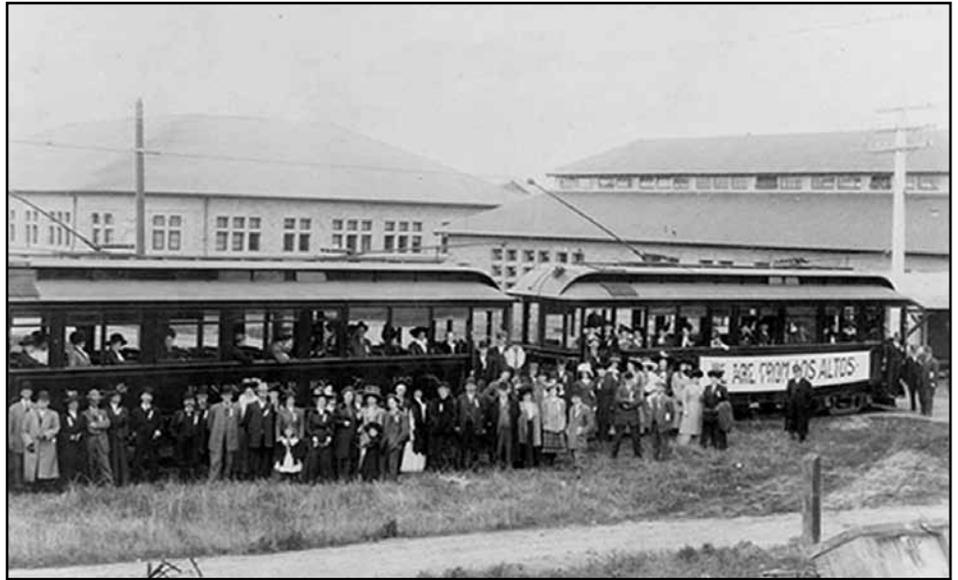


Trains—Then and Now

These days, traffic congestion in the Bay Area seems to be getting worse by the day. Not surprisingly, ridership on Caltrain is at an all-time high (58,000 riders per day up from 34,000 in 2010) and high speed rail is in the news. It is frustrating, but Santa Clara Valley used to have the public transportation infrastructure we need today.

At one time, railways connected San Francisco to San Jose, and many points in between. Los Altos was one of those points. The Peninsular Railway was incorporated in 1906 as a subsidiary of the Southern Pacific Railroad to help create an interurban line of electric trolleys to serve rural areas from San Francisco to San Jose. This is part of the history that led to the formation of Los Altos by Paul Shoup and the Altos Land Company, a story familiar to History Museum members. Another nearby line operated by the South Pacific Coast Railway connected riders to Santa



To celebrate the start of electric train service in Los Altos (and boost land sales), the Altos Land Company arranged a free excursion on March 5, 1910. From the town's temporary railroad station, two Peninsular Railway trolleys took 88 excursionists to Mayfield and Palo Alto, where an informal luncheon was served. The cars then went to Stanford University, where this photograph was taken. A San Jose Mercury article reported that "the advent of the cars was cheered by all the towns passed through, and from all the farmhouses along the route greetings were exchanged by the waving of handkerchiefs and hats." Collection of the Los Altos History Museum.

Cruz. While this rail line was used for freight and passenger service, tourism from San Francisco to the beaches in Santa Cruz became such a popular service that special trains were set up to cater to the weekend revelers.

But things changed. The last streetcar ran in San Jose in 1938. The Peninsular Railway shut down in 1934 and the South Pacific Coast line, then owned by Southern Pacific, stopped operation in 1940. In Los Altos, the line that ultimately became Foothill Expressway lasted until 1964. The reason in a nutshell is that passenger railroads were replaced by automobiles. Cars became affordable and reliable, and a network of good paved roads, built at public expense, became

available. Cars were the disruptive technology of the day and passenger rail service lost its place.

Forty years after the last streetcar service, Santa Clara Valley saw the introduction of light rail in 1987, but further progress has been slow. Ironically, what we need today are the rail lines that were installed over 100 years ago to connect town centers with rail service. Access to Caltrain in Palo Alto and Mountain View makes these spots ground zero for start-up companies. Metro areas where people can live, work and have access to public transportation are in high demand. The revitalization of downtown Sunnyvale along the Caltrain line along with the

continued on page 2



President's Pen

Your new board is already at work on the things we want to do this year. Our goal is to provide the programs and activities you would like to see in YOUR museum. Our dream is to involve all of our families in the things we do – to grow with our community and help us be the very best!



You will begin to notice our new logo, everywhere, and the new website, when it's available, will be a new way for you to become more easily involved with YOUR museum, to see what's going on, buy tickets, sign up to attend an event, and renew your membership – it will all be there!

Our new look will become more evident as you become aware of what we are doing. Our invitation to you is to join us in this new growth – let's do this together!

See you at the Museum.

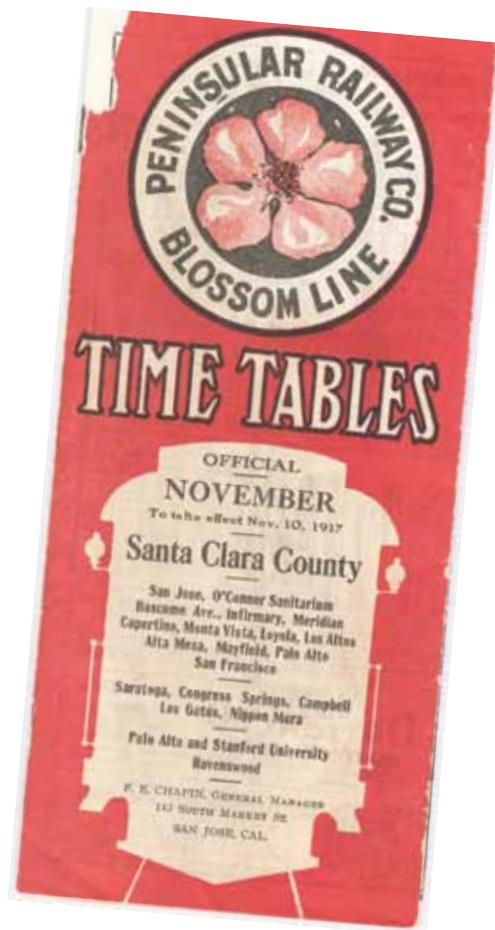
~ Marilyn Henderson

Trains—Then and Now cont.

addition of high density housing, office space and retail is another good example. And trains are at the very heart of it.

~ Mary Wadden

editor - Mary Wadden is a native of Los Altos, the author of *Silicon Valley: The History in Pictures*, the founder & principal of *Silicon Valley Commercial Brokerage, Inc.*, and was named one of the most *Influential Women of Silicon Valley* by *The San Jose Business Journal*.



1917 timetable for the Peninsular Railway. Courtesy of The California History Center.

Los Altos History Museum Presents:

Train Days

September 17 & 18, 2016
10am - 4pm

RAIL CROSSING

Model Railroads Galore!
Family fun celebrating trains.

Admission: \$5 / person
(ages 4 and under free)

Food, Drinks & Train Items for Sale
Children accompanied by adults please

Where:
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(behind the library)
51 S. San Antonio Road
www.LosAltosHistory.org

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los altos history museum

LOS ALTOS HISTORY MUSEUM "UNDER THE OAKS"

Gary Hedden, *Editor*
Judi Eichler, *Graphic Design*

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

Beiren at 100 – Opens Oct. 13

The Los Altos History Museum is proud to honor long-time resident and internationally renowned artist, Paul Hau (aka Hau Beiren), in a solo retrospective exhibition beginning October 13 in the main exhibit gallery. Paul and Mary Hau moved from China to Los Altos in 1962 with their young son and daughter. At a recent reception at the Museum to recognize his 100th birthday, they affirmed their love for Los Altos and their desire to never leave. His home and gardens and the welcoming community have been central to his evolution as a painter.

Master Hau's "Old Apricot Villa" home in north Los Altos has been the major inspiration for his ground-breaking work uniting Chinese ink tradition with modern Western artistic techniques. The Old Apricot Villa is his signature chop (artist's seal).



This retrospective exhibition focuses on the artistic development of his work from traditional Chinese ink brush painting to the introduction of vivid color to dramatic and bold abstract representation. His unique and innovative "splash ink and color" painting style integrates both Eastern and Western aesthetics. In addition, the Museum will offer programs for adults that provide deeper insights into his inspirations and hands-on activities that allow children to engage their artistic imagination.

Hau's work has been exhibited and collected in the U.S. and internationally including the Fine Arts of Museum of San Francisco, San Jose Museum of Art, National Art



Hau Beiren, *Mountains and Creeks Like Old Acquaintance*, 2010

Staff

Laura Bajuk, *Executive Director*

Crystal Taylor, *Assistant to the Executive Director*

Johanna Fassbender, *Collections & Exhibitions Manager*

Gena Hunter, *Bookkeeper/ Accountant*

Stefanie Midlock, *Assistant Collections Manager*

Kristin Morris, *Collections Specialist*

Mark Perry, *Facility & Rentals Manager*

Faustino Carillo, *Gardener*

Museum of China, Nanjing Museum, Zhejiang Art Museum and Austria Museum of Art and other international venues.

This summer his recent work was featured at Casa dei Carraresi in Treviso, Italy near Venice. Since 1972, his shop at 334 State Street has featured his work as well as fine porcelain curated by Mary Hau.



Ed Taft, Mayor Jeannie Bruins, Mary Hau and Hau Beiren holding the Proclamation from the City of Los Altos honoring and recognizing him on the occasion of the celebration of his 100th birthday.

This rare exhibit will be on display for just one month, Oct. 13 to Nov. 13. You don't want to miss it!

~ Karen Purtich

Many Communities, Many Voices – Closes Oct. 2

You have less than a month to check out our current exhibition, highlighting oral history interviews with 24 people who have had an impact on the history of our communities. You can listen to dozens of fascinating stories about corners of life in Los Altos and Los Altos Hills that you never knew existed.

There is one more program in conjunction with *Many Communities, Many Voices*. On Thursday September 29, we look forward to a lively discussion about "The Future of Community." What does "community" mean and what do we want it to look like? We hope to see you then and hear your voice!

~ Kristin Morris, *Collections Specialist*



Many Communities, Many Voices:

Personal Narratives from the Oral History Collection
of the Los Altos History Museum

April 28 – October 2, 2016



Spotlight on the Oral History Project

An oral history interview is a record of the narrator's truth of the moment, a truth that is born in recollections of a lifetime and informed by issues of the present moment.

Dr. Steve Natterstad's story is one of those truths. Steve practiced medicine in Los Altos and Sunnyvale for 25 years. As an HIV specialist, he watched the disease evolve from a swift and terrible killer to a condition managed by cutting-edge medications. He recalled in his oral history interview, "For many the issue has become the aging patient rather than the HIV-positive patient. I mean I can sit there across from these patients saying, HIV is probably not going to get you, you're going to die of old age or age-related illnesses."

After living in Los Altos for twenty years, Steve moved to San Francisco in 2014 but continued to practice in Loyola Corners. In his October 2015 oral history, Steve said, "I don't have any plans of moving the practice out of Los Altos..."

Six months later, Steve closed his practice and retired.

When asked, he said that he had been honest during the interview and had no plans to close but things change. Steve now pursues other interests, including his work with the international AIDS non-profit Global Strategies.

Future historians may be puzzled reading Steve's 2015 oral history and knowing the outcome, but change often comes when we least expect it.

~ Kristin Morris, Collections Specialist



Dr. Robert J. Frascino and Dr. Steve Natterstad. Photo credit: Los Altos History Museum, Gift of Dr. Steve Natterstad.

Our Hidden Gems

The History Museum has over 15,000 objects and we are often surprised by the treasures in the collection. One hidden gem is a mysterious device called a klystron. Here is its story.

In 2012, two volunteers, Pauline and Glen Diestelhorst of Los Altos, came across an oddly shaped mechanical device. Having worked at Varian Associates in Palo Alto they recognized it as a klystron, a microwave amplifier tube invented by brothers Russell and Sigurd Varian. Clearly an early model, it deserved some research.

The records show it was donated by the family of Edward Ginzton. Ed Ginzton met the Varian brothers in 1939, worked with them at Sperry Gyroscope, and was one of original nine directors at Varian Associates, incorporated in 1948. But what about the device?

In 2013, the Oral History committee interviewed Martin Packard, former head of Analytical Instrumentation at Varian, reporting to Ginzton. Connecting the dots, the Diestelhorsts and I met with Packard in May of this year. In a follow-up meeting with two long-time Varian employees - Lou Zitelli and Wes Anderson, the device was recognized as a reflex klystron, but a very primitive one. It might have been made by the Varian brothers while at Sperry Gyroscope and that would make it one-of-a-kind.

A request to disassemble it and take a peek inside was respectfully declined. Taking an x-ray might help; if you have access to an x-ray machine, please contact the Museum!

It was very rewarding to watch to the three Varian colleagues inspect the device, discuss its origin and the early days of Varian and Silicon Valley. Their enthusiasm breathed new life into an old piece of hardware sitting on a shelf in storage.

This feeling of connection to the Museum's collection is what we strive to bring to our guests through thoughtful storytelling and informed interpretation. In this way, we reveal our hidden gems and their fascinating stories.

Thanks to Stefanie Midlock, Assistant Collections Manager for bringing this unique item to our attention.



Stefanie Midlock with the mysterious klystron.



Wes Anderson, Lou Zitelli and Martin Packard, May 2016.

Backyard Politics

The new Smith House gallery exhibit, *Backyard Politics: Political Issues and Civic Engagement in Los Altos and Los Altos Hills*, opened August 11 and runs through the end of the year.

The exhibit showcases memorabilia and photographs to illustrate the many ways Los Altos and Los Altos Hills residents participate in politics. It includes citizen groups that work behind the scenes and some of the people who have answered the call to serve the community.

~ Azha Simmons

John F. Kennedy graduate student



Azha Simmons at the opening reception for Backyard Politics.

I am working towards a M.A. in Museum Studies and M.B.A. degree, and I work at the California History Center, located at De Anza Community College.

I first met Johanna during a class assignment for my collections class, where we had to interview a collections manager to get a better understanding of what goes on behind the scenes.

Johanna was very helpful during the interview and I was impressed and intrigued by the inner workings of the History Museum. Johanna offered me an internship to curate an original exhibit in the Smith House, an opportunity I couldn't pass up.

Curating the exhibit has been fun, educational, and a great experience. I thank Johanna, Laura, and the rest of the museum staff for being such great mentors.



Tamara Fagin and Azha Simmons looking at a 1984 photo of a picket line in Los Altos.

Director's Corner

I am delighted to introduce two terrific new employees, Gena Hunter and Crystal Taylor.

When **Grace Perry** departed for a wonderful job at Stanford supporting two major gifts officers, we took time to think about how to fill that void. Her job had grown so much in the three years she'd been here. Half her time was spent on daily bookkeeping, the other half on program, fundraising and marketing support, and just plain old keeping this place running.

We strategically decided to split the position into two part-time positions. **Gena Hunter** is a bookkeeper/accountant who is a *whiz* in QuickBooks. She won our hearts with her comments on the exhibits and collections... cultural heritage is important to her.



Crystal Taylor is also a whiz – in social media, marketing, design, databases, Excel... the list is too long for this issue! With years of experience in museums small (Monterey Art Museum) and large (FAMSF, Bay Area Discovery Museum) she also won our hearts, with her warm friendly manner and genuine interest in history.

We wish **Johanna Fassbender** all the best as she and Jon set up home in Yazoo City, MS, where he has a new job. She has added professionalism to our exhibits, always came in under budget, and has been a real leader to the museum as our Collections and Exhibitions Manager. We miss her, and wish them well in their new, southern, life.

Switching gears from people to financials, I can tell you we **finished the year in the black**, with a healthy amount put into the bank. Thank you for your support, in donations, time and bringing new friends into the Museum. Please keep it coming: you are the reason this museum is so successful!

~ Laura Bajuk, Executive Director

New Members

Welcome to our new members:

Cam Acker	Katalin (Kathy) Horvath
Jane Clemmons	Rene & Harry John
William & Diane Fisher	Laura Kneller
Aiko & Jim Hill	Brandon J. Smith

And thank you to all 787 active members!



History in the News

Nan and Chuck Geschke, owners of the Historic Landmark Marini House initiated a preservation agreement with the City in July. In return for a reduction in property taxes, the home is protected from modifications “for a ten-year period with an automatic renewal clause each year” and the money saved on property taxes is invested in its continued preservation. The City has ten of these preservation agreements, called Mills Act agreements, and they provide significant protection to our town’s historical heritage.

The Geschke house has been beautifully restored and is linked to a master architect, Perseo Righetti, whose career in San Francisco lasted almost thirty years, from 1899 to his passing in 1928. The home was built for Frank Marini around 1927, and is an excellent example of the Italian Renaissance Revival style that was popular from 1890 to 1935. During Council discussion, Mayor Bruins expressed a concern about future caretakers being as conscientious as the Geschkes, and it was agreed that a regular evaluation of all Mills Act properties be added to the Historical Commission work plan.

In other news, the effort to protect the Eichler homes in South Los Altos is making good progress. According to Tracy Gibbons, historical consultant Seth Bergstein will be preparing an application for designation as a historic district, expected by the end of November, and once that’s done, “We’ll have protection while we make our way through the review / approval process.”

~ Gary Hedden

Photo Gallery–Antique Evaluation



Steve Yoaska enthralls the crowd of over thirty guests with helpful advice and lots of great stories.

Photo Gallery–Summer Camp



Kristen Julien, camp counselor, with one of the 45 Bullis Charter School summer school students attending Bridge Camp 2016. About 20 students had a fun day visiting the History Museum in July.



Students trying their luck with the spinning wheel of fortune.

Photo Gallery—Member's Party - July 10



Signing in the guests - Ann Foxen and Eleanor Watanabe.



Great help at the bar - Margot Gordon and Ted Adams.



Sam and Janet Harding, Jean and Barbara Mordo.



Board members Carole Flores and Linda Eckols, with Doug Debs serving dinner.



Ed Taft and Nomi Trapnell.



Doreen and Mark Cohen.



UNDER THE OAKS

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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 or
hello@losaltoshistory.org

Collections/Research

(650) 948-9427 x16

Event Rentals

(650) 948-9427 x12

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

On The Calendar

Train Days! Sat./Sun., Sept. 17/18, 10 am-4 pm.

The Future of Community. A panel discussion on how our communities are developing and changing. Thursday, Sept. 29, 7:30-9:30 pm, Los Altos Library.

Paul Hau@100: Works from the Old Apricot Villa, solo retrospective exhibit, Oct. 13 to Nov. 13. Opening reception Oct. 16, 2-4 pm.

MoonFest #3! Saturday, Oct. 15, a special evening event - eat mooncakes, visit with community members - and see the full moon!

Catch the Spirit! Wednesday, Nov. 16, noon to 4pm.

Seaweed, Salmon, and Manzanita Cider: A California Indian Feast. An exploration of traditional hunting, collecting, food preparation and preservation. Accompanying programs include Ohlone Day. Nov. 17 to April 4, 2017.

More events are in the works – watch for your monthly member email updates!



Parting shot. Long time volunteers Nomi Trapnell and Marie Backs have retired from the Board. Thank you so much for your many years of devoted service!

Board Meetings, First Wednesday each month, 4 pm, everyone welcome

Smith House Tours, Every Sunday, 2 pm