

THE RECORD

Spring
Quarterly
Meeting will be a
surprise!
see p.3

NORTON PEARL PHOTOS NOW ONLINE

About four years ago, our members may recall having learned of an enormously important photography collection of roughly 250,000 negatives generously offered to the Burlingame Historical Society by prolific photographer, Burlingame native Norton Pearl. Norton graciously allowed us to use several of his photos in our Burlingame Centennial book a few years before. In 1949, while Norton was still attending Burlingame High School, he and his trusted camera documented the opening of the brand new Community Center. The "Rec" Center opened to great fanfare. The plaque that still adorns the brickwork on the entrance dedicates the building to "men and women of Burlingame who patriotically gave their lives in World War II..." We are pleased to post a number of these early Rec Center photographs that highlight the anticipation and thrill of that event in this newsletter. (See photos in center).

Pearl grew up in Burlingame, attending McKinley and Burlingame High School. Photography became an early passion as he began developing images in his garage darkroom. His first published photo, for which he was paid \$3.50, appeared in the local newspaper *Burlingame Advance* while he was still a student at McKinley. Pearl later became Burlingame High School yearbook editor and volunteered his services as photographer for the Burlingame Fire Department.

This early experience, together with extensive freelance work done for San Francisco newspapers while concurrently earning his Business Administration degree from San Jose State, led to work for United Press Photos. His talent was subsequently sought by a San



Above - crowds enjoy entertainment at the entrance. At right- teens try out the dance floor. Below- brownies listen with joy to the juke box.
-Norton Pearl
Photography Collection



to experience the breadth of subject matter highlighting the latter part of the 20th century. The SMCHA museum store also offers a number of framed prints.

Mateo-based commercial photography studio that he purchased by the early 1960s, moving and expanding in 1963 to 875 Cowen Road, located in the then new East Millsdale industrial area east of 101, in Burlingame. His commercial photography studio became the largest on the Peninsula. When Pearl approached us with the donation, the confines and limitations of our storage facilities, as well as

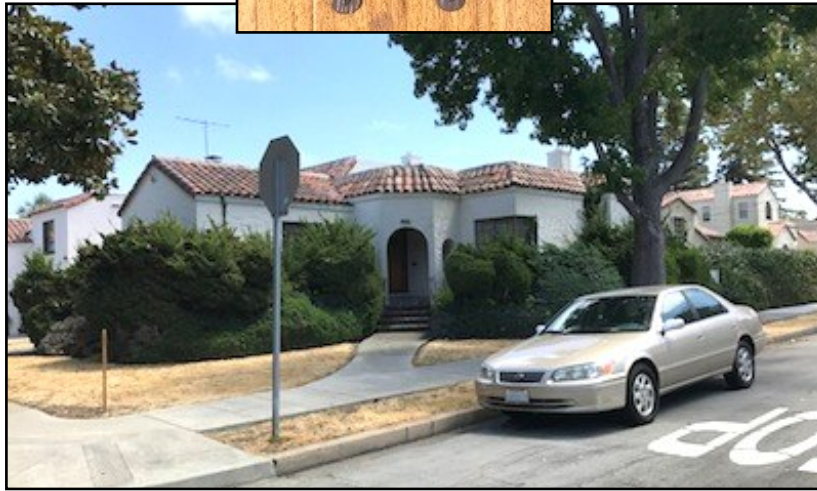
lack of staff, led us to approach Mitch Postel, president of the San Mateo County Historical Association, who together with his staff and Board of Directors immediately recognized the importance and urgency of preserving the Norton Pearl Collection.

Fast forward nearly four years, and thousands of hours of staff and volunteer time at SMCHA in what would otherwise be a daunting, if not impossible exercise, over 2,600 of those Norton Pearl images have already been processed and cataloged. Norton's assistance has been critically important to help identify subject matter on negative film, and has been greatly appreciated by all.

Mitch recently announced that the San Mateo County Historical Association has made over 400 of the images available online. Check out the images by going to: historysmc.pastperfectonline.com (click on "photos", and then type in "Norton

NEW ACQUISITIONS! With thanks to...

Gilson Development Construction kindness of **Mary Griffith**, for an original lettered, wrought iron front door insert in the form of a "G" (shown at right) after the first homeowners ("Gurdy Family") of 521 Burlingame Ave., a home built by early builder-developer **Charlie Hammer**, as well as a number of interior and exterior photos of said property prior to and during demolition; **Laura Lee Gilliam**, great, great granddaughter of Susan Burlingame Holton (Anson Burlingame's sister), for a large framed original photograph of Anson Burlingame and other dignitaries at the Chinese Embassy on the occasion of the signing of the Burlingame Treaty, photographed by J. Gurney & Son, 1868, as well as original letters and documents related to Anson Burlingame and other family members, including the Burlingame family bible, 1850; **Amelia Kolokihakaufisi**, City of Burlingame Planner for two digital clippings about the closing of Levy Bros. at 1375 Burlingame Ave. in 1984; **Ed Eisenman** for a large collection of articles, business- and community advertisements, real estate transactions and obituaries related to current and former Burlingame and Hillsborough residents and their lives, and other items including an autographed copy of *Treasure Express: Epic days of Wells Fargo*, c.1936, whose author, Neill C. Wilson, lived at 822 Walnut in Burlingame when he composed the work, as well as a booklet entitled *A Goodly Heritage*, a history of the First Methodist Church, 1908-1958, as well as a hot pink, vintage promotional 12-inch ruler courtesy of the Burlingame Police Department; **Jim Shypertt** for a vintage I. Magnin's gold and pink striped gift box, and misc. information related to Burlingame, Hillsborough, and San Mateo County residents and goings on; **Jim Kelly** for a *SM Times* clipping (March 21, 1933) reporting among other various activities, that *Mayor Buck announced a gift to the city of 400 Redwood trees, and suggested that they be*



Charlie Hammer built home - 1930s, 512 Burlingame Ave. at Clarendon Road with customized front door ornamentation

planted along Hillside drive, the work to be done by unemployed and for a SM Times Leader (Dec. 8, 1938) clipping copy related to the creation of Hillsborough's first municipal water system; **Mary Packard** for a copy of a Roster of State, County, City and Township Officials published by the State of California, August 1, 1923; **Carl Martin** for several vintage business cards; **Joanne Garrison** for misc. pamphlets and paper memorabilia related to Burlingame and SM County activities; **Cathy Foxhoven and Ray Tyler** for DVD copies of an oral history taken of George and Carolyn Parker on Feb. 23, 2018, and

Bobbi Benson for a transcript thereof; to **Ray Tyler** for filming and DVD copies of our Annual Program *I. Magnin - A Store To Remember* (Feb. 25, 2018), as well as for a 32 GB video card of several of his recent recordings made on our behalf; **Brenden Kelly** (Central County Fire Department) for a circa 1960s *Burlingame Chamber of Commerce* pamphlet featuring Millsdale; **John Geer** for

his description of the Burlingame School District Art Mobile of the 1960s and 70s, as well as other photos and brochures; **John Parkin** for misc.

vintage photos and paraphernalia related to the BPD and Reserves, a 1946 BHS track team photo, a 1957 Art Mellior aerial photograph of the Mills Estate, and a copy of *My Brother, Freddie*, by Jeanne Aurel-Schneider ©2013, the story of a fallen pilot, a Burlingame native, in France in 1958; **Dale Perkins** for several card reproductions of his artwork, as well as a Burlingame map adapted to show ancient Indian mound locations, for the Art Mobile program run by Dale Perkins for the Burlingame Elementary schools, 1960s-70s; **Caroline Serrato**, for a 1970s era "Class A" Hillsborough Police Dept. uniform once belonging to Captain Arthur Sacht, and two police caps; and **Martin Quan**, City of Burlingame Public Works, for construction pictures of the Burlingame Hills Fire Station (1949), Ray Park (1949), the sewage plant expansion (1950), and of the Peninsula Hospital Meter bypass project (1962).

Our spring quarterly program announcement will be sent out to our members via a separate postcard mailing as soon as we have a firm date for this special surprise event. Thank you for your patience and understanding. Additionally, Please SAVE THE DATE, Sunday, August 5th, for our Summer Walking Tours (1 and 3 pm.) Details in our next newsletter.

WHAT'S NEW IN THE MUSEUM?

Make sure to check out our brand new photo presentation NOW... AND THEN, featuring dozens of recently acquired images that chronicle change (or not) up to the present.

Two examples are featured here: Easton Drive in 2018 and in 1912.



Thank you to the following members for their generous donations: Marcia Parish, John Parkin, JoAnn C. Stenberg, Richard Aptekar, Marjorie Kobe, JoAnn Quadt, Kent and Jill Lauder, Betsy Bogel, Anne Fuller, Pat Giorni, Frank Pagliaro, Ann Mahnken, Brian Johnson, Steven Cady, Thomas Friebe, Mary and Richard Griffith, June Wayne, Gary Heckenkemper, Mary Hunt, Charles Voltz, Julianne Mooney, Dale Perkins, Don Donoughe and Beth Concoby, Clare Cavanaugh, Leona Moriarty, Virginia H. Siegman, Farris Horak, Vicki Giles, Jim Bailey, Wallace Mersereau, Beverley Conrad, and Barbara Hewitt and John Basye for their contribution to our museum.

A very happy and special acknowledgement goes to our longtime Board Member, June Wayne, who became a centenarian this year!

Welcome New Members!

Donna Lema-Cerna - Individual

Viki Giles - Individual

Jeanne V. Patterson - Individual

Tom O'Dwyer - Individual

Jeanne Perkins Carmack - Life

DID YOU KNOW?

Long before our garbage was hauled to San Carlos, like most cities, Burlingame had its own dumpsite. Depending on one's point of view, a visit through the gates at 1101 Airport Blvd. was either repulsive, or an adventure waiting to happen. It was not uncommon to leave the heap with newfound "treasures". The facility closed in the 1980s. Walls of specially prepared clay were constructed to prevent leaching into the bay. Today, the golf driving/putting field, and a couple of soccer fields off of Anza Blvd. cover the landfill where the garbage continues to compress and release gases.



Burlingame City Dump, formerly located at 1101 Airport Blvd. in 1963, and citywide clean-up drive sign on Broadway in 1949 from Norton Pearl Collection

Address Service Requested - Time Dated Material

Calendar

Quarterly Meeting:

Stay tuned for upcoming
summertime event to be
announced via postcard!

**Burlingame
Hillsborough History
Museum Open:
290 California Drive**

1st Sun. of each month, 1-4 PM.
June 3rd, August 5th (closed July)

Museum Docents Needed!

No experience required.

Please call 340-9960 to volunteer.

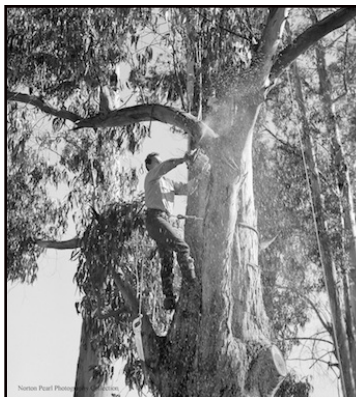
*Please remember us in
your trust or will!*

THE BURLINGAME HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SPRING 2018, ISSUE 154

President's Message

Seeing Norton Pearl's amazing 1963 photograph of the trimming of a Burlingame eucalyptus tree is a reminder of just how long our city's ethos has been intertwined with our trees. While much has changed over more than a century, the significance of our urban canopy has not. On February 26th, according to plan, a public Study Session was held to update the City Council on the year-long process of the El Camino Task Force that notably, in addition to citizens representing various viewpoints and concerns related to the highway, also included a seasoned Caltrans director—a first. The stated “objective” was refreshingly simple: *Retain the character and*



health of “the Grove” while improving the roadway and sidewalk safety and condition. Remarkably, there has never been a comprehensive, written agreement between the City of Burlingame and Caltrans, with regard not only to the trees, but to all aspects of infrastructure—the roadway, drainage, and sidewalks. But there is hope for our historic stretch of highway going forward. As a Task Force participant charged in my capacity as Historical Society president with accurately representing the character and history of the El Camino Grove and its legacy going forward, I look forward and am eager to see how this develops.

-Jennifer Pfaff

Current Officers 2018:

President - *Jennifer Pfaff*

VP - Museum -

Russ Coben

VP Technology and
Education -

Diane Condon-Wirgler

Treasurer and Newsletter -
Joanne Garrison

Oral histories & Parliamentarian-
Cathy Foxhoven

Secretary - *Mary Griffith*

Corresponding Secretary -
Mary Packard

Social Media-

Cathy Baylock

Membership Co-Chairs-

Carl Martin and

Leslie McQuaide

Board Member Emeritus

Martha May