' *Black Hawk Ranch* in north Burlingame/Hillsborough. The signature groves of eucalyptus trees that line El Camino Real from San Mateo Creek north to Millbrae are McLaren's handiwork.

During the last half of the nineteenth century, portions of the vast *El Cerrito* estate were sold to other wealthy San Franciscans, who fled San Francisco's fog each summer to enjoy the rural, equestrian lifestyle available on the mid-Peninsula. Thus, by the time of Agnes's death in 1893, a second generation of mid-Peninsula residents had reached adulthood. Born into wealth, this group was closely connected socially, frequently intermarried, and often followed their parents' example by engaging in philanthropic and civic-minded pursuits.⁴

In 1893, one of these second-generation men, Francis Newlands, decided to market a portion of his mid-Peninsula property to his prosperous peers. Newlands hired a respected architect, A. Page

By some accounts, John McLaren, the Howards' landscape gardener, planted two million trees in his lifetime. After leaving the Howards' employ, McLaren became the superintendent of Golden Gate Park and is responsible for the plantings there as well.



Adeline Mills Easton.

The dramatic tale of Adeline and Ansel Easton's 1857 honeymoon shipwreck aboard the *Central America* is retold by Gary Kinder in his book *Ship of Gold in the Deep Blue Sea*. In 1986, almost 130 years after the *Central America* sank, an adventurer-explorer found the ship on the ocean floor, 200 miles off the Carolina coast. The sunken ship contained a well-preserved trunk loaded with the Eastons' wedding gifts and articles of clothing that the couple had packed for their honeymoon. It also contained a wealth of California gold headed for the safety of New York bank vaults.

For reasons that remain unclear, almost one third of *El Cerrito* was given to Agnes's father, Dr. Joseph Henry Poett, upon the death of her first husband, W.D.M. Howard. In 1866, Agnes's father sold approximately 1,000 acres to Anson Burlingame. Eventually, this property passed to William Ralston and then to William Sharon. After Sharon's death, Francis Newlands (Sharon's son-in-law) began to develop it.

William H. Crocker was the son of Charles Crocker, one of the "Big Four" of the Central Pacific Railroad. John Parrott II was the son of Gold Rush millionaire John Parrott. Captain A.H. Payson was the son-in-law of the elder Parrott. The Tobin brothers were sons of Richard Tobin, a co-founder of Hibernia Savings and Loan Society. Attorney John B. Casserly married Cecilia Cudahy, member of a Chicago meat-packing family (who were close friends with the parents of Harriett Pullman Carolan).

The train station's architects were George Howard, Jr., Agnes's second son, and his colleague, Joachim B. Mathisen.



Henry Bowie at *El Cerrito*.

The wealthy families on the mid-Peninsula frequently intermarried. For example, Agnes chose her second and third husband from those she knew well. Her second husband George was the younger brother of her first husband, W.D.M. Howard. Her third husband Henry Bowie was the son of the doctor who delivered Agnes's son, George Howard, Jr. Whereas Agnes's first husband was 15 years older than she, her third husband was 15 years younger than Agnes.

Brown, to build five summer "cottages" on a large block just north of where St. Paul's Episcopal Church is now located on El Camino Real and Bellevue Avenues. When the cottages did not sell, he decided to form a country club, with the hope that the club amenities would attract future homebuyers.

Newlands convened a group of influential local men and the Burlingame Country Club was born, the first country club west of the Mississippi. Not surprisingly perhaps, Agnes's first child, William H. Howard, then 43 years old, was a founding member. Among the other founding members were second-generation wealthy men, such as William H. Crocker, John Parrott, Captain A.H. Payson, Richard M. Tobin, Joseph M. Tobin, and J.B. Casserly.⁵ The Peninsula residents in the 1890s were, by and large, sons of early California titans of industry—men who made their money by finding gold and silver, by providing supplies or financing to those who did, or by constructing transportation systems to connect the new State of California with the rest of the country.

For the next two decades, from 1893 until the start of World War I, an active club and social life developed on the mid-Peninsula, centered around the Burlingame Country Club. In 1894, the club members helped finance a stylish new train station, at the base of what is now Burlingame Avenue, to receive their San Francisco guests in style. Walter S. Hobart, Jr., heir to a large silver-mining fortune, introduced fox hunting to the club. For a period of time, the club kept a pack of hounds for its members' use. Twice a week, parties in full English riding gear assembled at the train station to chase fox—or when fox were in short supply, the hounds were sent to chase coyotes. If coyotes were in short



Hounds and riders ready for the fox hunt.



Polo in Burlingame.

supply, the hounds followed a trail scented with anise. Joseph D. Grant, the son of a prosperous Gold Rush merchant, helped introduce polo to the club. It became a very popular club sport, especially after polo enthusiast Frank Carolan and his heiress wife, Harriett Pullman Carolan, moved to the Burlingame-Hillsborough area, which was then universally called “Burlingame.”⁶ Polo was such an integral part of the social scene that *Sunset Magazine* reported that “part of a debutante’s social equipment [is] that she . . . recognize an off-side play.”⁷ Champagne-drenched victory celebrations sometimes led to outrageous high jinks at the Burlingame Country Club. Around the turn of the century the club and its equestrian activities ensured that the community in Burlingame was known as “perhaps the most exclusive hometown in California and here San Francisco society has its country headquarters.”⁸ In fact, before the Great Earthquake of 1906, “the name *Burlingame* was associated not with a town, for there was none yet. It stood instead for the spectacular Peninsula play life of San Francisco’s richest social set.”⁹

When the earthquake struck, refugees fleeing San Francisco found small lots for sale at affordable prices just south and east of modern-day Burlingame Avenue, in a subdivision that William H. Howard (the son of Agnes and W.D.M) had made ten years earlier. The subdivision extended from Burlingame Avenue south to Peninsula and from El Camino Real east across the railroad tracks to Dwight Road. A second subdivision, made in 1904, offered affordable lots north of Burlingame



Harriett Pullman Carolan, 1892.

Harriett Pullman Carolan and her sister Florence Pullman Lowden became two of the richest women in America at the death of their father George in 1897. George Pullman made his fortune by manufacturing the special train cars that bore his name.

In his *History of the Burlingame Country Club*, Mitch Postel retells the story of the high jinks that occurred immediately following Burlingame’s win of the state polo championships in 1907. Reportedly, eleven of the club’s polo players and their friends consumed 37 quarts of champagne. Responding to a challenge upon which a bet was placed, William Hobart, egged on by Cyril Tobin, rode his pony up a staircase at the club and burst into the room of “venerable millionaire clubman, A.B. McCreery.” Upon hearing of these antics, the club’s board of directors differed on whether the night’s events were outrageously hilarious or simply outrageous. In the end, they let the offending Hobart and Tobin off with a nominal \$25 fine.



Burlingame bungalow, c. 1910.

Shortly after the 1906 earthquake, lots in Burlingame’s first subdivision south and east of the train station were offered for \$600 and up, with terms of \$25 down and \$10 per month installment payments.

1. John and Julia Redington's home, *Oak Grove*, was located near present-day Redington Road and Eucalyptus Avenue. Donald Ringler, "Hillsborough-San Mateo Mansions," *La Peninsula* 18 (1976): 4. Later, after the turn of the century, the Redingtons' son, Arthur, served as Hillsborough's city attorney.
2. Mitchell P. Postel, *San Mateo: A Centennial History* (San Francisco: Scottwall Associates, 1994), 60-67.
3. After Agnes married her third husband, Henry Bowie, she became a Roman Catholic and, as a result, was not buried in St. Matthew's Episcopal Church but instead in St. John's Cemetery. Gertrude Howard Whitwell, "William Davis Merry Howard," *California Historical Society Quarterly* 27 (1948): 320.
4. Other Peninsula families intermarried. For example, Harry Howard married his cousin Marion Poett. Francis Carolan's sister, Genevieve, married the nephew of Agnes Poett, Henry Williams Poett. Adeline and Ansel Easton's daughter, Jenny, married Colonel Charles F. Crocker, brother of William H. Crocker.
5. Francis Newlands, the man who is credited with starting the Burlingame Country Club, was the son-in-law of William Sharon. At his death in the mid-1880s, Sharon was one of the richest men in California, having made his money with the Bank of California and the Comstock silver mines, among other investments. When Newlands convened the group that formed the Burlingame Country Club, he was developing a piece of his deceased father-in-law William Sharon's estate—a dairy ranch that supplied San Francisco's Palace Hotel. For more information on early Hillsborough families, see Annotations by Mark S. Still, "San Mateo Looks as Though It Had Been Bombarded: The letters of Francis J. Carolan to Harriett Pullman Carolan, April-May, 1906," *La Peninsula* 28 (1993): 15-30.
6. Francis Carolan and Harriett Pullman Carolan built their first mid-Peninsula home, *Crossways*, near the present intersection of Willow Road and Sharon Avenue. Several years later, they purchased a horse-breeding ranch near the present site of Burlingame High School and turned it into polo grounds. Their second Peninsula home is the famous *Carolands* that Dr. Ann Johnson and her husband Charles have lovingly restored.
7. Mitchell P. Postel, *History of the Burlingame County Club* (San Mateo County, California: Burlingame Country Club and the San Mateo County Historical Association, 1982), 55.
8. Beverly Evans, "Burlingame: Evolution of a Suburban Landscape," (San Francisco State: Master's Thesis, 1976), 68-69, quoting Stanley Wood, *Over the Range to the Golden Gate: A Complete Tourist's Guide to Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Nevada, California, Oregon, Puget Sound and The Great Northwest*, revised to 1904 by C.E. Hooper (Chicago: R.R. Donnelly and Sons, 1906), 265.
9. Frank Stanger, "Burlingame . . . was something special," *La Peninsula* 9, no. 5 (1958), 7.
10. Shirley Burgett and Michael Svanevik, *No Sidewalks Here: A Pictorial History of Hillsborough, California* (San Francisco: Custom & Limited Editions, 1999), 61.

Avenue, between Burlingame Avenue and Oak Grove, east of El Camino Real to the railroad tracks.

The local population grew fivefold in one year, as refugees flooded into Burlingame. Many of the wealthy San Francisco families who had summer homes on the mid-Peninsula decided to move here year-round as well. To address the many changes occurring in the community, the Town of Burlingame incorporated in 1908. Two years later the wealthier families, who for the most part lived west of El Camino Real, found that they did not share many of the same goals as the newly incorporated residents of Burlingame, such as paved sidewalks and street lighting. Not eager to be part of the tax base that would fund these goals, the families living west of El Camino Real incorporated their own community, the Town of Hillsborough, in 1910.

Throughout the years, many Hillsborough residents have continued to practice the high level of philanthropy and civic engagement first demonstrated by Agnes Poett Howard. For example, Ethel Crocker (Mrs. William H.) created outdoor food stations in Union Square immediately after the 1906 earthquake to feed hundreds of homeless families. In 1919, Joseph Grant, the avid polo player, helped form Save-the-Redwoods League, declaring "the heritage we pass to our children must not be less than what we have received."¹⁰ During World War II, both Phyllis de Young Tucker (daughter of Michael de Young of the *San Francisco Chronicle*) and Jennie Crocker Henderson (daughter of Colonel Charles F. Crocker and Jennie Mills Easton), as well as many others, helped feed and entertain soldiers. Today, philanthropic activities remain a large part of the Hillsborough community, whether it is raising money for PARCA, Stanford Children's Hospital, the San Francisco Symphony Auxiliary, the city's public schools—or more recently, to rebuild the historic *Carolands* gatehouse or to fund the new Burlingame Hillsborough History Museum.

The community in Hillsborough was formed by families who built summer homes to escape the fog and to enjoy gracious living and entertaining—far from the grit of urban living. Although the residents' names and industries have changed in the last century—from mining and transportation in the early days to new entertainment-related businesses, specialty retail businesses, and biotech businesses in the twenty-first century—the essence of the community has not changed. Hillsborough continues to be the place where titans of industry enjoy The Good Life: gracious country living within a generous and civic-minded community.

Hillsborough:

One Hundred Years of Grand Architecture

by Caroline Serrato

On May 5, 2010, the Town of Hillsborough will be 100 years old. Several special events are planned to commemorate the occasion: a parade, the dedication of the Centennial Garden, the rebuilding of the *Carolands* Gatehouse, the installation of a time capsule, and a tour of several historic homes. This important anniversary promises to be a time of reflection and celebration. It also offers an opportunity to look toward the future of Hillsborough, to contemplate what the next 100 years will bring.

Today Hillsborough covers just over six square miles, the terrain is hilly, and the environment remains semi-rural. When Hillsborough was established, the first ordinances were noteworthy for what they excluded, yet these guiding principles are still largely in place. There are still no sidewalks; winding, rural streets traverse the Town, obliging the driver to slow down and enjoy the beautiful trees and catch glimpses of some of the splendid homes in the area. In addition to envisioning and realizing a community free of those features that would normally define it, the founders left a treasure-trove of unparalleled architectural works created by brilliant individuals discovered and patronized by early Hillsborough families. A hundred years later, the beauty of this inspiring architecture continues to resonate throughout Hillsborough, the Bay Area and beyond.

Hillsborough is indeed an unusual town; from the very beginning, educated and well-traveled residents were able to utilize the preeminent designers and builders of the day to create the homes that came to typify the Town. There is still no commercial district, factory or waterfront to serve as a focus. Hillsborough is a town that creates no products and sells no goods. There has never been an official town square or industry to define the Town's identity; grand estates filled the need for places to gather. While there is now a police station, a town hall, and several schools, most events are still held in the private residences that make up the Town. Hillsborough is a residential sanctuary, an architectural delight, and a truly American achievement. It is, as John Winthrop said, "...a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us."¹ There is also an undeniable aspect intrinsic to

Caroline Serrato

Lieutenant Caroline Serrato has worked for the Hillsborough Police Department for the past 14 years and resides in Burlingame.



The Pacific Bell Building designed by George Howard, Jr. now houses the Hillsborough Police Department. Courtesy of the Hillsborough Police Department.



Ohlone house in *Nature's Bounty* at the San Mateo County History Museum.

The partial skeleton of a young Ohlone Indian was found while excavating an area for a reflecting pool that was being constructed for a mansion on El Cerrito Road in Hillsborough. It was initially thought that the remains might be those of a possible homicide victim, and the police were called to investigate. They in turn contacted the San Mateo County Coroner, who called two archeologists from San Jose State University. The bone fragments consisted of a skull, hand and rib that belonged to a male who was determined by the archeologists to have been about 14 years old at the time of his death, which was about 900 years ago. Archeologist Jeff Hall stated at the time that more than 400 Ohlone archeological sites have been recorded in San Mateo County, and at least 100 of them have contained human remains. After the bones were identified as belonging to an Ohlone, they were placed in a paper bag and reburied with tobacco in a burial ceremony that was conducted by Kenny Marquis, the director of the Ohlone Cultural Institution of San Jose. The ceremony was also attended by about 80 students from nearby South School and was documented in several area newspapers.

Wykes, S.L. "Indian Bones Reburied Near Hillsborough Mansion." *San Jose Mercury News* 26 Mar. 1986, Morning Final: 3B.

Hillsborough, which is that it inspires curiosity from those outside this community, and a sense of protection from those within. The true history of this town, always a town, never a city, is made more tantalizing by the inability of most visitors to negotiate the geography of its tree-lined twisting streets. Once elegant driveways, the streets are beguiling, like a Möbius strip that seems to disclose, yet just as effectively conceals, the most beautiful places of all.

Ohlone Shelters (No Longer Standing)

The first residences in what would come to be known as Hillsborough were dome-shaped houses made of woven tule reeds covering a wood frame, which were the homes of the Ohlone native tribes. These indigenous people were hunters and gatherers, who lived in harmony with nature, existing on what they could forage. Despite the years that have passed since then, they continue to maintain a distant presence, occasionally making an unexpected skeletal appearance during renovations to buildings or other disturbances to the terrain.

El Cerrito (No Longer Standing)

Hillsborough's inception as a town really began nearly 35 years prior to its incorporation, when the land that would one day become Hillsborough and much of San Mateo County, was purchased in 1848 by William Davis Merry Howard (William Howard). An early California entrepreneur, Howard made his fortune by the age of 27, and sadly was dead by age 36. However, it was his business acumen, generosity, and his fortunate partnership with his young wife Agnes Poett that would create an environment and an expectation that gave rise to the town and community of Hillsborough, "named after Hillsboro, New Hampshire, Howard's ancestral home."² A sprinkling of other lush country estates followed his first *rancho* and 170 years later, this exceptional grouping of residences, and the individuals who make them their homes, still make a significant impact with their spirit of entrepreneurship, innovation and philanthropy that were embodied by that first family.

The building materials for Hillsborough's first mansion were brought around the Cape by the clipper ship, *Great Eagle*, in or about 1851.³ William Howard named the rancho *El Cerrito*, which is fitting as it means "little hill", or "the mound" in Spanish. Built in the Carpenter Gothic Style, it improvised upon features seen carved in stone on cathedrals and churches in medieval Europe. This mansion set a tone and expectation of grand style that subsequent estates would echo in the decades to follow. It would become the first community gathering place for the

young town when the building was moved lock stock and barrel from De Sabla Road to Roehampton Road after its purchase by PG&E founder Eugene DeSabla in 1907. This move was more practical than it seems, given the shortage of local raw materials. It was the first instance of a recycling and “green building” practice that would continue up to the present day.⁴ Ultimately, this picturesque dwelling would serve as Hillsborough’s first Town Hall, Police Department, Fire Department, school and meeting place. Unfortunately, *El Cerrito* was torn down in the 1930s and so can only be seen in old photographs. Today a small plaque marks the location and a time capsule is buried there.

El Cerrito was splendid, so the grounds had to be also. After William Howard’s death in 1856, Agnes Poett married his brother George, and they continued the embellishment of their home, recruiting the now vaunted Scot, John McLaren, from Liverpool, England to landscape the estate.⁵ Over one hundred years later his considerable presence lingers through the legacy of his work. As the superintendent of Golden Gate Park for over fifty years, McLaren made a tremendous impact on the natural spaces of the Bay Area with his horticultural philosophy of promoting a natural style, the effects of which form the landscape we see today. Examples of his work include the estate of Leland Stanford in Palo Alto, plantings of trees at Coyote Point, the trees on El Camino Real, and the creation of the berm that runs along the Great Highway in San Francisco.

Blackhawk Ranch (No Longer Standing)

The Mission Revival Style of architecture is instantly recognizable and surely so inherent to our state that to many it represents California. According to local lore, this style may have originated in Hillsborough even prior to the Burlingame Train Station. It is thought that in about 1868, Ansel Easton, upon the request of his wife Adeline Mills Easton, dismantled an authentic adobe house, which apparently belonged to Chino Sánchez, and utilized the adobe bricks to build the second story of their home. Unfortunately, an earthquake in the same year demolished the house, and thus it remains lore. If they did indeed build their second story from reclaimed bricks in an attempt to live in an authentic “adobe”, this would be quite exciting, as it would have been the first example of the now ubiquitous and well loved Mission Revival Style. The adjacent photograph of *Blackhawk Ranch* does not appear to represent the elements that epitomize this unique blended style, as no tile roof, arch or curved gable is visible. However, historic photographs of the *Sánchez Adobe* (completed in 1846) in Pacifica show some



Gardens at *El Cerrito*, the Howard family home.



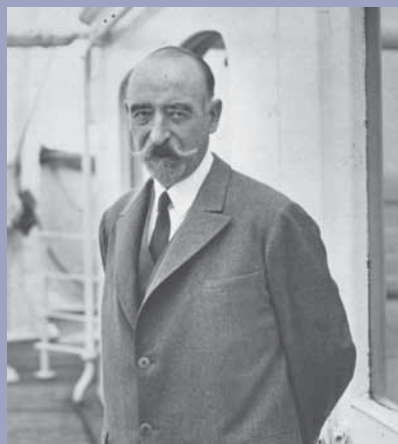
Hillsborough Fire Department and City Hall, c. 1926.



The Eastons at *Black Hawk Ranch*, c. 1860s.



Burlingame Train Station, 1903.



George Howard, Jr.

Although George H. Howard, Jr. was born 46 years prior to the incorporation of the Town of Hillsborough, he was one of the first true "Hillsborians" in that he was likely born at *El Cerrito* into one of the true founding families of Hillsborough. Educated abroad in architecture, he designed 74 buildings in a wide variety of styles -- Georgian, French, Classical, Italianate, Shingle and Tudor. He also assisted in the incorporation of the Town of Hillsborough and served on the new town's board of trustees. Buildings that he designed that are still standing are the Pacific Bell Telephone Building (now the Hillsborough Police Department) at 1600 Floribunda Avenue, the C. Fredrick Kohl mansion (now Mercy High School) at 2750 Adeline Drive, Burlingame, the Hillsborough Racquet Club at 252 El Cerrito in Hillsborough and numerous houses still occupied as private residences in Hillsborough.

Still, Mark. "A Style, a Building, and an Architect." *La Peninsula*. XXIX.1 (1994): 22-28.

similarities in the appearance of the plaster-covered adobe bricks. The *Black Hawk Ranch* house was at Jackling Drive and Armsby Drive.⁶

Burlingame Train Station (Still Standing)

While the Eastons' impact on architectural style may never be resolved, Hillsborough did ultimately provide the first permanent building to be erected in the Mission Revival Style. A new train station was needed to service the recently created country club development of six cottages. The cottages were conceptualized by Francis Newlands, who participated in the building of Chevy Chase, Maryland, a prestigious and successful country club community that he created with his father-in-law, William Sharon. The original Burlingame Country Club consisted of one of these six cottages built in 1893. It is thought the name was selected when a survey map was examined and the name of a former property owner, Anson Burlingame, a distinguished diplomat who represented both the United States and China, was noticed.⁷ Burlingame the city didn't incorporate until 1908.

The architect for the project, Arthur Page Brown, had originally come to Hillsborough in 1889, at the request of Mary Ann Crocker. Mrs. Crocker commissioned him to design a mausoleum for her husband Charles, the president of Southern Pacific Railroad, who had died the year before. In addition to designing the mausoleum and the six cottages, Brown designed the Ferry Building at the foot of Market Street. Brown's architecture firm won the competition to design the California State Building for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition; their entry was Mission Revival Style.⁸ Better known as the Chicago World's Fair, the exposition had a profound impact on this style of architecture, as well as on the Beaux-Arts Style and the Arts and Crafts Movement. The Chicago World's Fair was truly a watershed event for American architecture. During the six months the fair was open, an astonishing 27 million people were exposed to these styles.

One year after the Fair, George and Agnes Poett Howard's son, George H. Howard, Jr., and fellow architect Joachim Mathison designed a new train station for Hillsborough to replace the earlier "pill box" station. It was called the pill box station because it was so small and was located near what is now Oak Grove Road in Burlingame.⁹ The funds for the new station were raised from the membership of the Burlingame Country Club, and this structure was recognized as the first permanent building to be erected in the Mission Revival Style. Like the Easton Adobe's reported reuse of adobe bricks, this building reused authentic mission tiles from Mission Dolores' *asistencia* in San Mateo for



Uplands I. Built for William Henry Howard.

the roof.¹⁰ The Burlingame train station is still in use as a Caltrain station and it is also the site of the Burlingame Hillsborough History Museum. It is a California Historical Landmark and is located at 290 California Drive at Burlingame Avenue, Burlingame.

Uplands I (Still Standing)

William Davis Merry Howard's improvement of Hillsborough was continued by his son, William Henry Howard. W. H. Howard was interested in agriculture and development. He sold the first parcels of real estate in San Mateo and co-founded the Burlingame Country Club where he served as the president for several years. The first issue of San Mateo's original local newspaper, *The San Mateo Leader*, published in 1889, described W. H. Howard's *Uplands* as "modernized...old Gothic," which is perhaps a fitting evolution from the original Hillsborough estate, *El Cerrito*, which was Carpenter's Gothic. The *Uplands Estate*, known as *Uplands I*, was said to contain "lavish woodwork, stonework and brick masonry."¹¹ Portions of an original stone wall are still visible on Stonehedge Road. According to *The Leader*, the woodwork was completed by Charles Smith of the Springfield Woodworking Company of Massachusetts. Smith used a variety of luxurious woods, including mahogany from the Dominican Republic in the dining room, antique oak in the library, and red oak in the den. The house had a concrete foundation and basement, which was unusual and innovative at the time. Bruce Price, who was the father of Emily Post, designed the mansion. Price was an early devotee of the Shingle Style and additional examples of his work can be seen in the



Homeplace, painting by Galen Wolf. Home of Jenny Crocker Whitman Henderson.

I remember growing up at *Homeplace*. We had 132 acres...coming up Barroilhet was our back gate. I remember walking down our driveway with my governess. The driveway was about half a mile long, and we would walk to the *Carolands* Gatehouse. I knew the man who lived in the Gatehouse and we used to chat in the afternoons. I also remember playing in the creek and finding Indian arrowheads.

When I was 13, I attended boarding school in Colorado. I had been trying out for the hockey team and I had to go to the infirmary; the nurse there told me that Pearl Harbor had happened. By the time I was 17, I had graduated from boarding school and had signed up for the Navy and went to Stanford as a Reserve. Unfortunately, the program I chose was too difficult and by the time I was 18, I was on my way to Manila. I was on a boat to Manila when Hiroshima happened, I ended up in Korea doing printing and working with off-set presses. I left (the service) as a Staff-Sergeant and went back to school at Menlo College. When I came to Hillsborough after the War, everything was different; there was a transition that occurred. We lost everyone who worked on the estate to the war effort and they never came back. The place wasn't well kept up, that's the best way to put it.

We have had a change in lifestyle here in Hillsborough. It's changed from when I grew up here. For children who lived on the big estates, speaking for myself and speaking for others, it was kind of growing up in isolation, it was lonely. Your company was really your governess. There was no family life, parents did their own thing; today is better because parents and kids do things together and that's the key right there.

Interview with Robert E. Henderson, 82 years old, 12/22/2009. He is the son of Jenny Adeline Crocker Whitman Henderson and the great-grandson of Charles and Mary Ann Crocker and Ansel and Adeline Easton.



Asilomar Conference Center. Photograph by Caroline Serrato.

In addition to designing Hearst Castle, Julia Morgan contributed other well-known buildings to the Bay Area: Oakland's Mills College Bell Tower, Asilomar Conference Center in Pacific Grove, the Greek Theater on the Berkeley campus, the YWCA Hostess House in Palo Alto (MacArthur Park restaurant) and YMCAs in San Francisco's Chinatown and Oakland.



The California State Building at the Chicago World's Fair designed by A. Page Brown. Image courtesy of Caroline Serrato.

homes he designed at Tuxedo Park, N.Y.

Uplands I had a long and colorful history and went from one Hillsborough family to another when it was sold by W. H. Howard to Charles Frederick Crocker, who in turn sold just the house to a local contractor in 1915. Utilizing 200 eight-inch, mule-drawn rollers, and a 20-foot trestle, Lindgren moved the mansion south across San Mateo Creek, to the location where the residence currently stands. It took two months for 18 men to move the house the necessary 350 yards; details were documented by *Popular Mechanics* magazine that same year. In 1927 the home passed into the hands of George Hearst, who was the oldest son of William Randolph Hearst. Upon its acquisition, Hearst hired renowned architect Julia Morgan to remodel the building.

Julia Morgan was the first woman in the state of California to receive a degree in Engineering from the University of California, as well as the first woman to graduate from the prestigious École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. In redesigning *Uplands I*, she chose a style that was evocative of the White House and Mount Vernon. A 1976 article in *La Peninsula* described the newer style of *Uplands I* as "a cross between the Shingle Style and Chateausque. The ground floor stone-walls and the broad veranda both speak of the Shingle Style. The steep-sided, hipped-roof effect, the roof dormers with their pinnacled gables and the elaborate chimneys provide the Chateausque effect."¹² *Uplands I* still exists and is occupied as a private residence. The estate is located at El Cerrito Avenue and Poett Road.

It would be difficult to overestimate the impact that the Beaux-Arts classical design style has had in shaping the culture and aura that represents that *je ne sais quoi* that is Hillsborough. There are three Beaux-Arts mansions in the Town. Each one is a wonderful representation of this style and would be significant in any community, but to have three such jewels is a truly amazing legacy that deserves celebration and preservation.

The Beaux-Arts design also has its roots in the Chicago World's Fair. One of the primary designers of the Exposition was Daniel Hudson Burnham, who was optimistic that by creating beautiful structures, people would become inspired in a positive way that would lead to the betterment of all. His vision continued to influence urban design until the start of the Great Depression in 1929. Some of the common characteristics that are found in the Beaux-Arts Style are a flat roof, arched windows and doors, and symmetrical and classical details that suggest Greek or Roman architecture. The coordination of these classic design elements bestows a majestic presence to the building.



Uplands II designed by Willis Polk for C. Templeton Crocker.

Uplands II (Still Standing)

C. Templeton Crocker, grandson of Charles Crocker, began to replace Uplands I with a grander abode in 1912. A wedding present for his wife, the budget for the mansion was \$1.6 million.¹³ As architect for his new residence he selected Willis Polk. A supporter of Daniel Burnham's work and ideas, Polk had worked with Burnham in Chicago. Uplands II was the first Beaux-Arts classical mansion in the Town of Hillsborough and is still considered a masterpiece of the style.¹⁴ The 39 rooms had 35,000 square feet of living space. Fine woodcarving, matched marble walls and Italian ironwork were in place by the start of World War I.¹⁵ As many homes of this era were lost to fire, Crocker requested that Uplands II be designed with fireproof materials.¹⁶ However, the planned terra cotta exterior was replaced with concrete due to war-related shortages.¹⁷

At the conclusion of World War II, the home was selected in 1951 to host visiting Soviet dignitaries, including Vyacheslav Molotov and Andrei Gromyko, while they represented the Soviet Union at the Japanese Peace Conference in San Francisco.¹⁸ Today, this magnificent estate serves as one of two private schools that are operated from former Crocker residences. Crystal Springs Uplands School is located at 400 Uplands Drive, and is a private college preparatory school.



Police barricade at *Uplands II* during the visit of Soviet diplomats, 1951. Photograph courtesy of the Hillsborough Police Department.



The *Carolands* built for Harriet Pullman Carolan.



Prom night at the *Carolands*, c. 1946. Photograph courtesy of Robin Moseley O'Connell.



The *Carolands* Gatehouse. Photograph courtesy of Caroline Serrato.

***Carolands* (Still Standing)**

The second Beaux-Arts classical mansion is truly one of America's great homes. It was designated as significant by placement on the National Registry of Historic Places, which classified it as, "unquestionably one of the greatest residential spaces in America," as well as achieving recognition as a California Historical Landmark. From the time it was built, between 1913 and 1915, the *Carolands* has been the subject of fascination and curiosity. Harriet Pullman Carolan commissioned architect Ernest Sanson, another graduate of the École des Beaux-Arts de Paris, to design the mansion, and landscape architect Achille Duchêne, a luminary of French landscape architecture, to lay out the grounds. Pullman utilized Willis Polk, who had come to the area at the suggestion of A. Page Brown, to implement the designs, thought to be modeled after *Vaux-le-Vicomte*, southeast of Paris, and to build the residence on the nearly 600-acre parcel of land. *Carolands* is both inspiring and absorbing; it truly has a magnetic power. Even the smallest details are enthralling. Fortunately, the residence has been the subject of much research, photography and documentation, and ample information on this astonishingly beautiful residence is available. The *Carolands* mansion is still standing, and is occupied as a private residence. Both the mansion and grounds have been lovingly restored and are located on Remillard Drive in Hillsborough.

At one time, the *Carolands* estate covered over 500 acres.¹⁹ Part of the original design for the estate included a Gatehouse, but it was not designed and completed until 1929, when the estate was subdivided. Bay Area architect Harold G. Stoner, who was also responsible for designing the 'storybook' or Old English style houses in the area west of Twin Peaks in San Francisco, was commissioned to design a small gate-keeper's lodge that was evocative of the style of the larger *Carolands* mansion. Stoner was also a devotee of the City Beautiful aesthetic,²⁰ and this diminutive chateau has certainly served as a catalyst for civic virtue, having been saved from destruction and restored by civic-minded Hillsborough residents on two separate occasions. The first effort was spearheaded by Hillsborough resident Earl Zwingle who, in 1963, worked with Angus McSweeney, the co-designer of St. Mary's Cathedral,²¹ to restore, repair and rebuild both the gates and the Gatehouse. By 2007, the Gatehouse was once again in need of assistance. Sally and Jim Meakin raised the funds to rebuild the Gatehouse a second time, and in keeping with what is the tradition of the very first Hillsborough residences, it is currently being rebuilt using some of the original materials. Sustainable building materials have been



La Dolphine designed by Lewis Hobart for George Newhall.

utilized in its construction, and upon its completion, the Gatehouse will serve as a substation for the Hillsborough Police Department.

***La Dolphine* (Still Standing)**

The third example of Beaux-Arts classical design is *La Dolphine*, which was built in 1914 for George Newhall and still stands at 1760 Manor Drive in Hillsborough. It is a private home. Both the residence and the formal garden were designed by well-known Bay Area architect Lewis Hobart. They have striking French influences with regard to style and design; the front entrance of the mansion is evocative of Marie Antoinette's *Le Petit Trianon* at Versailles, and the entire building takes the shape of a cross. The house is listed in the National Registry of Historic Places in the areas of architecture and landscape architecture under two classifications: as an excellent example of the style, and as the work of a master.

Lewis Hobart had strong ties to Hillsborough and the Crocker family in that he was married to Mabel Reed Deming, a cousin of William H. Crocker. Much like McLaren, Brown and Morgan, Hobart's association with well-connected Hillsborough families would result in many examples of beautiful architecture that still inspire us today. The Crocker family commissioned Hobart to build several downtown San Francisco office buildings that were being reconstructed after the great earthquake. Hobart is perhaps best known for implementing the design of Grace Episcopal Cathedral that was built on Nob Hill on land donated by the Crockers. Hobart also designed other well-known estates in



New Place, home of William and Ethel Crocker.



The *Frank House* designed by Frank Lloyd Wright. Photograph courtesy of the Frank Family.



A Frank family dinner party. Photograph courtesy of the Frank Family.

Hillsborough, such as *Strawberry Hill* at the end of Redington Road, which was built in 1910, and George T. Cameron's *Rosecourt* at 815 Eucalyptus Avenue, which was built in 1913.

***New Place* (Still Standing)**

His long association with the Crocker family also led to Hobart's 1907 design for William and Ethel Crocker's lavish estate, which would come to be known as "the most beautiful residence in California".²² *New Place*, as it would come to be called, was built around 1910. The property consisted of a 35-room mansion on 500 acres. The grounds were laid out in Italian gardens that were designed by Bruce Porter, who would go on to design the gardens at the *Filoli* Estate in Woodside. In the 1950s, the Burlingame Country Club acquired the home, and they maintain ownership of it as a private golf and country club. The original gates still remain at the intersection of New Place Road and Eucalyptus Avenue, and both North and Crocker Schools were built on what was once part of the original 500-acre estate.

***The Frank House* (Still Standing)**

Not all homes in Hillsborough are massive estates, but in Hillsborough, even a modest home can inspire and, perhaps surprisingly, help pave the way for racial equality. In 1938, Sidney Bazett contacted the celebrated architect Frank Lloyd Wright to build a reasonably priced home for his family on a lot they owned in southern Hillsborough. It would be based on the Usonian concepts of economy, minimalism, easy transitions between the inside and outside and what we would now call "green building" due to the incorporation of efficient lighting, heating, etc. Sadly, the Bazett family did not settle in their new home; their child was stillborn, and they separated. They elected to rent the house to a tenant who was familiar with Frank Lloyd Wright's work. His name was Joseph Eichler, and to say that living in the Bazett home affected him would be an understatement. He adored the open floor plan and how it contributed to a new way of living for him and his family.

When the Bazett family put the house on the market, the Frank family, who were ardent fans of Wright, quickly purchased the residence. They were not interested in being landlords; they wanted to occupy their new dream home. This was a problem, as Joe Eichler was firmly ensconced in the Usonian lifestyle and was not interested in leaving. In the end, the Franks were forced to evict him. Eichler was devastated, and according to Betty Frank, he cried on the day he had to leave.

The happy conclusion is that out of this heartbreak came inspiration.

Eichler was determined to recreate this living concept and bring it to the middle-class of California. He went on to build over 10,000 ranch style homes that included the same single story, open floor, low roof and minimalist design that we see today as quintessential Eichler and mid-century modern. These homes were designed to be accessible by anyone, regardless of race or other factors. This was a revolutionary idea at the time, because many covenants, conditions and restrictions²³ still include discriminatory language restricting purchases based on race, religion and other now illegal criteria. In 1958, Eichler resigned from the National Association of Home Builders when they refused to support a non-discrimination policy because inclusion was so important to him. In addition to being attainable, Eichler and Wright both designed homes that were intended to create a harmonious balance between occupant, dwelling and nature.

Hillsborough is a unique town that contains a rich and varied history. Like the nine hundred-year-old Ohlone Indian artifacts that have been discovered throughout the Town, the historical details of the mansions reveal a tantalizing glimpse of our past. Who were these fabulously wealthy and pioneering people who built the mansions? They are all part of America's rich history, and following the trail can lead to unexpected places and fascinating connections. The history of Hillsborough can be read through its architecture. From the magnificent and massive *Carolands* mansion to its petite replica Gatehouse, we see tradition honored and continued. From a train station that incorporated our mission history to a new building style designed to embrace equality, we can see an evolution of architecture that parallels history and perhaps even our development as a society. We still feel the impact of these buildings. They have a dignified presence, an energy, a vitality that enriches the best parts of our humanity; they have served to inspire and encourage others to embrace and push for a better world and still most certainly enrich our lives with their beauty. They are a tangible legacy that connects us to those who came before us and reminds us that the past is never very far away but through its continuing development unexpectedly brings us in touch with our future.

1. Hawthorne, Nathaniel, *The Portable Hawthorne*, Ed. William C. Spengemann (New York: Penguin, 2005).
2. Erwin G. Gudde, *California Place Names*, rev. and enlarged (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1960), 132-33.
3. Still, Mark. "A Style, a Building, and an Architect." *La Peninsula*. XXIX.1 (1994): 13.
4. The Town of Hillsborough has always encouraged voluntary green building practices, and in 2009, made green building a requirement for all new construction and remodeling projects.
5. Still, 23.
6. See Easton Addition Office photograph, San Mateo County Historical Association (SMCHA) archives, Folder 829A.21, and Easton Property and Home photographs, SMCHA archives, Folder 829A.1 and 10.
7. Weiglin, Peter, and Albert Acena. "Burlingame and the Railroad." *La Peninsula*. XXIX.1 (1994): 8.
8. See illustration on p. 14.
9. Weiglin and Acena, 6.
10. *Ibid.*, 20.
11. Ringler, D. "Hillsborough-San Mateo Mansions." *La Peninsula*, XVIII.3 (1976), 4.
12. *Ibid.*, 5.
13. DeNevi, Donald and Thomas Moulin, *Gabriel Moulin's San Francisco Peninsula-Town and Country Homes 1910-1930* (Sausalito, California: Windgate Press, 1985), 23.
14. *Ibid.*, 199.
15. *Ibid.*
16. *San Francisco Examiner*, 8 June 1913.
17. Denevi and Moulin, 199.
18. Robbins, Millie. "The Fascinating Saga of a California Clan." *San Francisco Chronicle*, 3 April 1964.
19. Cain, J. (2009). "The Carolands's Gatehouse-Then and Now." *Hillsborough Newsletter*, 3rd Quarter, 1.
20. "Bay Area Beauty: The Artistry of Harold G. Stoner, Architect." http://www.mtdavidson.org/harold_g._stoner. Retrieved 2010-01-19.
21. "St. Mary's Cathedral". Archdiocese of San Francisco Web Page. 2008. <http://www.sfarchdiocese.org/about-us/cathedral-of-saint-mary-of-the-assumption/>.
22. Fredricks, Darold. "The Peninsula's Influential Crocker Family." *Daily Journal*, 4 Apr. 2009.
23. Covenants, conditions and restrictions (CC&Rs) are the governing documents that dictate how the homeowners association operates and what rules the owners must obey.

San Mateo County Historical Association:

1935 - 2010

Mitchell P. Postel

Mitchell P. Postel

Mitchell P. Postel has been the Executive Director/President of the San Mateo County Historical Association since 1984.



Roscoe Wyatt, 1941.

This year marks the 75th in which the San Mateo County Historical Association has worked to preserve and present San Mateo County History. Born in the midst of national depression, it survived wars and other historical calamities. During good times it improved and expanded. Today it operates a museum that is recognized as the top of its kind in California. Its education programs, historic sites and research library attract over 45,000 people a year. Its finances are strong; its board is stellar; its staff is professional; its volunteers are dedicated; its place within the community is respected.

However, like most things, the Association started as just an idea. Back in late 1934, Roscoe Wyatt, manager of an organization, now defunct, called the San Mateo County Chamber of Commerce, felt a county historical society, emphasizing the Peninsula's colorful past, might help lure visitors and residents. The population of San Mateo County was only 77,400 in 1930, about the population of just Redwood City today. Wyatt was certainly one who valued a place's history while promoting it. He had already secured registration of ten historic sites and had written several pamphlets on the County's history. Perhaps his most lasting legacy was the production of several promotional films, shown to millions across America. Today those films are utilized, time after time, in the interpretive projects of the Historical Association and by others.

In order to initiate his historical society, Wyatt called on friends at the *San Mateo Times*. On January 3, 1935, Wyatt with an attorney, Donald C. Brooks, and a water company manager, George J. Davis, compiled a list of interested people, and, on January 11, the first meeting of the San Mateo County Historical Association took place at the San Mateo Public Library. Among the notables present were Inez M. Crawford, chief of the San Mateo Public Library, Pancy Jewett Abott, the County Superintendent of Schools, and Col. C. N. Kirkbride, a founder of the *San Mateo Times*, the San Mateo Junior College and other local institutions.

In 1937, Wyatt was able to interest a history instructor at the Junior

College, Dr. Frank Stanger, in the two-year-old Association. Publisher Arthur H. Cawston had proposed producing a book about San Mateo County history and approached Wyatt who steered him to Stanger. Previously, Stanger had expressed interest in local history projects, especially the preservation of the Woodside Store. Now Wyatt was able to rope this scholar into the Association's activities. Stanger soon became its leader and remained so for more than 30 years.

Stanger was born in Michigan in 1887. His family traveled to South Dakota in 1896 and failed to establish a homestead there. The family went by surrey and covered wagon to Oklahoma and then moved to Colorado. Eventually they settled in California. Stanger returned to South Dakota to teach and graduated from the state university there in 1920. He then moved to Lima, Peru, where he taught while earning a *Doctor en Historia* from the *Universidad Mayor de San Marcos*. In 1926, he returned to California and landed a job at Burlingame High School. In 1928, he began his career with San Mateo Junior College. In 1930, he earned his Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley, studying under the eminent Herbert Eugene Bolton.

Under Stanger's leadership the Association took on some long-lasting and important projects. It began advocating for the preservation of the Woodside Store (1854) and the Sanchez Adobe (1846). In 1940, Association members were delighted when the County purchased the Store. That same year, a room was made available at the Junior College (located on Baldwin Avenue in downtown San Mateo) to create a museum which opened in January, 1941. The first item to be accessioned into its collection was a map drawn by Jerome Hamilton, indicating the sites of Indian shellmounds in San Mateo. In support of the museum's work, that same month, Stanger had the first issue of *La Peninsula* (this journal) published and distributed to the members.

The Second World War interrupted progress on most projects, but by its end, Stanger was leading a variety of efforts, including the saving of the Sanchez Adobe. On February 28, 1947, after an effective lobbying campaign, the County Board of Supervisors approved acquiring the property.

Great opportunities manifested themselves for Stanger and the Association as the Junior College expanded. Three times it increased in size, in 1949, in 1956 and, when the College moved to its present location at its College Heights location, in 1963.

For this last move, the Association hired Leslie O. Merrill to become the museum director. Stanger continued writing histories and having a positive impact on the Association's activities into the 1970s.



Dr. Frank Stanger at the San Mateo County Historical Museum, 1941.



History buffs at the Woodside Store, c. 1940s



Centennial celebration at the Sanchez Adobe, 1946.



Docent-led tour at the San Mateo County Historical Museum, c. 1970s.



Moving the carriage collection into the warehouse, 1985.



The San Mateo County History Museum, 2010.

Then began a long run at the College under four directors, Les Merrill (1964-1974), Bill Ray (1974-1975), Herb Garcia (1975-1983) and myself. It was during Herb Garcia's tenure that California's Proposition 13 passed (1978) and created stress on the public financing that the Association enjoyed. The beleaguered County parks system, at the same time, had trouble continuing the operation of the Woodside Store and Sanchez Adobe. The Association agreed to operate its museum and the two sites for a vastly reduced subvention from the County (\$40,000 to \$15,000). The role of the Association's Board now included fundraising.

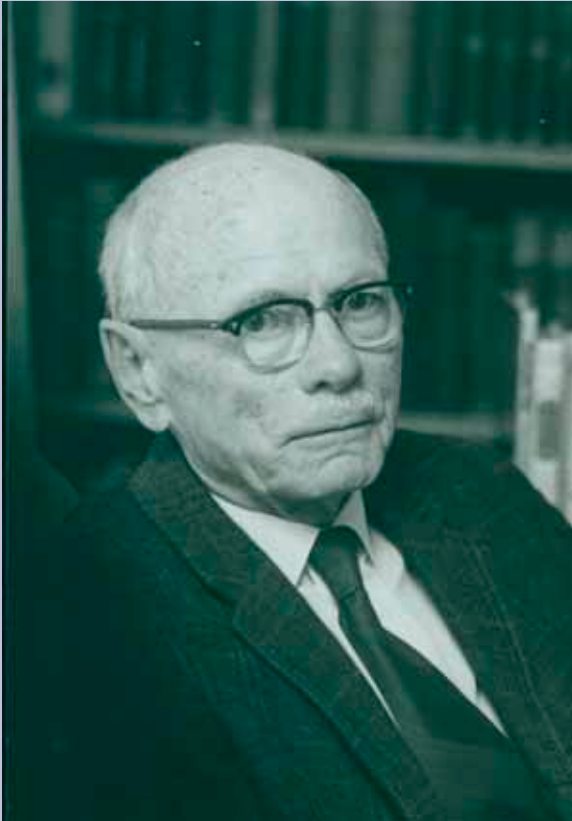
I came on as director in 1984. Our entire staff for running the three museums consisted of myself, our famous archivist, Marion Holmes, a part-time secretary and two part-time managers for the sites. However, the volunteer spirit was phenomenal.

We straightened out our financing, recognized our other problems and within two years were raising funds for our first capital improvements in 20 years -- the building of our 5,000 square foot storage facility on Tower road near Belmont.

Certainly, times continued to be challenging for the College. By 1994, the priorities of its trustees and administrators had changed quite a bit. Recognizing that future improvements and expansion depended upon finding a new location, the Association's Board began searching for a new home for its museum. That year it initiated negotiations with the County about the possibilities of moving to the old county courthouse in Redwood City. In 1998, the Association moved into the new location and in 1999 opened to the public with temporary displays. By 2006, when it led the effort to celebrate the County's 150th birthday, its museum had become part of a \$20 million improvement of the interior and exterior of the building.

Today the Historical Association is an accomplished, vital organization. However, we remain always mindful of our humble roots and thankful for the decades of great leadership and hard work from past board members, staff and volunteers.

Dr. Stanger Legacy Society



Dr. Frank Stanger, a history professor at the San Mateo Junior College, led the San Mateo County Historical Association for over 30 years. Under his leadership, Stanger was able to persuade the Junior College (located on Baldwin Avenue in downtown San Mateo) to make a room available to create the San Mateo County History Museum which opened in January, 1941. Along with the opening of the museum, Dr. Stanger took on some long-lasting and important projects that largely contributed to the success of today's San Mateo County Historical Association.

Your Gift May Live on Forever

Many of you make an annual donation to the San Mateo County Historical Association. Now we have a program that allows all of our supporters to make a gift with the stroke of a pen – a legacy gift. Your gift will live on forever through our endowment. You can help create an environment in which young people are enriched, excited and educated through understanding, preserving and interpreting the history of San Mateo County.

The most common type of legacy gift is a bequest made through your will or living trust. Simply ask your attorney to include San Mateo County Historical Association. If you don't yet have a will or living trust, we can provide you with a list of attorneys to help you create one. If you already have a will or trust, you can inexpensively update your document to include San Mateo County Historical Association through a codicil to a will or an amendment to your trust.

When you make a legacy gift to the San Mateo County Historical Association we will honor you by enrolling you in the Dr. Stanger Legacy Society. Your name will be listed in our publications, and we will recognize you at special events. Of course, you may choose to remain anonymous.

In order to help our supporters consider a legacy gift to the San Mateo County Historical Association we are able to offer the assistance of Greg Lassonde, our legacy giving specialist. Please contact Greg with any related questions at (510) 482-1502 or greg@greglassonde.com.



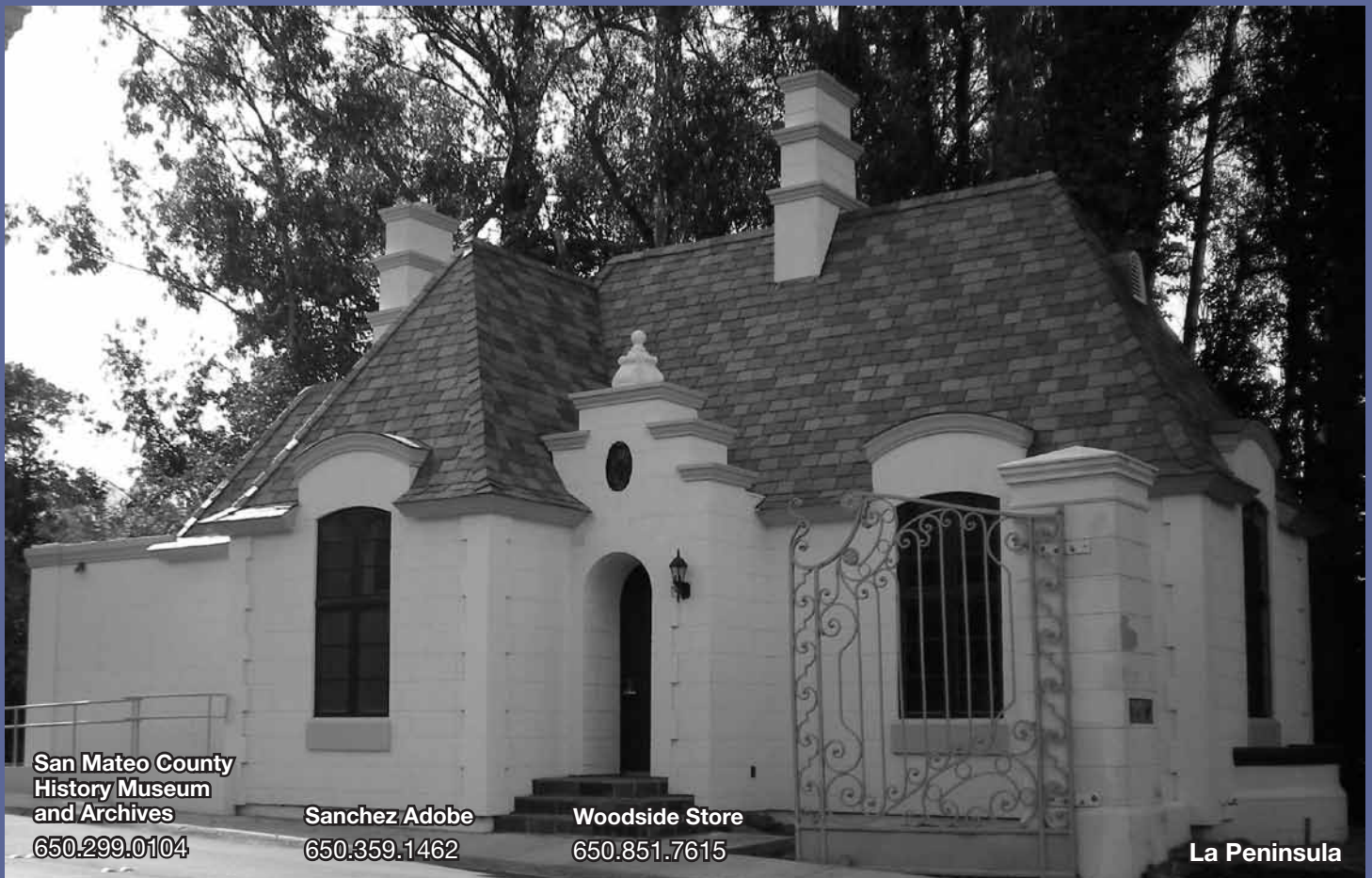
San Mateo County
Historical Association

2200 Broadway
Redwood City, CA 94063
650.299.0104
www.historysmc.org

Spring 2010

Non-Profit
Organization
**U.S. Postage
PAID**
Redwood City, CA
Permit No. 277

Change Service Requested



San Mateo County
History Museum
and Archives
650.299.0104

Sanchez Adobe
650.359.1462

Woodside Store
650.851.7615

La Peninsula