

# THE RECORD

## *Banking on Burlingame*

ANNUAL  
MEETING AND  
PRESENTATION

Sunday Feb. 23

1:45 pm

See pg. 3

Burlingame's two main commercial streets (Burlingame Avenue and Broadway) were never intended to be business districts. They began as roads to bring supplies into country estates from piers on the Bay. Indeed, the wealthy landowners who originally settled this area were intent on creating country homes to escape the unpleasant aspects of the businesses that brought them their great wealth. The last thing they wanted was for

business to follow them here. From the earliest days, there was a smattering of service businesses (tack shops, carpentry shops, vegetable and meat sellers) that had a symbiotic relationship with the great estates, but the relocation of factories and other businesses was not welcomed.

Certain established San Mateo businessmen, however, like John Henry "Harry" Hatch and E.A. Husing, recognized Burlingame's business potential. In the early 1900s, they purchased an entire city block (from today's Limon Restaurant to the Calico Corners store) to prepare for a future "city."

The "Hill" people to the west, accustomed to their exclusive lifestyle of polo and fox hunts started to become increasingly anxious that businessmen like



*View from Forty-line interurban electric railway around 1911 as it passes by Burlingame Square's early business establishments along California Drive, then called San Mateo Drive*

Hatch and Husing (in addition to recent arrivals of people buying modest sized lots east of the train station) were intent on turning Burlingame into a "workmen's town." The January 29, 1906 SF Call newspaper captured a particularly raucous scene at the Burlingame Railroad Station:

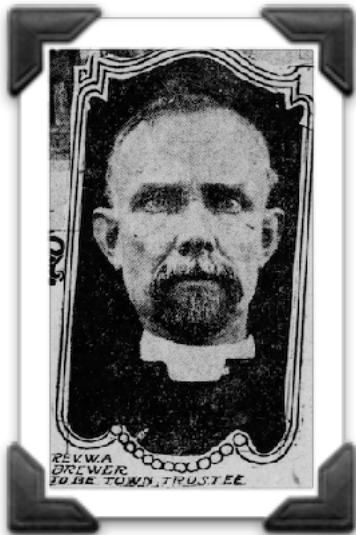
"The final blow to exclusiveness at Burlingame was delivered yesterday afternoon, when the humble residents of the far-famed abode of millionaires met and made arrangements to start a real town...

More than two hundred of the recent settlers gathered at the little railroad depot that has for years been a stopping-off place for swelldom. All these persons who congregated, signed the roll of the new Burlingame Advancement League and quickly got down to the business of outlining plans to transform the settlement into a regular town."

The primary purpose of incorporation was tax collection—essential for "a real bustling town" of lighted, paved streets and sidewalks. The SF earthquake just three months later became a catalyst for significant growth; the Hill People's fears were realized when the town of Burlingame incorporated in 1908.

In a defensive move to stave off annexation by Burlingame or San Mateo, Hillsborough incorporated in 1910—its founders shunning commercialism and, what

future Hillsborough Mayor Rev. W.A. Brewer bluntly described as, “the blight of asphalt and other modern inventions to which towns like San Mateo and Burlingame seem to be addicted” (SF. Call April 7, 1910).



Thus, a truce between these two competing tensions – pro-growth and business vs. maintaining leafy, country estates – seems to have been reached by incorporating both areas, so each could develop in its own way. Burlingame would be the “business town” and Hillsborough would maintain its country

flair. Even in business-friendly Burlingame, however, the type of commercial establishments was limited by a local government and citizenry who fought to ensure that homeowners’ values would always trump commercial interests. One of the first ordinances passed barred the sale of alcohol. As Burlingame Avenue (and the intersecting Main Street – today’s Lorton Avenue) developed, it was filled with a bank, dry goods stores, a volunteer fire department and city hall, shoe repair --- all businesses compatible and needed by local residents.

Entertainment venues also became an acceptable business welcomed in Burlingame. The first movie house, Roy’s Photoplay Theatre, opened in 1913 in the structure now used by Base Camp fitness center on California Drive. Within the next dozen years, enthusiasm for Burlingame’s downtown entertainment resulted in two more theatres being built along Burlingame Avenue, each more opulent than the last. By the late 1920s, another one, the Broadway Theatre, later known as The Encore, was built on California Drive near Broadway, though its location off the beaten path made for a tough start that it could never completely shake.

At first, automobiles were almost a recreational vehicle rather than a means of transportation. Affluent residents flocked to buy the new contraptions. By 1922, the Burlingame Advance newspaper correctly predicted that “Burlingame will soon become the automobile headquarters of San Mateo County”, noting that three

leading automobile manufacturers were already represented in town. Despite the unprecedented growth in automobile ownership, and the newfound mobility that followed, Burlingame bucked the prevailing trend of commercializing El Camino Real—



*Crocker Bank founder and Hillsborough resident W.H. Crocker enjoyed regular horseback visits to downtown Burlingame*

another indication that residential values were not going to be subordinated to business interests. The City Council and Planning Commissioners, bolstered by the Burlingame Woman’s Club and Chamber of Commerce, among others, enacted zoning that would prohibit commercialization of the highway, seen as a direct threat to Burlingame’s beautiful canopy of eucalyptus trees and leafy residential ambiance. The multi-year zoning battles resulting in the pivotal election of April 1930, constituted the very first known example in our nation of a city that exercised local zoning control to protect a historic resource---its trees.

The emphasis on well-defined business districts, surrounded by a variety of residential properties, including those developed along the highway, paid off. By the mid-1930s, when much of the nation struggled with high unemployment, investment in Burlingame continued—demonstrating that Burlingame’s balancing of quality of life issues with pro-business growth was a winning combination for both its residents and its businesses.



This year's Annual presentation is:

**Longtime and Local.**

featuring six Burlingame Legacy businesses that have been part of the Burlingame Community for over 25 years:

*The Studio Shop, Alana's Café, Copenhagen Bakery, Capps Glass,  
All That Glitters, Bare Necessities.*

**Come join in the conversation!**

**Sunday, February 23rd at 1:45 in the Lane Room of the Public Library**



**Executive Board elections will also be held at 1:45pm:** The Nominating Committee has proposed the following slate of executive officers, that was approved at the November 12, 2019 Board meeting:

President: Jennifer Pfaff; VP Museum: Russ Cohen; VP Technology and Education: Diane Condon-Wirgler; Treasurer: Joanne Garrison; VP Membership Co-chairs: Carl Martin and Leslie McQuaide; Secretary: Mary Griffith. Nominations will also be taken from the floor at the meeting.

**NOTE! Membership renewals are due.** Please use the enclosed envelope to select your annual membership level. Life Members do not owe dues but are welcome to donate. *All New and Upgraded Members shall receive a promotional magnet.* **Charles Seabiscuit Howard and Anson Burlingame** level members shall receive a mailed voucher for a "Greetings From Burlingame" mug, featuring our mural—redeemable museum Sundays or by other arrangement.

## What's New?

**"Burlingame's Small Businesses in Big Pictures."** is located in Hatch Lane (aka Hatch's Alley, located between Burlingame and Howard Avenues). The large, lit display celebrates a slew of beloved businesses that have come- and gone over the past century and is adjacent to our ***Greetings From Burlingame*** tiled mural. Both have been made possible by the generosity of **Dewey Land Company.**

Some items highlighted include a bottle of Lemon Caper Dressing from Nathan's (a beloved restaurant that used to occupy the space now occupied by Flights), an ashtray from La Pinata (formerly located at the current site of Sephora) and a cigarette lighter from Bit of England (a popular pub once located roughly at the current site of Sixtos).



As part of our focus on Legacy Businesses (as noted above), we have identified over 50 local businesses that have been part of the Burlingame community for over 25 years (and that doesn't include offices). *Why* did they locate here in the first place, and how have they managed to survive in today's challenging retail environment? Join us on February 23rd in the Lane Room to find out!

**Thank you** to all the longtime businesses for *banking on Burlingame* and being such an integral part of our community.



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## NEW ACQUISITIONS! *With thanks to...*

**Bob Disco** of the **Burlingame Parks Department** for documents and information related to the creation of

the original Tot Lot at Parking Lot "J" (behind the former Levy Bros. Dept. Store) designed by *Jules Francard*, including 4 photos, circa 1971- at right; **Jim Kelly** numerous clippings, including the topic of building the original San Mateo Bay Bridge, in 1929, and what became of its remnants in the 1960s following the construction of the "new" San Mateo Bridge, and a March 20<sup>th</sup>, 1928 clipping from the SM Times regarding the proposed location of a fire station at 1800 Easton Drive; **Ed Archer** for information related to a vintage car photo on a pre-1913, unpaved El Camino Real; **Sue Coussins**

for an original Fox & Carskadon real estate sign (ca. 1930s) when the company was located at 1471 Burlingame Avenue; **Edward Eisenman** for printed matter and other paraphernalia related to Burlingame and Hillsborough residents, their places of worship, and businesses, including a circa 1979 inflatable, promotional beachball from Radio Shack, 240 Lorton Avenue; **Russ Cohen** for misc. memorabilia including a large banner he designed for the city sponsored SOBA event South of Burlingame Avenue design charette, that took place on Saturday Sept. 30, 2006; **Linda Yelnick** for misc. printed matter and other paraphernalia about Burlingame, Kansas, the small town she recently visited, also named after our namesake, Anson Burlingame; **Jim Shypertt** for digital photos documenting the life and activities of the recently deceased Bill Freedman, and photos related

to the excavation of the Millbrae Hills Mills Estate by the Macco Corporation in the 1940s and early 50s for infill of



*City parking Lot "J", located between Park and Primrose behind Joe and the Juice, is shown in an aerial photo looking east circa 1971. In the 1960s, many formerly developed parcels were purchased by the city for use as surface parking lots to facilitate shopping*

the Bay, Bayshore Freeway, and the expansion of SF Airport; to the **Estate of Frank and Peggy Taverna**, kindness of their family, a 1920 postcard depicting the George H. Howard Estate, in San Mateo (demolished circa 1930s); **David Day** for an early 1960s sketchbook belonging to Burlingame artist and architect, William Charles Frederic Gillam (1867-1962), whose most renowned local work was St. Paul's Episcopal Church in 1926; **Ray Tyler and Cathy Foxhoven** for the interview and digital recording of the

November 4<sup>th</sup> oral history of Olga Parr, and **Bobbi Benson** for a transcript thereof; **John Parkin** for misc. digital scans related to the early school life of Naomi Ziff; **Joleen Helley, Burlingame Parks and Rec Dept.** for several digital photos showing the ribbon cutting event that took place on Dec. 10, 2019 for Washington Park's new playground and Sport Court; **Barbara Adams** for a copy of the out-of-print *Lively Memories*, ©1977 by the Burlingame Historical Society; **Russ Cohen** for misc. printed matter, and materials related to teaching a local history class on Burlingame's history circa 2006; **David Gerster** for a circa 1921 digital image of 1540 Newlands Ave., shortly after it was built, and to **Martha May** for dozens of clippings, including vintage 1948 magazine advertisements for Burlingame establishments (*see some samples on page 5*)

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### *In Memoriam –*

June Wayne  
James McCabe  
Naomi S. Ziff-Cissna  
Lee Mendelson

Well wishes to our former Board President **Beverley Evans**, for a full and speedy recovery.

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### **WELCOME! New Members:**

Dan Conway  
Mark D. Hudak  
Dennis Moskovitz



## A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR DONORS

for over \$18,000 contributed during our fundraising drive between November and December 31st, 2019

Linda Easton  
Donna L. Petersen  
John Catania  
William Briggs  
Richard Aptekar  
Kris and Jim Cannon  
Thomas R. Friebe  
Tom Ames  
Linda (Nicolaidis) Merrifield  
Jennifer and Juergen Pfaff  
Donna Lema-Cerna  
Anne Fuller  
Joanne and Pete Garrison  
Pamela S. Merchant  
Diane Elcan  
Carol Rossi  
Sylvia Lopez-Verbelli  
John Parkin  
Pierre Bouquet  
John and Nancy Finney

Donald and Deborah Doyle  
Barbara Hewitt &  
John Basye  
Mary L. Hunt  
Betsy and Brian McGinn  
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David Kell  
Mary Thompson  
Thomas J. Carey  
Gary Heckenkemper  
Erik Winkler  
Dewey Land Company  
Rocky and Julie Allen  
James Wald  
Bev Conrad  
Patti and Ed Fichtner  
Lorraine A. Smith  
Vicki Jacobs - *In Memory of Ruth and Bob Jacobs*  
Nick Delis  
Lee Ebbert

George Parker  
Doris Harvey  
Cathy and Joe Baylock  
Raziel Ungar  
Jane R. Calavano  
JoAnn Quadt  
Jeannie Howard Siegman  
John and Leslie McQuaide  
Dale Perkins  
Anonymous - *In Memory of Nick Baylock*  
Mary and Richard Griffith  
Henk Van Arkel  
Emily Beach  
Harry Chin  
James Alex Veech  
Don Donoughe  
Walter F. Sorensen  
JoAnn Stenberg  
Anonymous (9 gifts)

Heartfelt thanks to the **Jacobs Family Trust**, for the very generous donation from **Ruth and Robert Jacobs**, for use in our future endeavors.

A debt of gratitude is owed **Richard Terrones and Alicia Ader of Dreiling Terrones Architecture Inc. (DTA)**, and **Sung Engineering** for their generous, in-kind assistance and expertise over the past year and a half, relative to potential seismic-related work on the Gunst Carriage House. Many thanks also to contractor, **Mike Gaul**, as well as **Eric Johnson**, of West Coast Electric, for their assistance in this regard.

*We'd like to acknowledge the gifts of **Peggy L. Huston, Ken & Ann Byrum, and Cynthia & Robert Porter** for their generous donations made to us **in Memory of Naomi Cissna**, who adored Burlingame.*

### Peninsula Life Magazine advertisements (1948) - recently acquired

**A HAPPY NEW YEAR**  
**Will Be Yours**  
**By Stepping Out With Arthur Murray!**

**2 for 1 Rates**  
**Are Now in Effect!**

Be Popular! Don't wait! Learn the latest steps from our talented experts NOW while 2 for 1 rates are in effect. It's easy and such fun—to learn to waltz, Rhumba, Samba, Tango, jitterbug or tricky new fox Trot by Arthur Murray's famous method. Think how confident you'll both feel at your next party! Enroll today before rates go up. Open 10 a. m. to 10 p. m. Phone today or come in.

**FREE GUEST LESSON**

**Arthur Murray**  
dance school for the san francisco and monterey peninsula

Phone 3-4022  
BURLINGAME 450 El Camino Real

Palo Alto 5848  
PALO ALTO 315 Alamo Street  
Also San Francisco

Pacific Grove 5125  
PACIFIC GROVE Forest Hill Hotel

P. S. Visit Our New Studio on the Monterey Peninsula

**THE PENINSULA'S FINEST IN FOOD**

Our Continental Luncheons and superbly prepared salads are created by the same master chef whose delightful cuisine has made our dinners famous throughout the entire Bay Region.

**Accommodations for Parties and Banquets**

**LUNCHEON** 11:30 to 2:00  
**DINNER** 5:30 to 10:30

For reservations Phone Burlingame 3-5976

**"Bob's on Broadway"**  
CORNER of BROADWAY and EL CAMINO  
BURLINGAME

Peninsula Life Mag. 1948 1443 BROADWAY

1294 Burl. Ave.

**TIMELY CLOTHES**  
**PLATEAU**  
the suit with the weightless feel  
made by Pacific Mills

**Till We Tried It! We Couldn't Believe It**

We looked at this Plateau Suit. Fine, regular weight woolen. Poshokin, nature and lustrous finish. We tried it. Seemed like any other suit. Next, we tried it on. And then we believed it! For Plateau looks positively weightless on your back. Come in - try on one of our Plateau Suits - and see for yourself!

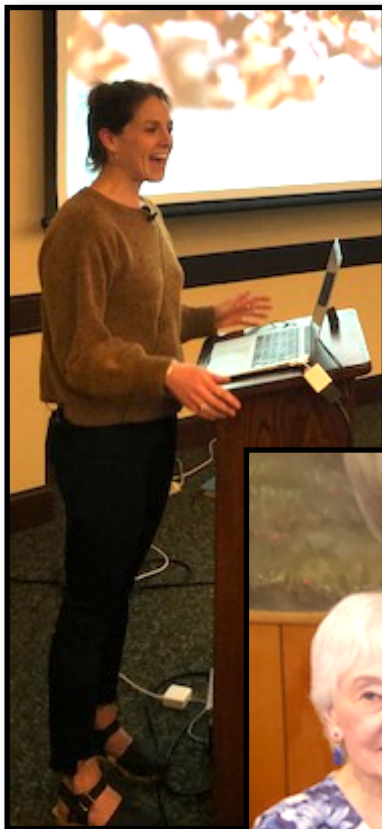
**ALSO CONTRASTING PLATEAU SLACKS**

**FORSYTHE & SIMPSON**  
The Peninsula's Leading Outfitters to Men and Boys  
1294 BURLINGAME AVENUE PHONE BURLINGAME 3-3312  
Peninsula Life Magazine Jan. 1948

## *Our activities and accomplishments in 2019 included...*

### **1. Quarterly meetings**

included “Guittard Chocolate: 150 years of Chocolate Perfection;” History of U.S. Postal Service; Two Summer Walking Tours and Mitch Postel on 250th anniversary of Portola’s Discovery of SF Bay



**2. Oral Histories** taken of Mae Lee Chan and sister (first woman postal employee in Burlingame), The Rev. Peter Garrison (artist and former pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church ) and Olga Parr (artist and long-time member of Russian Orthodox Church)







**3. Educational Tours** for W. H. Crocker Middle School summer camp students, Third Grade Passport tours for 10 classrooms, and Cub Scout Tours.

**4. Exhibits and Archive Research** including early movie theaters, the Dessin pioneer family, and structures and architects of note along El Camino Real (*ongoing*).



*Thank you to ALL of our hardworking volunteers  
for all of their work throughout the year!*



**Address Service Requested - Time Dated Material**

Calendar

**ANNUAL Meeting and Elections:**

**"Longtime and Local." Feb. 23rd**

1:45 pm - Lane Room of the Library

(see pg. 3 for details)

**1-4 pm Burlingame Hillsborough  
History Museum Open**

290 California Drive

**"Through Harry's Lens"**

Photographic Essay of Burlingame's  
Formulative Years: 1910s - 1920s

**1st Sun. of each month, 1-4 PM.**

**March 1, April 5, May 3**

**Docents Needed!**

No experience required.

Please call 340-9960 to volunteer.

*Please remember us  
in your trust or will!*

THE BURLINGAME HISTORICAL SOCIETY

WINTER 2020, ISSUE 161

**President's Message -Jennifer Pfaff**



*In the late 1980s, the GAP opened on Burlingame Avenue. Depending on one's point of view, that was either a good thing, or the beginning of a*

*trend that would put independent retailers, many of whom we'd known for decades, out of business — or at least to side streets, or perhaps to the Broadway business district.*

*Within a decade or so, the system of restaurant quotas, considered a protective mechanism that limited downtown restaurant seating, was gradually eliminated, while outdoor seating, at*

*one time frowned upon, became permissible and even encouraged. With time, these and other changes upended a longstanding retail model. Of course, the biggest change in the last two decades has been the growth of online shopping. This has become pervasive as our cities continue to become snarled in traffic, and "going shopping" in the traditional "brick and mortar" sense of the word may seem more of an effort than it's worth, particularly if it means having to park the car.*

*We look forward to hearing firsthand the stories, challenges and histories of many of our longstanding businesses on Sunday, February 23rd at 1:45, in the Lane Room.*

*—See you then!*

**Current Officers 2019:**

President - Jennifer Pfaff  
VP - Museum - Russ Cohen  
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