



PAST News

Vol. 31, No. 2

P.O. Box 308 • Palo Alto, California 94302

Spring 2019

Walking Tours

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



Sat. **Homer Avenue: Led by Steve Emslie**
May 4 Meet at The Woman's Club, 475 Homer Avenue



Sat. **Downtown: Led by Margaret Feuer and Bo Crane**
May 11 Meet at City Hall Plaza, 250 Hamilton Avenue



Sat. **College Terrace: Led by Bo Crane**
May 18 Meet at 1181 College (corner of College and Harvard)



Sunday **Professorville: Led by Kris Zavoli and Anne Gregor**
May 19 Meet at 1005 Bryant (corner of Bryant and Addison)



Sat. **NEW! Just Beyond Professorville: Led by Bo Crane**
June 1 Meet at 1325 Cowper (corner of Melville Avenue)
See page 3 for a preview of this tour!

New this spring is **Just Beyond Professorville**—Tours are free, although donations are always welcome! Join us for a fun and friendly walk through town — We look forward to seeing you.

Palo Alto at 125 – Preservation Week Celebration

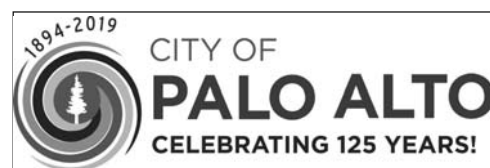
◆ Preservation Awards



◆ Plaques



◆ Architectural History



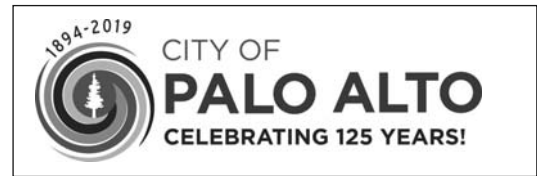
PAST Celebrates Preservation Month

Sunday, May 5

2 – 4 p.m.

Art Center Auditorium, 1313 Newell

Refreshments to follow presentations!



DANIEL GARBER, FAIA,
Partner at Fergus Garber Young
Architects.

PAST HERITAGE'S MAY 5 meeting features local architect **Dan Garber** discussing "**Palo Alto at 125**" as part of PAST's celebration of Palo Alto's 125th Anniversary. Dan was a keynote speaker at PAST's program, "Nuts and Bolts", in 2017. Our May program is our annual participation in a national Preservation Month event. We will recognize Centennial homes built in 1919 and present awards to property owners who have preserved their buildings through renovation/restoration. This program is a joint meeting with the Palo Alto Historical Association as part of their contributions to PA 125 events.



Palo Alto's 125th Anniversary Events

The Celebration of Palo Alto's 125th anniversary (1894 – 2019) includes events throughout 2019. The City, along with other organizations including PAHA and PAST, are planning 125th anniversary themed events/projects including the May Fete Parade, the Chili Cook Off, and the Black and White Ball. The first official event is Palo Alto Day, a Palo Alto birthday party, on Sunday, April 28 at 2:00 p.m. at the City Hall King Plaza, 250 Hamilton Avenue. The party will feature short presentations about Palo Alto's 125th birthday, entertainment, refreshments, and the opening of a time capsule (photo at left) placed in the City Hall basement during the 1994 Centennial.

PAST Heritage events to recognize the 125th Anniversary include the Spring walking tours starting on May 4, the May 5th Preservation Month program and the release of a book by Bo Crane about the history of Rock in Palo Alto.

These and other 2019 anniversary events will be listed on a web site, www.paloalto125.org currently under construction.

The Amazing Residents of 1325 Cowper Street By Bo Crane

THE JUST BEYOND PROFESSORVILLE WALKING TOUR is a new walking tour of some of the expanded Professorville's most unusual houses and person-ages who occupied them. The tour meets at the corner of Melville and Cowper, more precisely in front of 1325 Cowper Street, 10:00 a.m. Saturday, June 1, and will be led by Bo Crane.

The Craftsman shingle house at 1325 Cowper Street was built in 1909. Its resident shown in the 1910 census was **Dennison Alexander Russell**, 38, with his wife, 29, his daughter, 4, and, in the family style of the day, his mother-in-law, 51, and his sister-in-law, 28. His wife and in-laws were all born in Kansas.

Russell was born on Halloween, 1871, in Missouri to Scottish parents. He was listed as a newspaper editor. Two years earlier, he resided in San Jose as the Reverend Russell. He remained an editor in the following year's directory, a writer in the year after, and later again as a reverend.

His future wife and her sister were raised at 704 Webster Street (now a one-story office building). The girls' father, John Franklin Spurgeon, was a hackman, a pre-computer age term meaning that he drove a hackney carriage for hire, pre-taxi driver. Left out of the 1910 census, he reg-

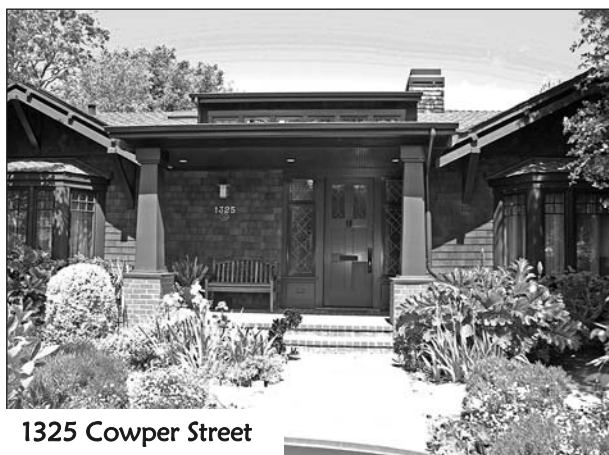
istered to vote in 1916 at 1325 Cowper Street, a year before he died.

Dennison and his wife, Cleo, had gone their separate ways as of 1920, with Dennison a clergyman in San Francisco and his wife with her mother and daughter to San Diego. Eventually, the women moved to Los Angeles where Cleo listed herself as single. Dennison also moved onto LA where he was a research meteorologist. After her mother died, Cleo reunited with Dennison, both once again listed as married, with her sister and their daughter also in the household.

The younger sister was called Frankie in the 1900 census, after her father's middle name. In 1910, she's listed in the directory as Miss Frank Alice, a teacher. She's buried at Forest Lawn as Frank Alice Spurgeon. Her niece was Rebecca Alice Russell, who, attended Stanford and, like her aunt, died unmarried.

In the 1920 census, the house at 1325 Cowper Street was rented by **Clarice Butler**, 17, with her younger sister, 16, and two younger brothers, 13 and 11. A 65-year-old widow is listed as their servant but Clarice is "head of household." The kids' mother had died in 1909 in Seattle, leaving their father, a widowed high school teacher, with four kids under the age of ten. As of 1920, he had remarried and living apart in San Francisco with his new wife and 2-year-old daughter. At 22, Clarice married a carpenter and moved to San Francisco. As of 1959, she and her husband were back in Palo Alto, living near Mitchell Park at 640 Ashton Avenue. [Now replaced.]

Ten years after the Butler children occupied the house, **Clarence H. Judson**, 70, and his wife, 56, plus their daughter, 20, lived there.



1325 Cowper Street

Continued on page 6

Palo Alto's History of Rock By Bo Crane

“ONE PILL MAKES YOU LARGER AND ONE PILL MAKES YOU SMALL.” That’s the opening lyric to “White Rabbit,” a song written by a Palo Alto graduate of Castilleja School. The song was released as a single June 24, 1967, in the middle of San Francisco’s **Summer of Love** when San Francisco’s psychedelic rock scene collided with the British rock invasion of a few years earlier. One seed of this collision traces to Palo Alto of the late 1950s.

In 1958 “Tom Dooley” was a huge hit performed by the folk-singing Kingston Trio. One of the group’s founders was a Stanford graduate and in the Business School as the trio played around campus and at local venues. In 1958, he was married and living in a house that’s still there on Carolina Lane. Folk music in Palo Alto cafés was the underpinning of the rock music that followed. A Paly High folksinger graduated that year, soon moving onto the Boston area with her family, where she would continue her craft. Palo Alto’s **St. Michael’s Alley** opened in April 1959. “Tom Dooley” won the best Country and Western Performance at the first ever Grammys.



In 1961, the Kingston Trio recorded Pete Seeger’s “Where Have All the Flowers Gone”. Discharged from the Army, a nineteen-year-old, missing most of his right middle finger, returned to Menlo Park,

where his family had left after his eighth grade year. Of course, rock was big but with a lot of Doo-Wop, Motown, Twisting and Shaking with the likes of “Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow,” “Calendar Girl,” “Little Sister,” and “Blue Moon”.

Cabana Hotel



In August 1963 Bob Dylan released “Blowin’ in the Wind.” Meanwhile that hand-damaged musician who had married in April, moved to Palo Alto and began playing in cafés with his wife, the daughter of a former Palo Alto councilmember. The British invasion was launched in 1964 with several UK bands appearing on the Ed Sullivan Show. Local bands began converting to rock, among them the Warlocks. The Rolling Stones “Satisfaction” was released in June 1965. In August, the Beatles, at their zenith, stayed at Palo Alto’s **new luxury hotel**, preparing to play at the Cow Palace. Now it’s common place that famous performances regularly appear locally, with Shoreline Amphitheater being a top venue. Meanwhile, also inspired by onslaught of rock, former classmates who had grown up in a “Leave It to Beaver” neighborhood surrounding Eleanor Pardee Park formed a rock band, the Great Society. Around the same time, still 1965, the Warlocks band led by the damaged-hand guitar player changed their name to the Grateful Dead and became one of the most prolific groups ever.

1012 High Street



Three famous drummers were either born or attended grade schools in Palo Alto, including one who quarterbacked his Gunn High School football team to the league championship. Another who lived across the street from Cubberley High School and one who attended **Paly High** both did vocals and keyboards for well known rock groups they co-founded. One born in Palo Alto but moved to Atherton is a famed guitar player, vocalist and song writer. One who attended Paly High wrote and sang the song that became the anthem of the 1967 Summer of Love. Thirty years later, four Paly High grads '97, three of whom

also attended **Addison Elementary School**, formed an all-girls rock band, continuing a progression from the folk song roots of the late 1950s.

You may be surprised to discover Palo Alto musical's background is connected, besides the Kingston Trio and Grateful Dead, to Santana, Journey, Pablo Cruise, Creedence Clearwater Revival, Fleetwood Mac and Jefferson Airplane. We also came across a jazz band that plays James Bond movie theme songs and a famous, recently retired oboist for the Philadelphia Orchestra, who grew up in one of Palo Alto's National Historic Register homes.

PAST is publishing a booklet to be released this summer featuring the places around town where the local musicians from the '50s folk and '60s rock music era lived and played. Many of the homes where they lived still exist, aging elegantly, preserved as is the history of that time.

The booklet will be available for purchase at upcoming events with more information to be posted on the PAST website. ☿

Attention Art Lovers!

A Collector's Passion: 100 Years of Paintings inspired by the McKay Collection. This collection of historic paintings by Santa Clara Valley artists compiled over 55 years by local historian Leonard McKay is on view through December 15 at the Leonard & David McKay Gallery, 635 Phelan Avenue, San Jose.

The gallery is open weekends between 12 and 4 p.m.

Historic Resources Board News

The Historic Resources Board annual retreat was held March 14, 2019 in the City Council chambers. Discussion topics included:

- ◆ City of Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan Policies and Programs Related to Historic Preservation
- ◆ Mid-Century Modern Context Statement
- ◆ Application and use of Historic Building Code
- ◆ Community Outreach Regarding Palo Alto's Historic Preservation Program

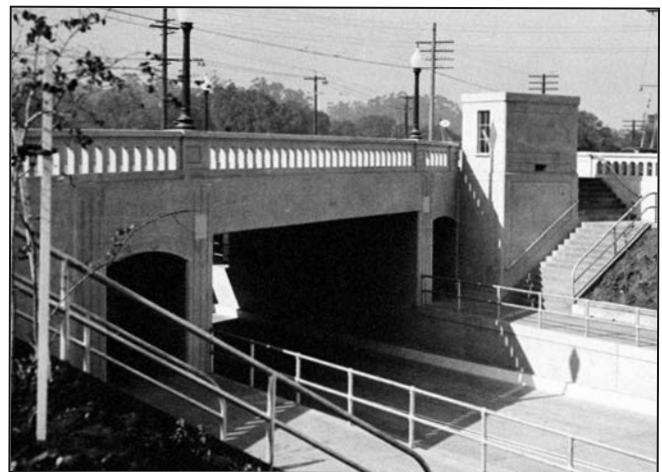
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The house was valued at \$10,000.

Clarence, an engineer with the telephone company, was Palo Alto's mayor 1936–37 and presided over the opening of the Embarcadero Road Underpass beneath the railroad line (as shown in the PAHA Guy Miller Archive photos below).

That's more detail per house than you'll get on the tour. If you've already done the Professorville Tour (Sunday May 19) or even if not, you're encouraged to join the Just Beyond Professorville Tour, which begins a few streets over. Also included on the tour will be the rambling Casaquierda,

Birge Clark's La Casa Abierta, the landmark El Patio, the tragedy-born St. Ann's, the club-converted Darsie House, the Theophilus Allen house (once and maybe still considered "the most attractive home in Palo Alto"), the Mayor Mary Thomas house, and Alan Cranston's birth-place home, plus two unusual Eichlers from 1958. Just Beyond Professorville is so named as its just blocks beyond the original Professorville Historical District. Actually, some streets are now within the expanded district and yes, professors' homes are on the tour, past and present. ☘



Mayor Clarence Judson at the opening of the Embarcadero Road Underpass in 1936

Storner Cottage Photos



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www.pastheritage.org

Stroner Family Search

GOOD DAY FROM CANADA!

In the process of doing some historic research on an old house my family purchased, things have taken an unexpected turn to sunny California!

In short, the house in the town of Kincardine, Ontario, was built by and lived in by Robert Stroner (a tailor) and his wife Ann, in about 1873. Both Robert and Ann were from Scotland and had 6 sons...the eldest born in Scotland and the others (including James – more below) in Ontario.

Since your group is interested in architecture, I'll mention the original house had a clapboard exterior, with a single-brick exterior built at a later point. I am also sending photos of the interior...you can see the old planks with tree bark between the studs as a form of insulation. [Photos on page 6.] That was a hard pioneer life! I kept these old planks, cleaned them up and remounted them after doing new mechanical and spray foam insulation.

Through the process of conducting research in order to get a historic plaque for our house, we learned about the Stroner family and Robert's profession as a tailor that appear in both the 1871 and 1881 Canadian Census. I can clearly see that the family moved to Palo Alto, where Robert continues to be listed as a tailor in the local directory. I also see that James was a painter in the same local directory and courtesy of your interesting research – <http://www.pastheritage.org/inv/invK/Kipling430.html>

I am not sure why the family moved to California in the early 1890s. This is long past any gold rush that I know of. My best guess is that it had something to do with the Baptist Church. I see in the 1871 census, the family is noted as being Presbyterian (as most Scots were at the time), but in 1881, were listed as Baptist. Perhaps coincidence, but the Palo Alto Baptist Church was established around this time and the fact that

James and his wife were the first to be married in the church may also suggest that they were among the founding families.

All of this background leads up to asking if you or anyone in your network is in contact with local descendants of this Stroner family. If so, I would love to make contact with them, with the hope of learning more about the original owners of our old house and also share with them some interesting family history from their time in Canada that they may not be aware of. I also have a few 'artifacts' from the Stroner era, that I discovered in gutting the house.

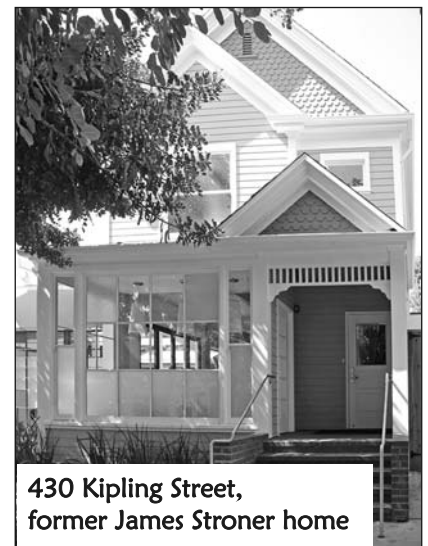
Please feel free to share this with anyone in your network and I will also directly contact the Baptist Church for any information.

Thanks again for any assistance and very best regards,

Bill Harvier



Kincardine, Ontario home built by Robert Stroner



430 Kipling Street, former James Stroner home

NOTE: Photos and information will be added to the PAST website and linked from the Inventory page for 430 Kipling which is currently being adapted to office space for American Express after being vacant since 2014 when Zibibbo Restaurant closed.

Calendar of Historical Happenings

April 28, 2019 — **Palo Alto Day** – City Hall King Plaza, 2 p.m.

May 4, 2019 – **May Day Parade**, 10 a.m., University Avenue

May 5 — **PAST / PAHA joint meeting, Preservation Award and Plaque Presentation** (see page 2)

May /June — **Walking Tours** (see front page)

Museum of American Heritage: 351 Homer Ave., 11 a.m.–4 p.m., Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Free.

Historic Resources Board – 1st & 3rd Wed., 8:30 a.m., City Hall

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www.pastheritage.org



PAST News

Palo Alto Stanford Heritage
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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.