

### **Fall Schedule**

- Oct. 2 — Downtown Tour
- Oct. 9 — Greenmeadow Tour
- Oct. 16 — Crescent Park Tour
- Oct. 23 — College Terrace Extended Tour
- Oct. 24 — Professorville Tour
- Oct. 30 — College Terrace Architecture Tour
- Nov. 6 — Barron Park Tour
- Nov. 7 — Joint Zoom Webinar with PAHA: 1920 Centennial Homes, Preservation Awards, and How to Research Historic Buildings. Check website at the end of Oct. for the Zoom link, 2 p.m.
- Nov. 13 — Homer Avenue Tour

**\*\* Our next mailing will be a membership renewal envelope. Please continue your support! Thanks!**

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# PAST News

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Fall 2021

## Historic Preservation Tours

Join us this fall for a walking tour! See the schedule on page 3 for old favorites and new tours this October and November!

## Centennial Houses & Preservation Program

PAST's November 7 Zoom Webinar will feature 1920 homes, historic preservation awards, and information on researching historic buildings. Check our website at the end of October (<http://www.pastheritage.org>) for the Zoom link.



### PAST News

Palo Alto Stanford Heritage  
P.O. Box 308  
Palo Alto, CA 94302

PAST Heritage is a nonprofit organization advocating the preservation of the historic architecture, neighborhoods, and character of the greater Palo Alto Stanford area through informed citizen involvement and education.



**329 Lincoln Avenue**



**587 Alvarado Row, Stanford**

These houses are 100 years old! See more on pages 4 and 5.

## Meet Our Newest Board Member: Nick Marinaro



Nick came to Palo Alto in Fall, 1968 when he entered Stanford University and he's been here ever since. He grew up in the Fresno/Clovis area of the Central Valley and graduated from Clovis High School.

He is a man of many interests that include history (particularly the American West and the Civil War), old movies, guitar and ukulele. Add to that international travel, reading, golf, cycling, and fishing. In 2001, he joined the Lions Club and has held various leadership/executive positions with Second Harvest Food Bank distribution.

He retired from the Palo Alto / Stanford Fire Department in July, 2011 as Fire Chief of the Palo Alto / Stanford Fire Department after 37 1/2 years of service. For most of his career, he worked at Fire Stations #6 (Stanford Campus), #2 (Hanover/Page Mill), #1 (Alma and Everett) and #3 (Embarcadero and Newell). We are fortunate that he has joined us with his special knowledge of our environment.

In 1994, Nick moved to Barron Park from Stanford Avenue in College Terrace. He will be sharing his inside tales of the area on the November 6 walking tour. (See page 6 for more about this tour!)

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### *The Reds and Greens of Greenmeadow and The Meadows* by Bo Crane

PAST is introducing a walking tour of the Joseph Eichler Greenmeadow neighborhood. Eichler has been well covered by PAST, however, the origin of its Nelson Drive is *another matter*. According to *The Streets of Palo Alto*, published by the Palo Alto Historical Association (PAHA), Nelson Court and Nelson Drive were named for Steve Nelson, a labor organizer of the 1930s. He was a friend of James Henry San Jule, who named the streets. San Jule was V.P. of marketing for Burke and Wyatt, builders of this and other nearby subdivisions. Burke and Wyatt houses are also found in other neighborhoods around Charleston Road.

In 1940, San Jule was living in San Francisco and was employed as a newspaperman, likely with *The Voice of the Federation*, the Federation of the Pacific maritime union that had joined the Longshoremen's Union led by union activist Harry Bridges. He became a housing advocate who helped dismantle racial barriers in home sales, as did Joseph Eichler. San Jule probably met union activist Steve Nelson, who was employed in construction and was the chair of the S.F. branch of the Communist Party. In 1942, Nelson registered for the draft, stating his employer as "Communist Party." In that year's voter registration, he again declined to state a party affiliation. (Continued on page 7)

(Continued from page 7) Nelson was born Stjepan Mesaros in Croatia in 1903. He immigrated to Pennsylvania at age 16, worked as a carpenter, became a union organizer and joined the Communist party. He met his wife, a typist with the party, in the Pittsburg local office. The couple was soon moving about at the party's direction. In 1931, they were sent to Moscow where Nelson studied party doctrine. After returning to the U.S. to organize Pennsylvania coal miners, he was sent to help the fight against fascism in the Spanish Civil War serving in the American Lincoln Brigade. Back in the U.S., Nelson was sent to the West Coast to gather information on the Manhattan bomb project. Nelson, kept under surveillance by the FBI, was recorded as being paid as a spy by a Soviet agent as he passed along information through the USSR's S.F. consulate.

In 1950, once more back East, Nelson was arrested and charged with attempting to overthrow the government. He was convicted and sentenced to prison, but released on bail pending an appeal. In 1953, he was also charged under the Alien Registration Act, (the Smith Act), for which he was also convicted and released on bail.

The Greenmeadow subdivision was mapped in 1954 at the height of the Joseph McCarthy anti-Communist campaign. At that time, San Jule honored Nelson as namesake of the Greenmeadow street. San Jule, married that year, moved with his wife to 3848 Duncan Place. In 1957, the government dropped all charges against Nelson due to technicalities. He left the Communist Party after the atrocities of the Stalin regime were revealed and moved to New York where he worked once more as a carpenter. He became involved with his former unit, then the Veterans of the American Lincoln Brigade. He died at age 90.

Carlson Court feeds into The Meadows subdivision. Carlson Court and Carlson Circle were mapped in 1951 as part of the Fairmeadow subdivision. San Jule states that the streets were named for Marine Brigadier General Evans Fordyce Carlson. Inspired by Edgar Snow's book, *Red Star Over China*, published 1931, Carlson visited Chinese Communist troop headquarters, where he met with Mao Zedong and other leaders. At that time, the Communist guerrillas were fighting Japanese troops. Carlson later adopted similar tactics in the Pacific WWII fight against Japan, which included leading his raiders behind enemy lines. He is credited with popularizing the phrase, "gung ho," taken from the name of the Chinese co-op. Carlson died of a cardiac ailment in 1947. One general said of him: "He may be red but he's not yellow."

A few doors from the Greenmeadow Swim Club was the Greenmeadow Way home of attorney William E. Green, wife, Loretta M. een, and family. Bill, one of two sons, attended nearby Cubberley where he was Peninsula Male Athlete of the Year in 1979. A track athlete, he made the 1980 Olympic team which boycotted going to Russia. Bill

died at age 50 and a bench with a plaque honors his memory at the Cubberley track. His mother, Loretta, was a reporter for the *Palo Alto Times*, and the *Times Tribune*, and a columnist for the *San Jose Mercury News*. Upon her retirement in 2004, she was named Woman of the Year in the 21st Assembly District.

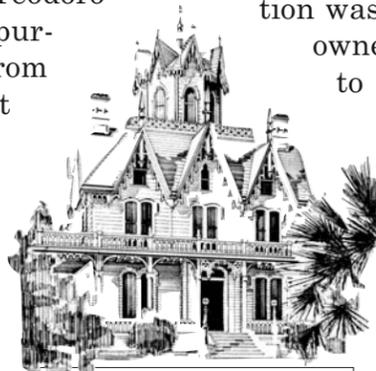
The PAST Greenmeadow tour features other notable residents including "The Godfather of Silicon Valley" and the lead singer of Santana's "Black Magic Woman" and a walk over the creek that ran by the 1800s hacienda, now gone, where a couple gave birth to 29 children, plus more evocative political street names and Eichler architectural notes.



## Barron Park Walking Tour

By Bo Crane

The tour will focus on the Matadero Creek/Bol Park area. The neighborhood was originally part of Rancho Rincon de San Francisquito, a land grant award in 1841 to José Peña. In 1847, Peña sold the entire rancho to brothers Secundino and Teodoro Robles. In 1853, Elisha Crosby purchased part of the former grant from the Robles brothers, and named it Mayfield Farm. The name was adopted for the layout of a nearby town. Sarah Wallis and her husband acquired the estate from Crosby in 1856. Edward Barron purchased the Wallis estate in 1878 and put his own touches on the mansion which burned to the ground in 1936. The site, now identified by a curbside plaque is about a mile walk from Bol Park towards El Camino Real.



Sarah Wallis House

Matadero means “place of slaughter,” or “slaughterhouse.” Prior to the arrival of the Mexican ranchos, bears visited Matadero Creek for salmon and steelhead. In the rancho era, cattle were driven over from the coast and slaughtered for hides alongside the more level land next to the creek. Work had to be done quickly before the bears, having smelled the meat, arrived.

Cornelis Bol, his wife Josina and five sons, Kees, Klaas, Pieter, Joor and Morris left Holland in 1936 where Cornelius was experimenting on the invention of the mercury vapor lamp. Son Gerald was born in California. Cornelis was a consulting engineer for General Electric and also worked at Stanford as a research associate. After visiting friends on Roble Ridge, Josina fell in love with the area and they began purchasing property that included what is now Bol Park.

A handful of houses in the Barron Park neighborhood were built between 1900 and 1919. Between 1920 and 1924 there were a dozen more, including one dated 1922 that is still standing. Over 50 more were built in the 1920s before the depression slowed new construction. After WWII, housing construction took off.

The Barron Park Homeowners Association was dedicated in 1970. The homeowners assessed themselves enough to purchase part of the Bol farm for a park which was dedicated in April 1974. Annexation to Palo Alto was approved by the Barron Park residents on November 4, 1975.

The tour will pass by the older homes on Roble Ridge Road, the name of which serves the dual purpose of identifying the oak (roble) treed ridge as well as previous landowners, the Robles brothers. We’ll continue by the former Bol farm house, the donkey pen with its live donkeys, walk up the mound that was formerly Strawberry Hill, and by Matadero Creek now shaded by redwood trees.

The tour will be led by long-time Barron Park resident Nick Marinaro and Palo Alto native, Bo Crane.



## Fall 2021 Tour Schedule

Sat. Oct. 2	<b>Downtown</b> Led by Margaret Feuer Meet at City Hall Plaza, 250 Hamilton
Sat. Oct. 9	<b>Greenmeadow</b> Led by Bo Crane Meet at 4010 Nelson
Sat. Oct. 16	<b>Crescent Park</b> Led by Margaret Feuer Meet at 900 University in front of the Squire House
Sat. Oct. 23	<b>College Terrace Extended Tour (3 miles)</b> Led by Bo Crane Meet at 2310 Yale
Sunday Oct. 24	<b>Professorville</b> Led by Kris Zavoli and Anne Gregor Meet at 1005 Bryant (corner Bryant and Addison)
Sat. Oct. 30	<b>Architecture in College Terrace</b> Led by Carolyn George Meet at 1181 College (corner of Harvard)
Sat. Nov. 6	<b>Barron Park</b> Led by Nick Mariano and Bo Crane Meet at Cornelis Bol Park, 3590 Laguna
Sat. Nov. 13	<b>Homer Avenue</b> Led by Steve Emslie Meet at the Palo Alto Woman’s Club, 475 Homer

Tours are free, although donations are always welcome! Join us for a fun and friendly walk through town — Most tours cover about one mile and last about 1 1/2 hour. The College Terrace Extended Tour is approximately 3 miles long. We look forward to seeing you.

Rain or shine! – All tours start at 10 a.m.

# PAST Celebrates Centennial Homes!

One of PAST's annual activities is the presentation of centennial plaques to owners of structures celebrating 100 years! Since we missed last year because of Covid-19, we are playing catch-up by honoring buildings from 1920. This recognition will be part of a Zoom Webinar with the Palo Alto Historical Association on Sunday, November 7 at 2 p.m. Buildings from 1921 will be honored next year.

Photos of two centennial homes are featured on the front page. A photo of the 100 year-old home at 669 Mirada Avenue, Stanford, is not available.



**262 Hawthorne Avenue**



**611 Alvarado Row**



**420 Lowell Avenue**



**1204 Middlefield Road**



**646 Alvarado Row**



**112 Kingsley Avenue**



**915 Waverley Street**



**211 Middlefield Road**



**3337 Ross Road**



**225 Middlefield Road**



**1431 Webster Street**

