

UNDER THE OAKS



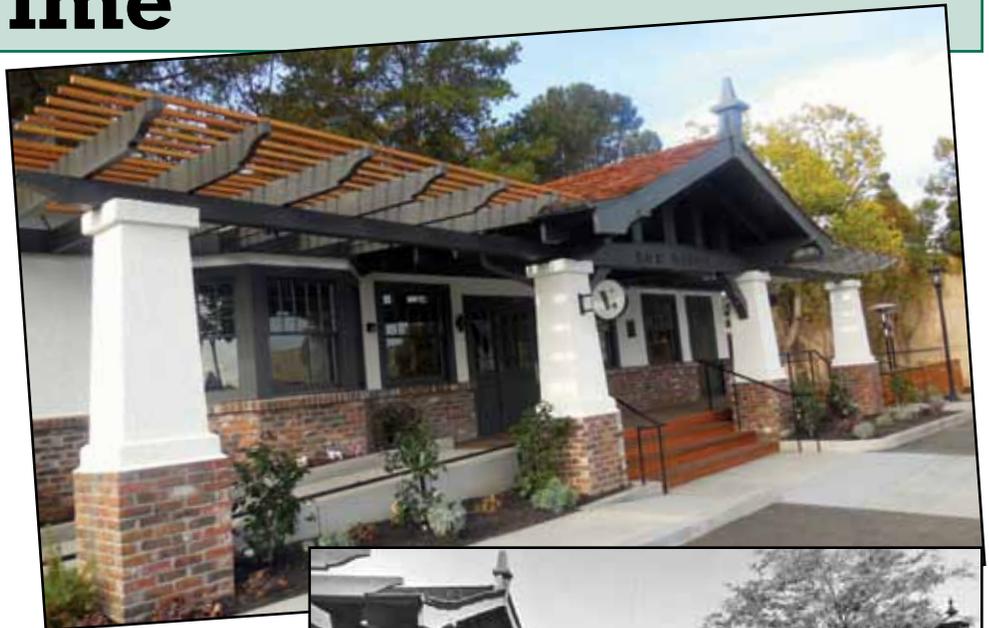
Published by the Association of the Los Altos Historical Museum, founded 1978

Winter/Spring 2014

Our Train Station's Travels Through Time

The local entrepreneur who recently renovated the Los Altos train station to transform it into a bakery and café, has joined a tradition begun half a century ago when the station also served as a restaurant.

Completed in 1913, the Los Altos depot of the Southern Pacific Railroad was always a beauty. On its debut, the *Palo Alto Times* reported that the Craftsman style structure was one of the prettiest on the peninsula and had "all conveniences, including the latest in drinking fountains." At the peak of rail service, twelve steam trains a day called there. For five decades the Los Altos depot was a place where loved ones embraced before journeys, growers shipped out the summer apricot harvest, and families dropped off one parent or the other for the daily commute to San Francisco.



In 1962, with rail service ending and plans for Foothill Expressway in the works, attorney Morton MacLeod turned the building into a railroad-themed restaurant. It was first called the Ole Station House and later the Old Station House, but under both names and three different owners the restaurant was a fixture, serving up burgers (and cold Coors beer) inside and on picnic tables on the patio. At some point, an old Southern Pacific passenger car was added on the lot's north side. In 1968, under the ownership of the Donald Halversons, a retired red caboose also came on board. The passenger

Train Depot, now and in an earlier photo when the passenger car was used for additional restaurant seating.

car is now in private hands in Woodside, but the caboose remains and is part of the latest restoration.

"The Station House made great burgers, cooked on an open grill," remembers Dave Howser, a Los Altos native who grew up on University and now lives in Prather, California. Reports Ginny Gilmore

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The Old Station House, circa 1960s.

President's Pen

Dear Friends,

Our goal is to make your history museum come to life as a community-centered, active resource for all ages. As a non-profit institution, the only way that we can do this work is with people like you who love our community and care about culture. Your active participation, your interest in volunteering, your willingness to share your photographs and mementos of your history in this area, your donations of money, are all needed and are so important in helping reach our goal.

Successful events during the last two quarters include Ohlone Day, Train Days, an expanded fall antiques show, the *Moving Art*



Ohlone Day at the Museum

Forward exhibition of local artists, the *Catch the Spirit* boutique sale, the J. Gilbert Smith House festooned for the holidays, and the always popular Crab Feed fundraiser.

Upcoming highlights will include Bouquets to Art, a first day of spring reception, school tours for 3rd and 4th graders, new gift store merchandise, a celebration of our student essay contest winners, a new exciting exhibition called *Pedal Power* co-sponsored by GreenTown, and activities honoring May as California Museum Month and national historic preservation month.

I welcome you to join us at every chance you get, to



Los Altos Hills resident Nancie Crowley's painting "Seattle Ferry" was awarded Best of Show at the Moving Art Forward Exhibition.

explore, and discover the wonderful resources and educational opportunities of your community museum. See you soon!

~ JANE REED, Board President

Like Reading the Paper?

Volunteers wanted

We are seeking a few more team members to read through old Los Altos newspapers, decade by decade, and outline key happenings. Your work will assist in research inquiries and become the basis for a new history book—our sequel covering 1950-2000. Contact Grace Perry at ext. 14 to get started.

LOS ALTOS HISTORY MUSEUM "UNDER THE OAKS"

A publication of interest to citizens of Los Altos and neighboring communities, produced by the Association of the Los Altos Historical Museum. A special thanks to the newsletter mailing team!

Our Train Station's Travels Through Time

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Brown, now of Paradise, California, "I remember those burgers! You could build your own, and I could put on all the dill pickles my little heart desired." Dia Felt Batchelder of Mountain View, recalls, "My mother used to take me there for lunch in junior high. The station with nine lives!"

By 1976, after more than a decade as a restaurant, the old station was home to San Diego Federal Savings, which remodeled it extensively. Then, for many years it housed Maria's Antiques.

The creative force behind this latest change is Rie Rubin, who says it was her desire to give back to the community that moved her to restore the historic building. During the eight-month process,

she uncovered what appears to be the original Los Altos station sign. She has also put together a railroad exhibit in the old caboose. The café menu is designed for light meals, and baked goods. "We will see about the future," says Rubin, when asked if the restaurant will be open evenings.

"Voyageur du Temps" is the new eatery's name: the words are French for "time traveler." And, after a life that has spanned a century—and so many different uses—it is a title to which the beautiful old building can definitely lay claim.

~ ROBIN CHAPMAN

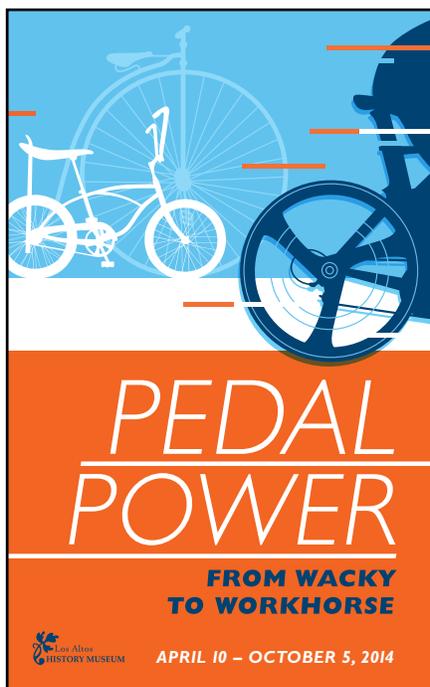
Pedal Power: From Wacky to Workhorse

New exhibit opens April 10, 2014 at the Los Altos History Museum.

Bicycling has a long history in California. This exhibition will tell that story and show the fun and value of cycling—all brought to you by your neighbors.

“Why do I bike? It’s fun, it’s healthy and it’s good for the planet. Plus, it’s so easy to connect with people. You’re out in the open and can say hi to friends, and even strangers. And I never have a problem finding a place to park!” says Gary Hedden, exhibition coordinator.

“Bikes were a common means of transportation for a long time in America. My excitement? Biking is a great way to connect with our community,” added Mike McTighe, exhibition committee member.



The exhibit will feature a vintage collection of bikes including one of the earliest mountain bikes from the legendary Tom Ritchey. Also on exhibit—the very first bike ridden in 1980 by professional Greg LeMond, who trained extensively in our area. Wacky bikes include a wooden one built by a local, Tom Kabat, and a workhorse bike used by the Los Altos Police Department.

Pedal Power offers much more: rides led by local clubs, a design-a-bike event, the popular Historic Bike Tour, and especially for kids, a Bicycle Carnival.

Pedal Power opens April 10 with the inaugural reception scheduled for April 27, from 4 to 6 pm. Mark your calendar now so you don’t miss out. It’s going to be fun!

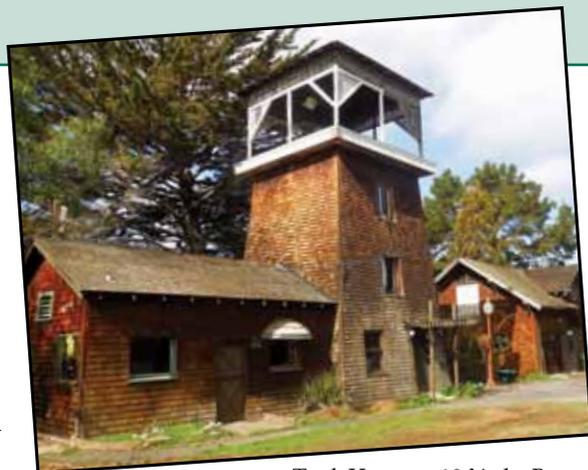
History in the News

Steve Jobs’ house at 2066 Crist Drive was designated a Historic Resource by the Historical Commission at its October 28, 2013 meeting. According to commissioner Denise Welsh, collecting the background information that led to the designation has been a two year process, and commissioner Frank Bishop made the point it is more accurate than what is in some books.

The house is a typical ranch style house built in 1952. Nothing special, but what happened in that house was very special. The very first Apple computers were assembled there in 1976 by Steve Jobs, Patricia Jobs, Steve Wozniak, Daniel Kottke and Elizabeth Holmes. These were the Apple 1 computers and they were sold to Paul Terrell’s Byte shop in Mountain View for \$500 each. One, in its original packaging and with a letter signed by Steve Jobs, sold in 2010 at Christie’s for \$213,000. The partnership that formed Apple Computer Co. was

signed April 1, 1976. In January 1977, the operation was moved to Cupertino, but for a few months it was all in Los Altos.

In other news, the commission approved the adaptive restoration of the 1911 Craftsman style bungalow at 10 Yerba Buena Avenue. The innovative plan calls for lifting the main house and rotating it 90 degrees to allow the front of the structure to face Yerba Buena. At the time of the original construction the house was on 10 acres and fronted San Antonio Road. A 1968 subdivision created a parcel between the house and San Antonio. The new owners will restore the house to its original appearance, add additional living space behind it, and add a new basement. The property also has a barn that will be converted to a garage and a tank house that will be converted to a second living unit. Both of these structures will



Tank House at 10 Yerba Buena

retain their original look, but will be updated to modern use; a process called adaptive restoration. The commissioners applaud this effort as a way to keep historic properties in Los Altos while allowing homeowners the flexibility they need to create modern, functional homes.

~ GARY HEDDEN

The Historical Commission opened the Museum in 1977 and continues to work closely with the Museum Association.

Margaret Thompson Historical Essay Contest

The LAHM's Education Committee, in conjunction with the Los Altos Historical Commission, is sponsoring the 30th Annual Margaret Thompson Historical Essay Contest for all students in grades three through six. The 2014 theme is "Los Altos Art Works Enrich Our Lives and Community."

An ice cream social to honor the winners from each grade will be held Tuesday, May 13, at 6 pm, on the patio of the Los Altos History Museum. The Historical Commission will award certificates and the City of Los Altos will contribute checks. The first-place winners receive \$50, the second-place winners receive \$30, and the third-place winners take home \$20.



Pinewood 5th grade students look at artwork at the museum.

The Education Committee will present the annual Margaret Thompson Trophy to the school whose students win the most prizes. All members of the History Museum are invited to attend the ice cream social.

The Education Committee will also be conducting tours for third graders from April 1 through May 2, with tours for fourth graders from May 9 through May 23. The museum will welcome about a thousand students during this time. Committee members often hear from both students and teachers how much they enjoy visiting our beautiful museum and learning about early Los Altos history.

~ ANNE ROBERTS

Director's Corner

Our mission continues to inform our daily lives. Last year, the Museum received the Silicon Valley Water Conservation Award for Education through our *Shaped by Water* exhibition, in which we learned that California is fundamentally a desert.

As we enter another drought cycle, I thought it timely to tell you we've made changes in our beautiful gardens.

We have re-grouped plants so that those with similar water needs are together, moving—and removing—many in the process. We planted more native and drought-resistant plants. We keep a vigilant eye on our aging irrigation system—and have reduced our watering time by 20%. The gardens are still beautiful. The exhibit may no longer be on display, but you can read more at the websites of some of our exhibit partners, like CalWater and the Santa Clara Valley Water District on how to conserve.

~ LAURA BAJUK, E.D.

POPs Goes the Easel

Artists from the Peninsula Outdoor Painters—a group known as POPs—will be out this spring with their easels in the historic apricot orchard surrounding the museum. Members of POPs, founded in 1977, will be creating artworks for *POPs in the Orchard*, an exhibit scheduled for the Los Altos Library, July 1–31, 2014. The orchard was planted by J. Gilbert Smith in 1901 and was named a Historic Landmark in 1981.



Linda Maki painting in the Civic Center Orchard

Welcome New Members!

A Big Membership Welcome to:

Margie Alving, Lauren Arnold Dick, Jim Barrow, Teri Berwick, Kathleen Besuner, Kenneth Bleibler, Marilyn Boland, Christian & Nancy Breneau, Phyllis Brown, Lenore Cambouris, Gary & Karen Campi, Kathryn Carpenter, Chris Chang Weeks, Ken Clifford, Bill & Ginny Dolan, Nancy Fouquet, Jacqueline Johnson, Hardy Jones & Jane Bryan-Jones, Ellen Jones, Judith & Ken Joy, Jack & Carol Kelly, Marjorie Law, Le Boulanger, Ineke Ligtenberg, Greg Loney, Douglas & Candace Lublin, Sue & Todd Makler, Bill & Jane Marshall, The Meier Family, Charlie Pack, Ann Pagacian, Duco & Laurie Pasmooij, Anne Putney, Viresh Ratnakar, Larry Rhett, Brett Schiller, Eugene & Nancy Sharp, Tom and Nancy Stevens, Jeff & Sharon Stricker, Rosalinda Taymor, Steve Yvaska

Staff

Laura Bajuk, *Executive Director*

Grace Perry, *Assistant to the Executive Director*

Stefanie Midlock, *Assistant Collections Manager*

Kristin Morris, *Collections Specialist*

Mark Perry, *Facility & Rentals Manager*

Faustino Carillo, *Gardener*

Spotlight on the Oral History Project

The Museum has an extensive collection of oral histories that have been recorded since 1976. Recently this project has been rekindled, with interviews of residents who have memories of the town in the very early days of its development.

One interview conducted last summer was with Phil Zeitman, now a resident of Roseville, who with his father took over the DeMartini Orchard in 1955. Together they transformed this landmark from a seasonal fresh fruit stand on San Antonio into the unique market that it is today. In addition to adding fruits and vegetables from select farmers throughout the area, they introduced and set the standard for the organic food movement.



Grand re-opening of De Martini Orchard in 1955 with Lou Zeitman (center), his son Phil (right), customers and friends. Lou leased the business from the De Martinis, originally opened by John De Martini in 1932 to sell fruit from his orchard on San Antonio Road.

Phil retired from DeMartini's in 1975, and eventually moved out of the area. But he and his family left a permanent legacy through the hard work and pioneering advances they brought to the market. Fortunately, even though the town has undergone major changes over the years, DeMartini's maintains the superior service and foods that Phil and his family made famous and that has been continued by the current owners, the Kozy brothers, Craig and Tony. This story is an important jewel in the history of the town's evolution.

If you are interested in learning more of Phil's story, or those of other early Los Altos residents, the complete interviews are in the collection at the Museum. If you would like to participate in this project, please contact Museum Staff. We are especially in need of people willing to conduct interviews.

~ GINGER SUMMITT

Photo Gallery



27th Annual Crab Feed

*Museum members enjoying all-you-can-eat, fresh, cracked crab!
Left: Bob Simmons, Warren and Ann Nelson, Jeannie and Jack Howell.
Right: Diane Simmons, Emily Hollinger, Betty Latta, Hank Drew.
Friends, fun, food and fundraising: a winning combination!*



Los Altos artist Hardy Jones prepares his found-art sculptures for display at the museum. The work will be on exhibit through March 23.



Volunteers Jane Babicz and Ann Foxen enjoy working in the Museum Store.

ON THE CALENDAR

“First Day of Spring” Reception, March 20, 4-6:30 pm

Bouquets to Art. Floral displays keyed to art in the exhibit,
Los Altos—Moving Art Forward, March 20-23, noon-4 pm

Los Altos—Moving Art Forward closes March 23

Native Garden Bike Tour, April 12, 9:30 am-12 pm

Opening Reception for **Pedal Power! From Wacky to Workhorse**,
April 27, 4-6 pm

May is **Historic Preservation Month & Museum Month!**

Silicon Valley Gives! (Day of online fundraising), May 6

Bike to Work Day Celebration, May 8, 5-7 pm

Essay Contest Winner Ice Cream Social, May 13, 6 pm

California Country & More **Antiques Show**, June 8,
10 am-4 pm, Hillview Center

Design a Bike Workshop, June 29, 10 am-12 pm

Family Cycle Carnival, June 29, 10 am-6 pm

Electric Bike Festival, July 26, 10 am-1 pm

Share your love of the Museum

Do you or a friend want to help?
Volunteers are always needed.

Like working with the public? Be a cashier
at the Museum store, or a gallery docent.

Like working behind the scenes? Help with
research in the collections department, or
setting up exhibitions.

Lots of part time opportunities! Flexible
hours! Training provided!

Contact Grace Perry: (650) 948-9427 x14



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Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 12
Los Altos, CA

51 So. San Antonio Road, Los Altos, CA 94022

www.losaltoshistory.org

Museum and Store Hours

Thursday to Sunday, Noon–4 pm

*We are closed New Year's Day, Easter,
Fourth of July, Thanksgiving Day
and Christmas Day.*

General Inquiries
(650) 948-9427 x14

Collections Research
(650) 948-9427 x11

Event Rentals
(650) 948-9427 x12

www.losaltoshistory.org

Mission Statement

History inspires imagination, stimulates thought and transforms society. The Los Altos History Museum preserves and shares our local history to enrich our community and to shape a more informed future.

Address Correction Requested