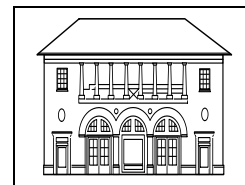


THE JOURNAL OF LOCAL HISTORY

VOLUME 3 NO. 2

MEMORIAL DAY ISSUE

SPRING 2011



Archives Committee of the Redwood City Public Library
1044 Middlefield Road, Redwood City, CA 94063

Board Officers:

John Edmonds *President*
Mike Bursak *Treasurer*
Gene Suarez *Secretary*

Board Members:

Julie Mooney, Jim Clifford, Molly Spore-Alhadeh, Florian Shasky

Inside This Issue

President's Message	1
A Brief History of Memorial Day	1
Back to the Future With Fox Theater	3
A Tale of Two Cities and One Man	8
The History Detective	13
Redwood City: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow	14
Andrew and Permelia Teague and Family	20

The President's Message

Hello again to all our friends...

The Archives Board of the Redwood City Library hopes that you are enjoying our Journal. The writers are spending quite a bit of time researching material for the Journal and would welcome your suggestions or contributions.

This is the Memorial Day issue and I hope you will find the time to come out to an old fashioned Memorial Day celebration at Union Cemetery on Monday, May 30th at 10AM (earlier if you want a seat or bring your own folding chair). This special program will feature two speakers, Romy Bassetto from the American Legion and Jim Camper of the Masons. The Clampers, the American Legion, the Masons, Native Sons and Daughters and the Slippery Gulch Band will all be there to provide some lively entertainment. At the end we will fire off the Anvil as usual.

The Local History Room in the Redwood City downtown library is open Monday through Thursday with the help of volunteers. The hours are 1PM-4PM.

John Edmonds

A Brief History of Memorial Day And The Grand Army of The Republic

By John Edmonds

In April 1866 the Civil War was over and as time went on it became necessary for communities across America to care for those returning home from battle and it was becoming increasingly challenging. Little preparation had been made for those who were missing limbs or other serious injuries. Little was understood about emotional illness and even those who were not physically injured were seriously ill emotionally.

The most profound illness was emptiness. These men had lived together, fought together, saved each other's lives and had survived. In some cases they felt guilty for surviving when so many of their friends had died. The men, however, developed a unique bond that only those who had similar experiences could really understand. This problem, in itself, led to a need

for further camaraderie.

The Grand Army of the Republic was started for that reason, in Decatur, Illinois on April 6, 1866 by Benjamin F. Stephenson. Membership was limited to honorably discharged veterans of the Union Army, Navy, Marine Corps and the Revenue Cutter Service who had served between April 12, 1861 and April 9, 1865. Each community was called a Post and they were numbered consecutively. They were also given a name of somebody highly respected in the community or vicinity.

The Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) was an immediate success and by August 1871 more than one half of the survivors of the Civil War were members. Stephenson, who had been a surgeon of the fourteenth Illinois Infantry, had fought through to the end of the war. He died at age 43 in August 1871 and really never saw the tremendous success of the organization that he started. Five presidents were elected who were members of the GAR in the ensuing years.

The local post in Redwood City began in 1886 and the first officers were Benjamin A. Rankin, Commander, and Joseph H. Hallet, Senior vice-commander, John Poole, Junior vice-commander, Elbert O. Rhodes, adjutant; P.P. Chamberlain, Quartermaster, C.B. Sears, Surgeon; W.H. Pascoe, Chaplain; E.W. Thompson Officer of the day and L.L. Stevens, Officer of The Guard and Sergeant Major.



Members of the GAR chapter General George S. Evans Post #72 taken on steps of the Congregational Church at Jefferson and Middlefield in Redwood City.

The local chapter of the Women's Relief Corps was started by Mrs. Geraldine Frisbie who had married Will Frisbie, a Civil War veteran.

The first encampment of the General George S. Evans Post, No. 72, was in 1886 on Memorial Day. The post had already established a GAR plot in Union Cemetery and several burials had already occurred by that Memorial Day that year. The name of the holiday was originally "Decoration Day" and it was under that title that the first celebration took place in 1886. The date of the very first Decoration Day celebration is in dispute, but most people agreed to call it Memorial Day. The San Mateo County Times and Gazette on May 30, 1890 reported on the Memorial Day celebration, "The GAR statue was entwined with garlands of evergreens and roses and numerous bouquets deposited on the graves of the departed." The statue, which was donated to the GAR by Mrs. Leland Stanford, has been a statement of patriotic appreciation for so many years and it continues to be a focus of attention throughout the year. Although this soldier has taken a severe beating and has been broken on three different occasions by unconscionable people, he survives, a wounded veteran himself.



Pin of the GAR

Memorial Day services will be held at Union Cemetery on Woodside Road at El Camino Real on Monday May 30, 2011 at 10AM. Parking is available at the funeral home as well as along Woodside Road.

Seating is somewhat limited so coming a bit early is not a bad idea and bringing portable chairs often pays off. The humble Order of E. Clampus Vitas will be performing their parade of grace and charm, the American Legion will be present this year and the Masonic Order will also take a role in the celebration. Memorial Day celebrations at Union Cemetery are a celebration of the veterans from all the American wars and the celebration of those who gave everything for our freedom.

There will be tours of the cemetery on May 14th at 10AM and some new pictures and names will be part of the tour. It is a good foundation for the self guided tour that is available on Memorial Day. We will have cemetery books available for purchase, \$20, and a new brochure on the history of the cemetery which was written because we don't have enough time to talk about that subject normally on our tours.

COME AND JOIN US



Union Soldier at Parade rests on a pedestal on the Grand Army of the Republic plot in Union Cemetery.

Back to the Future with Fox Theatre

By James O. Clifford, Sr.

New Fox Theatre owner Eric Lochtefeld concedes he knows little about the past of the downtown landmark that anchors the southern end of Redwood City's increasingly popular Courthouse Square. He's confident, however, that the future holds rave reviews.

"I don't have a history, but I do have an urn with some ashes that date back decades," Lochtefeld told the Journal of Local History. "We found them while we were doing some work. Maybe you can help me find out who they belonged to."

The remains of a former silent screen star? A past owner?

Another mystery is how the theater's original name became molded in to The New Sequoia, which to this day pops up in public prints, including Wikipedia and Cinema Treasures, a website that serves as a clearing house for fans of old movie houses. The movie theater, once billed as the largest movie house between San Francisco and San Jose, was simply The Sequoia when it opened on January 5, 1929, the year the nation was mugged by the Depression. It became the Fox in the 1950s.

The confusion is understandable. After all, the first Sequoia Theatre had been located just a few doors away. A minor point until one considers how easily the mistake was kept alive, even when the term "New Sequoia" was accompanied by a photo of the theater's marquee which clearly reads "Sequoia Theatre."

Not only that, the ads in faded newspapers say "Sequoia." Isn't there a line in a Marx Brothers movie that asks: "Who you gonna believe? Me or your own eyes?"

After flipping through those old newspapers like the cast on television's History Detectives, the Journal staff thinks it solved the case, dubbing it the Case of the Case. The early newspaper reports called the theater the new Sequoia to differentiate the structure from the original Sequoia.

Readers referred to it that way and the name stuck. Notice, however, that the word new is in lower case. What a difference a capital letter can make. So, future writers, don't morph the first three words of this article into the Fox's name. It's not, repeat not, the New Fox Theatre.



The second Sequoia Theatre, circa 1929

Whatever the name, Lochtefeld is sure of success.

"We are off to a great start," said the owner, who, among other productions, landed *Broadway by the Bay*, the musical theater group formerly based in San Mateo. "It is our hope to produce over 125 shows in our first year."

Broadway by the Bay debuted with "Forever Plaid" on March 31, one night before Lochtefeld lit up the theater's renovated neon marquee, thanks to the financial support of the San Mateo Credit Union. Lochtefeld sees the day when the Fox will be "the second best producing venue of our size in the entire Bay Area, only behind the legendary Fillmore Theatre in San Francisco."

A taste of things to come took place in February when the Fox was the venue for the premiere of "The Last Train from Bay Meadows," a documentary about the San Mateo race track that closed in 2008. The event that drew 700 people was immediately followed by the opening of an exhibit on the Roaring '20s at the San Mateo County Museum, located in the old courthouse at the other end of the square. The crowd had to walk about the length of a basketball court to get from one historic building to another. Last year the courthouse celebrated the 100th anniversary of its dedication in 1910.

To be frank, other cities might have more impressive resurrected movie theaters. For one, Oakland has its Paramount and Fox. Is there a city, however, with a plaza that has historic landmarks for "bookends?"

The Fox, then the Sequoia, got off to a "great start" in 1929. The structure was the work of Reid & Reid, the architectural and engineering firm of brothers James, Merritt and Watson Reid. Their resume boasted the Hotel del Coronado in San Diego, the Fairmont in San Francisco and the latter city's third Cliff House. In addition, the firm is credited with more than 20 theaters in the San Francisco area.



Sequoia Theatre Building, Redwood City, California

The Reids weren't the only big name associated with the Sequoia. Owner Ellis J. Arkush was linked to most entertainment offerings on the Peninsula, sort of a man behind the curtain people paid attention to. Arkush, a native of Chicago, came to the Peninsula in 1912 and his first major local entertainment venture was in 1914 when he bought the Bell Theatre in Redwood City. Eleven years later he and West Coast Theaters Inc. joined forces to form a new corporation called West Coast Peninsula Theaters, which embraced movie houses in Redwood City, Burlingame, San Mateo and Palo Alto.

When Arkush purchased the Bell it was a corrugated iron building with a stucco front where "moving pictures and illustrated songs" were featured, according to news reports of the times. The Bell opened in June 1910 with advertisements that promised "continuous performance. Latest Eastern and European novelties. Moving pictures, illustrated song."

Arkush remodeled the structure on Main Street by adding a lobby and bringing in 150 chairs. A year later the Bell was showing such draws as Theta Bara, dubbed as “the most beautiful wicked face in the world.”

The Bell wasn’t enough for Arkush. He wanted to build a movie theater on busy Broadway in an area that had a great deal of history behind it.

The Two Sequoias

In 1858 Mary Lathrop, wife of Benjamin Lathrop, San Mateo County’s first clerk and recorder, bought the entire block of lots on which today’s Fox stands from the Arguello and Mezes families, the area’s pioneering landowners. She built a home that still exists. The house passed into the hands of General Patrick E. Connor, whose family made it their home while he fought Indians in Utah. The next owner was Sheriff Joel Mansfield. He had to move the house back a bit to accommodate the Central Grammar School that opened in 1895. Ten years later, using a horse, winch and a few logs, he moved the house again – this time to Hamilton Street where today it is preserved as a reminder of the city’s past.

The Central Grammar School would be torn down in 1927 to make way for the second Sequoia. The school was one of Redwood City’s best known landmarks. It had a tall clock tower that struck off the hours day and night.

The first Sequoia, which opened in August 1916 with Mary Pickford starring in “Hulda from Holland,” was “a thing of beauty and the most modern on the Peninsula,” one newspaper reported. It had 750 seats, 150 of them in the balcony. Patrons could relax while forced air was changed every 10 minutes. The theater even had a marquee, reportedly the first in Redwood City.

Advanced as it was, the Sequoia was too small for the steadily increasing number of patrons. It closed in 1929, easily upstaged by the new 1,200-seat show house bearing its name that Arkush opened just a block away at 2215 Broadway.

The opening was big news. The Redwood City Tribune reported on every detail, including a ten paragraph story on the show house organ built by the Robert Morton Company of Van Nuys. One banner headline screamed “Hail To The New Sequoia,” which, by starting all the words with caps, may have led to the future name confusion.

Patrons imagine “they are in a street in a town somewhere in Spain,” the paper said of the new Sequoia’s Moorish interior. The walls consisted of a series of archways that recalled a Spanish courtyard. Hand-carved tiles were used along the balcony front. Arkush, a civil engineer by training, reportedly toured Spain to gain inspiration and ideas. A machine projected moving clouds and twinkling stars across the ceiling.

An estimated 3,000 people attended opening night on January 5, 1929 to see “Three Week Ends” starring Clara Bow. The theater also had a stage and dressing rooms for vaudeville acts. In addition to the movie, the opening night crowd was entertained by the Eddie Harkness Band and the dancing Curral Twins.

Among the ranks of the uniformed ushers that night was law student Louis DeMatteis, who would go on to become San Mateo County District Attorney and then a Superior Court judge. His story is told in a recent movie “Crime Buster: A Son’s Search for his Father.”

“We had a full stage, with full curtains and an orchestra pit,” DeMatteis said in an interview in the 1990s. “Some acts were terrible.”

DeMatteis, who died in 1995, remembered the opening as “a big event in town. They had searchlights. It was like a night at the opera in San Francisco.”

Arkush, who died at his Hillsborough home in 1974 at the age of 85, didn’t bask in glory long. His son told the obituary writer that his father sold his theaters to the Fox West Coast chain shortly before the Wall Street Crash in October 1929 and became a dedicated deep sea fisherman.

The Cave In

The Moorish interior's run ended on June 21, 1950 when a section of the plaster ceiling collapsed, injuring 27 people in the balcony, three of them seriously. Officials said nails, which were about an inch short of what they should have been, were loosened by vibration from nearby passing trains. The Sequoia was closed for three months. When it reopened, it had a new name and a new interior.

According to historians of the cinema, the Redwood City theater, thanks to the remodeling, is now among about 200 movie houses in the nation that feature "Skouras style" interiors, which drew the name from the Skouras brothers who managed several theater chains. The Skouras hired designer Carl Moeller to remodel the Sequoia, which would reopen as the Fox. Some critics described his style as "Art Moderne meets Streamlined." The marquee, terrazzo tile in the foyer, a mirrored lobby and ornate gold leaf combine to form a near-classic example of 1950s art deco theater interiors.

Much of the interior of the Sequoia was covered or replaced by Moeller, but the lobby, with arches that line the walls, still has the feel of the original. The ceiling on which night skies seemed to gaze down on the audience was covered by Moeller's work, said Tom Collins, the Fox venue manager. In order to see what's left, it's necessary to climb ladders and cross catwalks. A study in 1995 estimated it could cost up to \$7.6 million to restore the theater to its original design.

The study into "improvements and renovation" of the Fox was conducted by Szeliski & Associates, an architectural consultant firm based in Newport Beach. The consultants reported that a survey of 1,100 people found that 89% said returning the Fox to its glory days "should be one of the city's top priorities." In addition, 96% felt the Fox should become a "social and cultural hub."

One of the Skouras brothers, Charles, president of Fox West Coast Theaters, attended opening night on Sept. 15, 1950 when 2,000 people turned out to view the Fox, which was described as "completely remodeled and shining from a giant-sized portion of gold paint."



Opening night, 1950. New name, new interior.

"Crowds began gathering in front of the theater more than an hour before the outdoor entertainment started at 7 p.m.," read a newspaper report. "Temporary bleachers between Hamilton St. and Middledfield Rd. were packed as the throng watched street dancers, heard singers and was introduced to visiting celebrities." The big names included George Jessel, Eddie Bracken, Howard Keel and Roddy McDowell.



The Fox in 1953. Note there are no "For Lease" signs.

The film offering was “My Blue Heaven,” starring Betty Grable. The show was a benefit for the Korean War effort. One had to buy a bond to get in. The Fox started regular performances the next day with “The Black Rose.”

The marquee at the Fox promised that “Movies are Better Than Ever,” a slogan that Hollywood hoped would wean viewers off the new medium of television. Television, however, wasn’t the only reason the Sequoia was a tough act to follow. A U.S. Supreme Court ruling in 1948 would lead to the break up of the big movie house chains, which proved a death blow to many theaters. Why did the Fox survive? Many movie houses built in the same era, and also very lavish, were torn down. There’s probably no one answer. One theater owner said the seating capacity of the Fox was the main reason. With seating for 1,200, it was just about the right size to keep going. Other movie theaters usually had between 2,000 and 3,000 or even more, and this proved too expensive.

It’s Not Called “Show Business” for Nothing

The Fox is such an attractive landmark it is easy to forget that the theater is only part of a building that takes up an entire block, an area developed by Hare, Brewer & Clark, the realty firm with a resume that included the Edgewood Park area. Construction started on March 29, 1928 with the cost of the investment in the block estimated at \$300,000.

One of the first tenants in the building was the Woolworth Co. of “five and ten cent store” fame. Woolworth signed a 15-year lease. If only future commitments were so easy!!! For decades the most compelling drama at the Fox was the struggle to keep it open. The names most closely associated with that fight are Justin Jacobs and, later, John Anagnostou. Now Lochtefeld’s name can be added to the list.

Jacobs, a real estate developer, bought the Fox in 1981 and tried just about everything to keep it open before donating the dormant show house to the Palo Alto Players in 1986.

“I spent \$20,000 just to repair the neon lights,” he said in a 1987 interview.

Under Jacobs, the Fox featured stage shows, classic and art films along with bingo games and auctions.

His film festivals included “The Best of Broadway Musicals” and “Alfred Hitchcock Mysteries.” Jacobs also gave Canada College’s Center for the American Musical a chance to reach its aim of preserving and promoting musical theater. In 1983, the center sponsored a rare showing of the all but forgotten 1943 movie “The Desert Song,” Warner Brothers version of the Sigmund Romberg operetta. The musical starred Dennis Morgan and San Carlos resident Irene Manning, whose film credits included “Yankee Doodle Dandy.” Manning, who attended the showing, said she hadn’t seen the movie since 1944.

“If it never does anything more than enable movie buffs and operetta fans to see this ‘lost version’ of The Desert Song, the Center will have performed quite a service,” wrote one critic.

“The worst thing for me is for it (The Fox) to be dead,” said Jacobs, who blamed competition from cable television for much of the demise of traditional show business.

Nevertheless, the Palo Alto Players, a non-profit theater troupe with more than 60 years of theater experience behind it, drew nearly 20,000 customers in just a few seasons. Sell-out shows included “Annie,” “West Side Story,” “Evita” and “Jesus Christ, Superstar.”

Packing them in wasn’t enough, according to Peter Bliznick, executive director of the Palo Alto Players-Peninsula Center Stage.

Rents of commercial space within the Fox building and ticket sales alone couldn’t cover the costs of maintaining and restoring a historic theater, he said in 1994 when the Fox was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Bliznick took advantage of the opportunity to appeal for contributions to his group’s Fox Theatre Building Fund.

“It would be tragic should Redwood City someday find itself with a wonderful historic theater building which is unable to serve a theater going public,” said Bliznick.

Tragedy was avoided five years later when Anagnostou bought the Fox for \$1.9 million. He hoped to restore the theater’s original Moorish grandeur and make it a money magnet by drawing business to the area.

“You can attract a mixture of the boutiques, the national chains and the in-between specialty shops that make for a fun environment,” he said a year after he bought the Fox, which is encased in a massive “wedding cake” building that totals more than 40,000 square feet when the movie house, the adjacent Club Fox and the office and retail spaces are combined.

Reached by the Journal of Local History for this article, Anagnostou was asked how much money he spent on the building before he and co-owner Mike Monte ran into debt problems and foreclosure, forcing the Fox to bring down the curtain in 2009. .

“I don’t know how much,” he said. “It’s not the dollar value that counts.”

He noted, however, that he brought the Fox up to ADA standards, added fire curtains, improved the lighting system and the doors, among other things. It was obvious that he was most proud of the mahogany trim he brought back to the front of the Fox and the nearby offices.

“Everyone who walks down Broadway can see that Honduran mahogany,” he said, adding the Courthouse Square is unique. “At one end, there’s the Fox, the beautiful queen, with the strong king, the Courthouse, at the other,” he said.

Lochtefeld, too, sees the Fox as a way to increase downtown business.

“We have already seen some great results in this area,” he said, estimating that the shows he produced have brought “15,000 people to downtown Redwood City. That’s good for business all around us.”

He said he and his wife, Lori, have “gotten to know most of the restaurant owners and they have thanks us for the big uptick in customers on the nights we put on shows. Nobody wins if the doors are closed.”

Also optimistic is John Orr, arts and entertainment editor for the Daily News.

He wrote that the Fox should be much better for Broadway by the Bay than its earlier home, the San Mateo Performing Arts Center, which he described as “dingy” and “drab.”

In contrast, the Fox has “beautiful facilities for cast and crew and audience, including a nice bar in the lobby, and a great location in downtown Redwood City.”

As prestigious a publication as the New York Times has hailed Courthouse Square, describing it in a feature last year as “a European-style piazza sprinkled with Italianesque stone fountains” that served as a “Silicon Valley Relaunch.”

As for the Fox itself, the best review is just a block away at the contemporary Century20 movie house. The multi-screen facility décor is a virtual homage to the nation’s pioneering movie palaces. In addition, a second floor mural depicts cowboys and trains, both staples of the movies of the pre-television era. Patrons of new films at the Century can, like the audience at the Sequoia, view the night sky – the real one. Just go to the second floor at night and gaze out the huge window.

A Tale of Two Cities and One Man

By John Edmonds

Nevada City, a beautiful and quaint town today, was the queen of the high-country Gold Rush towns in the early 1850s. Deer Creek reaped millions of dollars in gold to the early placer miners. Deer Creek runs right through the town of Nevada City, and when it overflows its banks—although controlled today—it created havoc in the historic past. So since the town was built up on both sides of the creek, it was necessary to build a bridge.

A young man named Andrew Smith Hallidie arrived in the gold country in the early 1850s, naturally in search of his fortune. Andrew was born in London in 1836, and his name was Andrew Smith. As he reached his teens, he added the name “Hallidie,” the name of his godfather and uncle, Sir Andrew Hallidie, who was the court physician to King William IV and Queen Victoria. Andrew’s parents were both Scottish, and he was very close to his father, also named Andrew Smith. He had learned the process of braiding wire to increase its strength.

When Andrew was 13, his father put him to work with his older brother to supervise him. They were working in a machine shop, where the use of electricity was being developed.

There, Andrew's father had developed an interest in General Fremont, especially in regard to his property in Mariposa County, California, where Fremont had several gold mines. Like many others, when the Gold Rush whistle was blown around the world, Andrew (then 16) and his father set forth to join the throngs. They arrived in San Francisco in 1852. The father falls out of the history at this point, but Andrew at age 17 went off to the Gold County.

He found his way to the American River and went to work with a shovel and a pan. With his inventive mind, Hallidie developed a sluice box for separating gold. He found a substantial amount of gold in several locations. After three years, he moved on to Nevada City. There he witnessed the failing of the first bridge built over Deer Creek, as it went washing down the creek in a heavy winter storm.



Hallidie's wire rope suspension bridge over Deer Creek in Nevada, with the first horses and cart crossing it in 1862. (A very old and fuzzy picture.)

While Hallidie was trying to make money, he used his knowledge of wire rope to replace hemp to haul the rock from high on the embankment of the American River to the stamping machine and the gold fields. He designed and built a cable suspended overhead (a viaduct) that hauled rock from one side to the other, using wire cable and ropes. He then built a 220-foot bridge; this one carried mining equipment over the river, and from that day on, Hallidie worked with wire cable. He knew the process of braiding wires to form very strong wire rope to carry ore skips across steep and deep canyons.

He started a business in San Francisco—the California Wire Rope and Cable Company—in 1857, and he was quickly inundated with business orders for the cables and machinery.

In 1862 Hallidie travelled back to Nevada City. On Tuesday, June 24, of that year, the Marysville Daily Appeal announced that Hallidie and company had constructed a new bridge at Nevada City. The article read: “A new bridge has been constructed across Deer Creek at the foot of Pine Street.” The transcript describes it as “the largest bridge in the state.

“It has a suspended roadway surface of 4,700 square feet. The cables that support the bridge are each 503 feet long, made of the no. 12 best charcoal bridge wire. Each cable has 1,050 wires, and 36,000 pounds of wire were consumed in the construction of the cables. Each cable is 4 inches in diameter, has a deflection of 25 feet, and both are calculated to sustain a strain of 70 tons.

“The cables are connected at the ends to immense cast iron girders or anchors, 12 feet long, with elliptic back, the form of which is in the shape of a ‘T’. The girders weigh 2,500 pounds each. The wrought iron bars, two series of two, each weigh 4,375 pounds. The roadway, or platform, is suspended from the cable by 59 wrought iron rods on each side, 1 1/8 inch in diameter. These rods weigh, as they hang, 7,500 pounds.

“The suspended roadway has a span of 320 feet and a width of 14 feet 9 inches. There is a sidewalk on each side for pedestrians, separated from the wagon way by a 4- by 6-foot scantling, held by long bolts passing through the planking of the bridge and cross timbers. There is a railing on each side for pedestrians.

“Tunnels were run in the bank 35 feet, and as the rock found was not sufficiently solid, a cross-drift was run. The corners of the drift were taken out, and solid masonry of cut stone, laid in cement, was put in the place where the anchors rest.”

(All this is not bad for a young man of only 26 years.)

Hallidie enjoyed recalling his experiences when he was constructing the wire suspension bridge across Deer Creek in the fall of 1862.

Former Gov. Leland Stanford could see the value of having a streetcar coming up to California Street, so he joined the endeavor, first of all, with a substantial donation, and then some political pull. There were a substantial number of people who objected to the project because they felt it was impossible.

Hallidie was successful in putting together sufficient funds to purchase the materials he needed to get the program started.

People said, "No power on earth and no citizen would be fool enough to risk his life on attempting to put such a contraption on so steep and slippery a roadway."

But Hallidie built his cable car anyway and established the electronics to put the first units on the Clay Street hill. The wire rope—or cables—were placed in trenches in the roadway, and they ran on a continuous circuit up the steep hill and back down to the machinery that provided the electricity and power.

Hallidie's engineers carefully tested cables and measured the steam power; they also tested the grips and the brakes. The first workman took his place early in the morning, but as the time for departure down the steep hill approached, he decided he didn't wish to continue, so Hallidie took his place at the controls. He released the brakes, seized the cable with the grip, and slowly the car rolled down the hill and came to its destined stop at the turntable at Kearny Street.

Now the question was: could the car climb back up to the top? Hallidie shoved the car around the turntable and headed the little car up the hill. He released the brake, gripped the cable and slowly started to climb the hill. Block after block, the car climbed steadily until it reached the top at Leavenworth Street. It was a breathtaking adventure for the people of San Francisco, and especially for Andrew Hallidie.

The morning was still early, and the fog was thick throughout the city, as those who were present cheered for the first cable car trip ever accomplished in the world.

On Aug. 1, 1873, at 5 a.m., civic dignitaries, firemen, policemen and many citizens gathered to see the first true passenger-enclosed cable car climb the Clay Street hill at the Jones Street crossing, then return. The cable car, whose maximum capacity was 26, suddenly held 90 people. Nonetheless, the car climbed the hill and returned to Kearny Street. The cable car industry was born.

Hallidie's railroad company immediately began producing cable cars and the mechanical and other devices necessary to create increasingly larger cars for San Francisco, and then for other cities around the world. A number of the products were sold to Hallidie's native town of London, England. The cable railroads spread to Oakland, Los Angeles, Kansas City, Chicago, St. Louis, Philadelphia, New York and Sidney. The collection of large royalties for a long period of time made Hallidie very wealthy. While he was very experienced at patenting his inventions, he overlooked to process of keeping the slot in the roadway sufficiently narrow so the wheels would not slip out of the slot and off the cable. He corrected that in San Francisco and published the difference.

Hallidie became one of San Francisco's honored citizens and spent a good deal of time and money on the general welfare of his adopted city. In a contemplative mood he stated, "California that has become so endeared to me was an accidental love and brought about by circumstances over which I had no control. I was a passenger in the bark that carried me on in the voyage of life and took me to a land in which my experiences of early youth were not accompanied by the gentleness of polish of the family surroundings, which sweet memory still treasures of in the dim shadows of boyhood."

Susan E. Smith of San Francisco, deeded on Feb. 27, 1883, to Andrew S. Hallidie, also of San Francisco, for the sum of \$3,113.10: 103.77 acres on the road known as the Mastic Mill Road. (Portola Road) and at the same time, another entry of Lester L. Robinson to Andrew S. Hallidie as of March 4, 1884, the sale of 200 acres, sold as a result of a tax delinquency. Sold originally through the sheriff to George H. Rice, who signed the certificate of sale to Andrew Hallidie.

On Aug. 2, 1894, The Redwood City Democrat published an article about what was happening on the Eagle Home Farm of Andrew Hallidie. The farm was on the property on the west side of Portola Road in the 800 block. The article announced, "Aerial Transportation: A novel form of railway on the Eagle Home Farm. There is now completed in Portola Valley. The farm is about one mile from the junction of the Pescadero and Portola Valley Road.

The railway was erected by the California Wire Works under Mr. Hallidie's patent and was invented by him for the purpose of carrying ore, rock and fuel etc. over mountainous and rugged places.

"A great many of these have been built and are working very satisfactorily. Some important improvements are being made in the system, and the line referred to is called the Hallidie Ropeway and is 7,341 feet long and runs from the county road in Portola Valley to the county road on the top of the divide and makes in that distance a rise of 1,168 feet. The line is perfectly straight and passes over a very rugged country."

Hallidie was instrumental in starting the Mechanic's Institute in 1868 in San Francisco. He filled the position of president of that school throughout the rest of his life. He was one of the founders of the San Francisco Public Library, the San Francisco Art Society, and the Boys and Girls Society. He was also a member of the Manufacturers' Society and was president for years of the Academy of Sciences and the Geographical Society and the California State Historical Society.

The Redwood City Democrat reported on Dec. 1, 1892: "The library is growing rapidly in popularity. Its patrons are steadily increasing. There is no doubt now about its remaining one of the desirable fixtures of the city. Under the management of Miss Stewart, it is making rapid strides of advancement. A short time ago, the reading matter of the library was increased by the purchase of a number of valuable books, and recently it was further increased by a generous gift of 100 volumes on interesting subjects from Andrew Smith Hallidie of the California Wire Works; this is by far the greatest present the institution has received, and in behalf of the members of the Library Association and the people of Redwood City, the Democrat extends the donor the warmest appreciation of the gift."

The California Wire Works was incorporated in 1883 with Hallidie as president. The company was the outgrowth of the A. S. Hallidie Co. (1870). On June 29, 1895, the wire rope manufacturing machinery was sold to Washburn and Moen Co., the oldest manufacturers of wire in the United States (established in 1831).

On April 24 1900, at the age of 65, Hallidie died of heart disease at his San Francisco residence at 1032 Washington St. The services were held at the San Francisco Unitarian Church, where he had been a member. Dr. Horatio Stebbins delivered the eulogy, saying in part, "Hallidie belonged to that class of men who are called by way of distinction, self-made men. He was not only an intelligent, but in a certain sense, a learned man.

"He had that background of reserve power and discipline ... for those who were dependent upon him in any way, for those in whose blood flowed a kindred strain, he was surpassingly good. . . All he could do was for them and he left a host of silent friends. . . into whose hearts that kindness has fallen like gentle showers upon the thirsty earth."

His body was laid to rest in Laurel Hill Cemetery.

The Hallidie building at 130 Sutter Street between Montgomery and Kearny in San Francisco has the following on a plaque.

HALLIDIE BUILDING

Named in honor of Andrew Smith Hallidie
Born in London, England March sixteen 1836
Died in San Francisco April twenty-four 1900
Creator of our cable railway – twice member
Of a board of freeholders, chosen to frame
A charter for this city-regent of the University
From the first meeting of the board June nine
1868 to the day of his death – during his last
Twenty-six years devoted chairman of its
Finance committee.

Builder

Citizen

Regent

The History Detective

By John Edmonds

I am hard pressed to call the people on the television program of the same name as this as true “history detectives.” They are a large retinue of people who do the research and put together the program (which I enjoy very much), and they are the real backbone of the program. The “stars” merely follow the steps of the researchers, as they go from one end of the country to the other.

Redwood City had a real history detective. The Redwood City Tribune published an article in 1964 titled, “Schellens, Ace Historical Detective.”

I am speaking about Richard N. Schellens, who was the author of an astounding amount of historical information about Redwood City, the Peninsula, San Francisco, the State of California and almost every county in this state. It takes up an immense amount of space in the Local History Room in the Redwood City Public Library, on the mezzanine level.

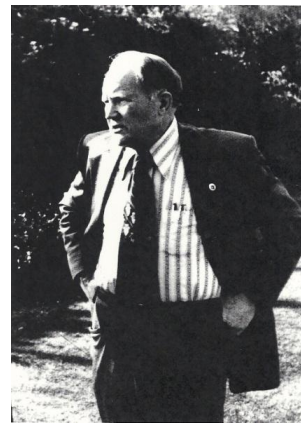
I have been using the work of Richard Schellens for a number of years, especially when working on books such as the book on Union Cemetery. While the collection is not perfect, it is close to that. However, I do find people in the cemetery who just did not seem to have great public lives, just like most of us. Schellens seems to disregard some people, or else he simply did not find the information to give to us.

Richard N. Schellens died in June 1975 and was severely missed immediately. Following his retirement from a cement plant, he spent a substantial amount of time in the Redwood City Tribune’s research rooms looking for people, places and things in old newspapers. He often contributed material for columns in the Tribune. Otto Tallent talked about his inquiring about Henry D. McGarvey, who donated his property for the American Legion Hall on El Camino in the north part of town. Schellens told him about Henry, but he also talked about Owen McGarvey, Henry’s father, who moved to this area in the 1850s. He purchased 1,000 acres from the Arguellos, including the grounds that today’s Menlo Country Club stands on.

He also told the paper about the quick silver mine Owen McGarvey found in the Searsville area and how he then used the gravel of the mine to cover the roads in Redwood City to reduce the dust and mud.

Richard Schellens was born in Los Angeles and was two-and-a-half years old when he was adopted by a Redwood City couple, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Schellens. They owned a large tract of land in the vicinity of the Shaberg Library and the Farm Hill area of Redwood City.

Schellens’ speech had a noticeable German accent to it, even in his later days. His parents spoke German, and his father was a native of Cologne and an engineer of railroad systems. He became quite wealthy engineering these railroads, having built one for the emperor of China. The Schellens family sold their property in Redwood City and travelled back to Germany in 1920, where they placed young Richard in grammar school. They returned to California in 1924, settling first in Palo Alto.



Richard Schellens, circa 1960

Richard Schellens had been unaware for most of his life at that time that he had been adopted. When he did learn, he went down to Los Angeles to look up his records. He discovered his birthplace and hospital, and he found that two babies had been born on his birthday. One had light hair and the other, dark hair. He learned then that his real name had been William Robert Brooks. The only parents he ever really knew were the Schellens, so he kept the name.

The Schellens family traveled pretty constantly, living on the dividends from the father’s stock investments. In 1929, Richard enrolled in a junior college in Asheville, N.C., and upon completion, he came back to California and enrolled in the University of California at Los Angeles for two years.

Then he went back to Germany and went to school for two years at the University at Munich, where he studied economics and observed the rise of Hitler.

Richard returned to California and got a job working for McNeil and Libby in Sunnyvale and Sacramento. In 1940 he went back to school. He worked to pay his way through Stanford to get a teaching credential by selling copper stock for the Kennecott Copper Company. His education was interrupted, unfortunately, by the beginning of the Second World War. Richard found himself in the finance section of the United States Army. He was stationed in Honolulu. His job was to escort the \$3 million military payroll when it was flown to South Pacific bases.

After the war and a period of recuperation from an illness, Richard went to work for the Pacific Portland Cement Company (later the Ideal Cement Company). He worked for the cement companies for 14 years. Richard retired in 1960 and began "to look for something worthwhile to keep my brain occupied." That is when he launched his efforts at researching the history of the people of Redwood City, and then he expanded in a grand way.

The Schellens collection in the Local History Room of the Redwood City Public Library is astonishing. The bound volumes include: 1. Individuals, 2. Organizations and Clubs, 3. Government of Cities and the County, 4. Communities of San Mateo County, 5. Other Counties of California, and just too many more to keep counting. The 4-inch binders containing two or three 1-inch binders take up shelves that are floor-to-ceiling on two walls of the room. More volumes, mostly on San Francisco History, are located in the vault, which is kept locked. This collection also extends from floor-to-ceiling on the back wall of the room. The Archives Board hopes to bring these volumes out of the vault and onto the shelves, so that researchers have access to them.

The pages in the binders usually have but a paragraph from the newspaper, and the researcher is expected to then go to the newspaper, look up the citation, and find the article, and usually, hand-write out the entire article.

I write this essay in appreciation of Richard N. Schellens and to honor the man who was truly a "History Detective." Those of us who work with this collection are constantly in awe of what this wonderful man accomplished. It is difficult to imagine, when looking at these volumes, how he was able to gather information from all over California for this collection.

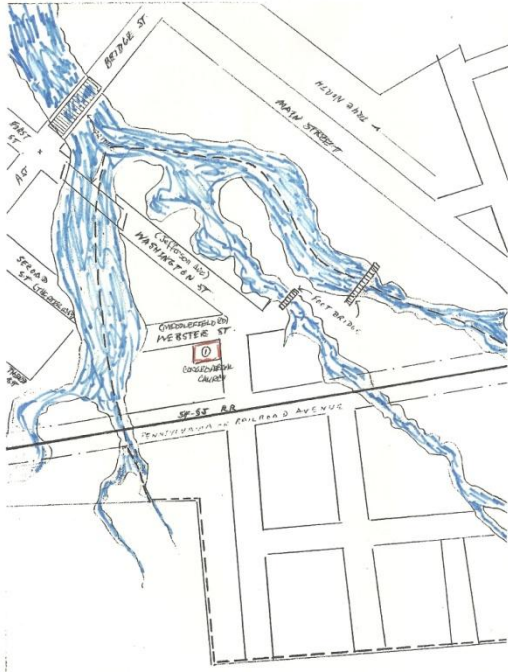
Since the downturn in the economy, the Local History Room now belongs to the Archives Committee of the Public Library, as does the Schellens Collection and the indexes of that collection, which seem to have been distributed to some extent without permission or recognition. While we are anxious for visitors, we are equally anxious for the necessary funds to keep running the room for those who need the information. I hope that all who read this essay will consider the value of it for those looking for information related to real estate (looking for hazardous problems on property), to those who are looking for obituaries on family members, or those interested in any number of questions about family or schools or businesses in the local area.

Redwood City: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

By John Edmonds

Yesterday

Yes, there is a creek, but a bit of searching is sometimes required to find it, or should I say *them*, because there are really three creeks that join to create the body of water that we call Redwood Creek. But I write this essay because I do not believe we give this invisible water source the really important credit that it deserves. Redwood Creek, more than any other entity, should be considered the foundation of the City of Redwood City, and perhaps, even of San Mateo County. I wrote the chapter on the creek for the Redwood City book, but the distribution of that publication is not great, probably because of the \$50 cost.



Redwood Creek as it came through town. Note the bridges and the routes of the creek.

Nonetheless, I think it is important that a greater knowledge be presented to the general public on this body of water.

The creek was discovered originally by Robert Tripp, the well-recognized dentist who set up shop at Tripp and King's Mountain roads. Of course, the roads did not exist when he did this. But Tripp began the process of using the creek to haul logs to San Francisco where they were desperately needed on an ongoing basis because of the almost perpetual fires that occurred during the 10-year period from 1850 through 1860.

Tripp floated the logs down the creek to a point where he could strap them together into a float, so that he could then place a small sail upon them and sail them down the creek to the mouth, turn north into the bay, and then sail them to the still-growing town at the mouth of the bay.

Enter Charles Brown, who built his adobe home a short distance from the Alambique Creek in today's Woodside. The house still stands, although it is on private property and is not open to visitors. The house has a sign on a door that says that it was built in 1835.

While this seems somewhat questionable, it is certainly true that he was the first to build a sawmill. Brown hired Willard Whipple to build the mill. At the same time, Dennis Martin built his own mill, with the help of William Littlejohn, on San Francisquito Creek. Martin built a bridge over a creek and a road. This became the Shine Family Road, then Whiskey Hill Road. Woodside Road was originally called "Red Woods Road," and it connected Woodside to Redwood City.

In the early 1850s, Charles Hanson came into the picture. Moving into Redwood City, he saw a business opportunity and purchased the property on the creek just east of today's Bradford Street. Here, along with a partner, John Ackerson, he built docks for loading milled lumber onto ships. With this advantage, the number of mills rapidly increased, with more mills on the east side of the mountain along specific creeks, and then the establishment of today's Edgewood Road. The driveway, which extends presently to the house west of the intersection of Edgewood and Canada roads originally went to Whipple's upper mill. What is now Edgewood Road was originally known as Whipple's Mill Road, and it went all the way to the docks on Redwood Creek.

The increasing amount of milled lumber coming into town resulted in increasing the number of ships entering the city, and this resulted in dramatic growth to the city. Hotels, restaurants and saloons quickly developed.



William Littlejohn

William Littlejohn came into Redwood from a short, but productive stay in the gold country. He designed and built the first stamp machine while working near Coloma on the American River.



Emma Littlejohn

William and Emma Littlejohn found Redwood City very charming and decided to make their lives in this environment.

While William was up helping Dennis Martin at Searsville, Emma found exactly the right spot on the creek for a home and business. The location was just where the creek widens from the narrowest spot. It widened into a lake where the other creeks joined, and the incoming ships used that wider area as a place to turn around.



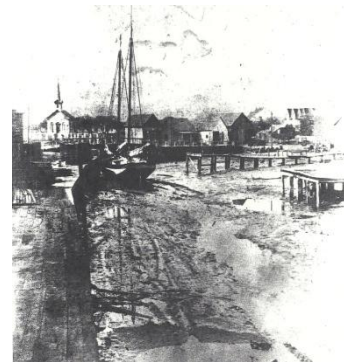
The first gold stamp invented by William Littlejohn along the American River. Of course, there were no patent possibilities, and many more and larger models were made for deep rock mining. These can be seen in Grass Valley at the Empire Mine.

William was very pleased when he found out where the property was located, because the three large lots enabled him to build docks on the waterside, a home, and business building that stretched from the creek to Main Street.

This then gave him the ability to do business on both sides of the property. William observed that people had to walk from the Main Street side to the downtown area by putting on very high boots and wading across. He then built a bridge to span the creek right at the spot where A Street meets the creek. This road, which joined on the east side of the creek, became known as Bridge Street, from the creek to Main Street.

William also observed that the creek would silt up and that it was becoming difficult for the ships to negotiate through the narrower parts of the creek in order to turn around. So he then built a dredge system just west of the bridge. Both the bridge and the dredge systems worked by a substantial number of men turning large wheels on both ends of the objects. This caused the machines to open and close. When the ships wanted to come in and turn around, the bridge would split in the center and pivot one way on one side and the other across the creek. When the creek needed to be dredged, the gates would be cranked shut, which would allow the water to build up on one side. When the tide dropped, the walls would be cranked open as quickly as possible, which then caused the water to flush out the creek by its rapid release.

William was a very clever man, and he certainly contributed to the ongoing benefit of his community. Unfortunately, there are no pictures of these machines, but the original Mezesville map of Redwood City when it was formally plated out shows where the bridge stood in relation to A Street and Bridge Street and Main Street.



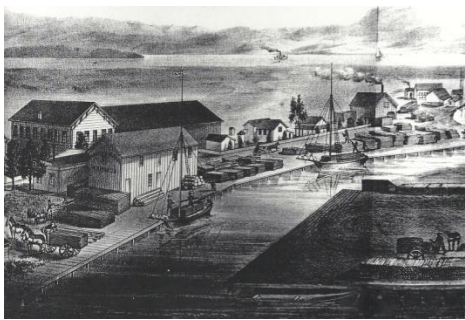
Ship at Littlejohn's dock, Congregational Church was at Jefferson and Middlefield; Lathrop house on right was on Broadway.

Just to mention one other accomplishment by Littlejohn.... He hollowed out a number of redwood logs and managed to place them so that he created a fresh water system for Redwood City. He also built the largest clipper ship on the West Coast, a three-masted schooner that sailed the ocean and bay for years after William Littlejohn joined the sleeping in Union Cemetery.



Littlejohn's boat built in Redwood Creek where City Hall now stands. It sailed to Japan and other long distances.

These improvements then caused the city to grow substantially. The big lumber wagons were now coming into town as doubles with additional horses. The number of these wagons increased. As the larger trees were running out on the east side of the mountain, the lumber mills started to spread to the west side.



The two -story warehouse building with the ship in front is J.V. Diller's, and his store that still stands on Main Street is in front. The creek runs down the present fire department's driveway, across Broadway and through the alley and parking lot.

This was more expensive because it required more men and more machines to cut the wood into milled lumber, load a truck and drive it up the hill to Skyline. By this time, Henry King had established his hotel on the west side of Tunitas and Skyline. Soon after, the town of Summit Springs, about a half mile east of Skyline, came into existence. It was especially popular to the lumbermen, as it furnished a good hotel, saloon and boarding place for their horses. The second day out, the men would head down King's Mountain Road to Woodside Road, then to Redwood Creek. Simultaneously, lumber wagons were traveling from the Searsville area and the West Union area, making a substantial amount of activity on the creek in Redwood City and rapidly increasing businesses in town.

During a typical one-week period throughout those 30 years, the activity at the Hanson/Ackerson Lumber Docks and the city included the arrival of 24 ships and the exporting of 50,000 board feet of milled lumber, 1,730,000 shingles, 108,000 fence posts, 152 cords of firewood and huge amounts of tanned leather, hay, alfalfa, vegetables and other grains. The latter items were products of the farms and ranches in western Redwood City, Searsville, Menlo Park, and Mayfield.

It is not difficult to recognize how important Redwood Creek was to the beginning of Redwood City. It is probably safe to say the city, as we know it, would not exist had it not been for the creek. Think about the structures needed to take care of people who were crowding into town. Hotels, saloons, leather foundries, stables, harness shops and many other shops were required and were very successful. It is no wonder that Redwood City became a chartered city in 1867, long before any other city in the fledgling county.

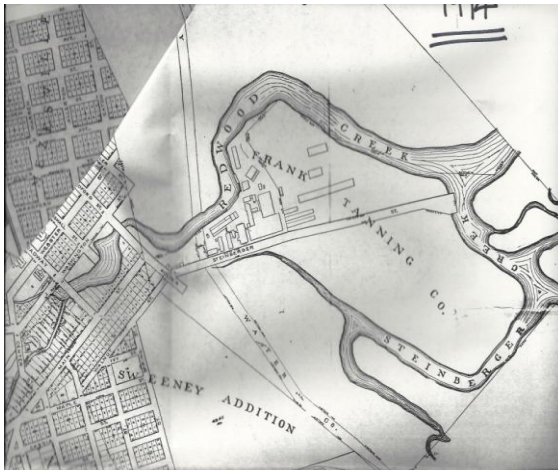
However, Redwood Creek was not always the highly financial waterway that I describe. When Redwood City was drenched by many winter days of soaking rain and a substantial high tide was present, a good part of the town would become a lake, as the creek would overflow its banks and flood everything in the vicinity.

This problem continued on into the 20th century, and much of it still exists today in some of the low-lying areas.



Dan Flynn and Henry Steinberger

Henry Steinberger came to Redwood City, in the usual roundabout way, through New York and Cincinnati from his native Bavaria. His mother and siblings were still in Bavaria long after he arrived. He went to work at Frank's Tannery. His employment lasted some 36 years. He became very popular in Redwood City, not just at the tannery, but in the community as well. He married Miss Carrie Fox of San Francisco. The couple had one daughter, who married a professor at the University of Southern California and took up residence in Los Angeles.



Steinberger Road and Holder Road, Steinberger Slough.

Henry Steinberger was a popular and well-known member of the Masonic Order, the Odd Fellows, the International Order of Red Men, and the Kiwanis Club. He was a member of the Redwood City School Board for some 24 years. The Steinberger name appears on the Redwood City map that includes Redwood Creek, because there is a slough named in his honor. The Redwood City Democrat newspaper reported on Henry's passing and on his first three years in this country as a soldier in the army of General Shafter during the Indian wars. Henry was buried in the Home of Peace Cemetery under services led by Rabbi Neito at the grave.



This picture, c1934 shows the creek coming through town (bottom right), then on through the cemetery at the top left.

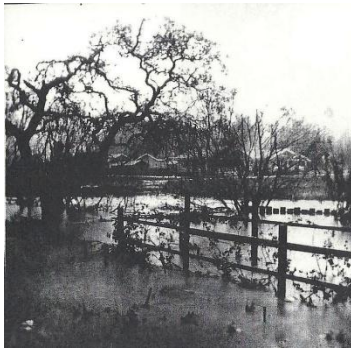
Redwood City named a street after Henry. On the 1914 map it is shown running off Holder Street, which ran off Bradford Street after the Bradford Street Bridge. Steinberger Street ran in a straight line, directly to Frank's Tannery. The picture shows both the street and the slough; however, the slough was named after he died.

Today

There have been many stories in the newspaper about problems with Redwood Creek and its tributaries. Many of you may remember the changing of the streets around Stulsaft Park.

The problem on Virginia, Redwood, Oak and Ruby streets was that the then dead-end streets at the creek would be opened up by bridging them over the creek. The issue had to do with increases in traffic going to the shopping centers.

Ray Spangler wrote in the Redwood City Tribune on Jan. 21, 1969: "As recently as 1958, we did break records with a rainfall total which reached 32 inches in April. The highest previous entire season recorded here was 30.45 inches in 1940. Redwood Creek went over its banks on April 2nd and water was coming in under the doors of several stores on El Camino near James Avenue."



Redwood City west of El Camino during a flood in early 1914.

Shirley Shwoerer, a retired librarian in Redwood City who now works in the Local History Room with those of us on the Archive Committee, tells us about her experience in 1982, when the library was across the street in the building that also housed city hall and the police department. She spent hours rummaging through soggy, smelly magazines trying to assess the damage and trying to dry out some of them. Much of the damage, on that occasion, was to magazines such as National Geographic, American Home, Life and Organic Gardening. Some of the binders of the San Mateo County Historical Association's publications of the time were also seriously damaged but most of them were saved.

Some 12 years ago in Union Cemetery, I made a cutting of a very old rose named "Mutabolis," and grew it in a pot in my backyard for a year. I then planted it just behind the Civil War soldier statue in order to give the Grand Army of The Republic plot some greater color. The process worked; apparently the plant's roots were able to find their own source of water. We didn't know it at the time, but we know now that the source of the water is Redwood Creek. The plant is easily 40 feet around, 12 feet high, and it blooms all year long. In spring, it is in full blossom early; multicolor blossoms begin with beige, then pink, and finally, red. It often has all three colors at once. The bees and butterflies love the plant, especially as the beige turns to a bright yellow during the summer and fall.

I am convinced the plant found the creek, because we found the creek when we put in the windmill. We had to sink the piers very deep (12 feet) in order to anchor the foundation for the windmill. At the front where the doorway is located, the corner to the far left rear stands on a foundation pier that extends through the creek into a solid foundation base.

If you walk down Central Avenue in Union Cemetery, you will notice, about halfway down, a lot of finely broken shells on both sides of the road. Somewhere along that location runs the creek, as these shells are part of an Ohlone Indian kitchen ("midden"), where they broke the shells of oysters, clams and mussels in order to take out the meat. The Indians then discarded the shells in a pile. Over the years, the shells have been broken into much finer pieces, but they are certainly visible.

Recently Hetch-Hetchy Water Company put in a water pipe between the nursery and the funeral home. It was not a surprise to me that they ran into Redwood Creek. Almost immediately across Woodside Road, they hit water, and it caused them a substantial amount of time to work around the creek. Interestingly, in addition, is that when they solved that problem, they almost immediately ran into another one that slowed them down dramatically.

They ran into an Indian burial mound. They had to call in archeologists, who had to remove the bones and then return them after the pipe had been completed and before they closed it up with dirt.

When I was an elementary school child, I went to Washington School, which stood where the big senior residential center across from the cemetery is today. I remember when they added a new wing to the school, with classrooms backing onto the back of the houses along Murray Court. When they dug the foundations, I was one of a number of kids who found the arrowheads. We saw lots of other bones in the mix as well, as this was obviously another Indian burial mound. The construction people simply smoothed it out and put in the buildings.

When you look at the Mezesville map, you can see that when Red Woods Road (Woodside Road) comes into town, it joins "Mound Street," which then comes into Main Street and up to the lumber docks etc. The street got its name from the Indian burial mound that was at the corner of Mound and Beach streets. Today, Mound Street is gone (combined into Main Street), but the burial ground is still at that intersection. The construction crews simply smoothed it out and built the buildings.

We will be paying more attention during tours to the creek and the Indian relics, as it gives us a greater dimension to the history of the property. It also helps us recognize why in some of areas, no one had anyone buried because they were not able to bury people in water.

Tomorrow

My dream for the future is that we will remove the parking lot that presently exists behind the post office and city hall and build a parking structure in the parking lot beside the library. Then they should "daylight" the creek from Broadway to city hall. Plant colorful flowers along its banks, build some decks and open sandwich shops among the flowers, beautify the creek, and perhaps develop a little waterfall, so that we can hear the beauty, as well as observe it. Can you imagine the number of people who would flock from the county buildings and the apartments to enjoy lunch or coffee together at the creek? Are you acquainted with the River Walk in San Antonio, Texas?

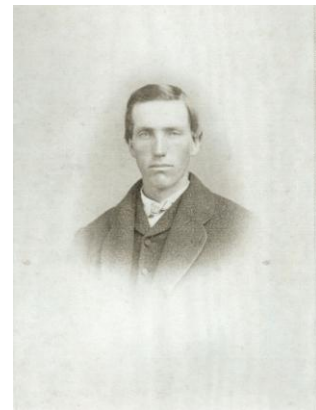
That is one crowded place.

This, however, is my dream, and I wonder if the city council can consider what I think a great majority of its citizens would prefer. Let's make the creek work for us. It would probably not be hard to find an urban designer firm that could develop an open space that would be very spectacular for the future. Tomorrow could be very beautiful for the businesses in town as well.

Redwood City's ongoing effort to develop an agreed-upon "Precise Plan" is a good idea in terms of reducing the use of motor vehicles and pollution in the area. It puts people close to downtown and to public transportation terminals. There are other things in the works for the future that may well create even more pollution from motor vehicles, thus diluting the most valid purpose of the precise plan. I think if the Redwood City community could vote on the project, they would reject it substantially.

Andrew and Permelia Teague and Family

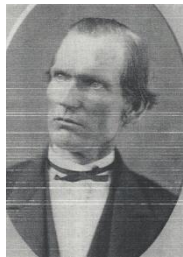
By John Edmonds



Andrew Teague, circa 1850

I feel an unusual closeness to this story because I have been looking at this gravesite and seeing this name in many of the subjects that I write about. Andrew Teague has been mentioned in just about everything I have written, but I have never really written about him until now.

Andrew was a native of, Boone County, Missouri, where he was born, Aug. 1, 1822. He was reared and educated in Jackson County in that state; his parents had moved to that area when he was but three years old. He resided in that area until 1850, when he and his wife Permelia and their six children migrated to California. Andrew mined in various parts of the gold country for two years before the family came to San Mateo County in 1852. They settled in Woodside. Andrew has been credited with establishing the first library in San Mateo County, in Woodside, although it was still San Francisco County. Thus, he started the first library in the area. Andrew and Permelia came across the country from Missouri in a wagon pulled by oxen. The couple had six daughters and one son. The girls were Telitha, Martha, Sarah, Francis Mary, and Rebecca; the boy was William Carlton Teague.



Andrew Teague, circa 1875

In 1855 Andrew was elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors, where he was able to vote on the bill that eventually established San Mateo County. He was elected to the position of district attorney in the new county in 1869, which caused him to move to Redwood City with his family. He continued to practice law in Redwood City for the rest of his life. He became the court commissioner and deputy district attorney under R. G. Rowley, and he remained in that position until his very untimely death.

Andrew felt very strongly about national unity during the Civil War. He was anxious to take part in some manner, when the possibility was presented to join the newly forming Jefferson Cavalry. He jumped at the opportunity and became an integral part of that dedicated organization. The Jefferson Cavalry became Company "H" of the First Division of

California Cavalry, and it was very possible that it would be sent to Southern California and east to fight the Confederate Army that had made the stated purpose of their westward march to get to San Francisco and the gold fields. The Jefferson Cavalry never left Redwood City except for parade and demonstration purposes. However, they were very much loved by the citizens of this city, and their departure was very much missed by the entire community. Andrew was known as "Judge Teague" because he spent much of his later life as the justice of the peace for the Third Township of San Mateo County. In 1867, he was instrumental in helping others to form the charter for Redwood City, the first formal chartered city in San Mateo County. Naturally, he was rewarded with becoming one of its first city councilmen.



Andrew and Permelia

Andrew Teague was a dedicated member of the Bay View Chapter of the International Order of Odd Fellows. He died at age 62 years, much too early for a man of his outstanding character and benevolence. The service at the Congregational Church was a long and beautiful one. The many floral presentations were fragrant and colorful and very tasteful. The procession to Union Cemetery was long, mournful and suitable for such a popular person. Andrew was buried in plot 75; he followed his son, William Carlton, who died on Nov. 10, 1874. William was 21 years old when he died. Andrew died on March 11, 1884, and Permelia died on Jan. 10, 1908. They are all in plot 75. We can't tell, and it might be just a coincidence, that all the Teague children, with the exception of Telitha, are buried within a few steps of each other in Union Cemetery. You will meet them as you continue in this article.

Mrs. Telitha Teague Shaw

Telitha was the sixth daughter of Andrew and Permelia Teague. She married and moved to White Salmon, Washington. She never returned to Redwood City, where she was raised and educated. Mrs. Shaw was the last of the daughters to leave this earth on June 28, 1928. She had been ill, and her death was not unexpected. She was 85 years of age when she died. She in was buried in Goldendale Cemetery in Washington.

William Teague

William was the only son Andrew and Permelia produced and was one of the first to die. He had just reached his 21st birthday when he was taken from this earth. He too was buried in Union Cemetery, plot 75, the plot of his parents and his sister, although he arrived before any of them.

Charles D. Wright and Francis May Teague



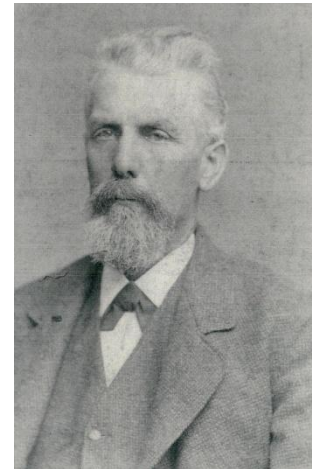
Charles D. Wright married Francis May Teague on Jan. 27, 1874, in the Congregational Church in Redwood City. May, as she was known, had been an especially gifted student throughout her studies in Redwood City schools. She was almost always at the top of her class. She went on to the state normal schools and continued to excel as she worked hard to become a teacher.

May worked for two years at her profession before she became sick at the age of 22. Living in San Jose with her husband, she contracted typhoid fever and died in that city. Her husband also contracted the disease, and his condition would not allow him to attend the sad funeral in the same Congregational Church in Redwood City in which they had been married. Charles survived his ordeal with typhoid and moved away from the area. Francis May's body was brought back to Union Cemetery and buried in the same plot as her brother Stanley.

I looked at every source I am aware of to find out what happened to Charles D. Wright, and I drew a complete blank.

May and her father, mother and brother are buried in plot 75D.

George Wentworth-Sara Anna Teague and Family



George Wentworth's native state was New Hampshire. He was educated in farming, lumber and cattle-ranching, as well as the three R's. George departed the East Coast for the West Coast at age 19 and found employment as a cattle herder with Miller and Lux Company in the San Joaquin Valley for a period of time.

He then came to Redwood City and went into the stock-raising business for Dennis Martin at Searsville. He developed the trade of butchering and opened a shop on Main Street in Redwood City.

The shop included a stable since he purchased the Pioneer Livery Stable that stood at the corner of Main and Phelps streets (Middlefield Road). He also developed a very productive farm, and as time went on, he extended its acreage, increasing his productivity. Wentworth observed that the tanneries in Redwood City were in need of redwood bark and material for the fires used for the tanning process. He hitched up his wagon and horses and traveled to the redwoods. He packed the needed material into his wagon and drove back and sold the material to the tanneries. He made this trip about twice a week, and it became a rather successful undertaking for several years to supplement the income from his farms. He continued in the stable trade until 1875 when he went back into the farming industry in western Redwood City.



Sarah Anna Teague Wentworth

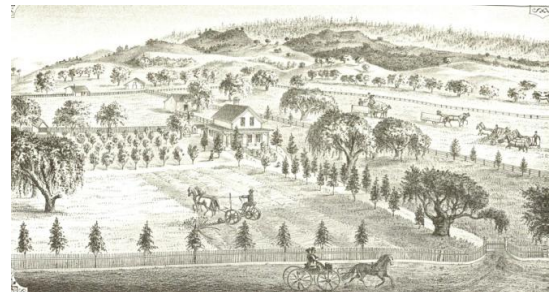
Another thing George did: on Sept. 23, 1864, he married Sarah Anna Teague in the Congregational Church at Jefferson Avenue and Phelps Street. George died on July 20, 1888.

Sarah Wentworth went on to greater success. She was deeply appreciated and loved by the community for her role in starting a Redwood City Chapter of the American Red Cross because of her appreciation of the soldiers passing through to go to the Philippines. This was, apparently, the first chapter of the Red Cross established on the Pacific Coast.

The predecessor was the Sanitary Commission, which was established during the Civil War.

Moore and DePue's excellent book, "The Illustrated History of San Mateo County," which was written and published in 1878, tells us that there were three tanneries in Redwood City at that date. One was called "Wentworth and Co." So George was busy running his extensive farm, working his tannery that employed 35 men, according to the book.

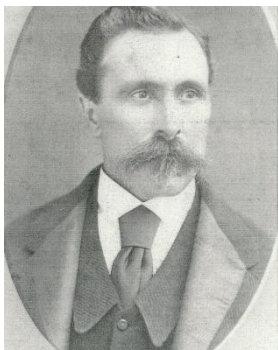
The Wentworth's had two sons, Frank P. and Charles Oscar Wentworth. Charles Oscar spent his life working for the United States Post Office, working the rural routes in western Redwood City. He also worked as a clerk in a pharmacy in Redwood City. Through studies and experience, he learned the pharmacist trade and made a solid contribution to that business, probably working for Will Frisbie in his drug store on Main Street. He married Miss Belle Crowe of Redwood City on Feb. 21, 1891, at the Congregational Church. Frank worked as a driver for Wells Fargo Stage Company for much of his life. He was also a farmer, and he did this throughout his life. He went back to it full time as he aged and got away from wrestling the reigns of the stage coaches.



Lithograph from Moore & DePue of the home and farm of Sarah and George Wentworth in Redwood City

Ott Durham, Martha Teague and Family

Ott Durham came to California and San Mateo County in 1859 to work in farming with his older brother Thomas. The Durham family owned a ranch on the west side of the mountain near La Honda. In 1873 Ott Durham married Martha Teague in the Congregational church in Redwood City by the Reverend H. E. Jewett. The marriage took place on the Christmas Day of December in that year.



Ott Durham

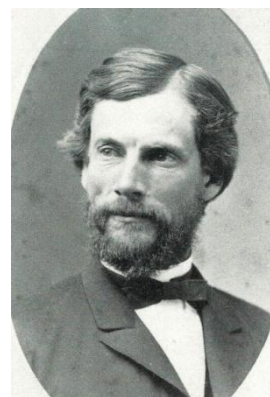
After living for a number of years on the mountain and farming for a living, the Durham family, which now included a son who was born on Feb. 6, 1875, decided to move to town in Redwood City and open a business. The San Francisco Bakery was established on Main Street, at first near Bridge Street. It later moved down to Main and Stambaugh streets on June 2, 1892. The original store was opened as a branch store of the bakery owned by C. Groner that stood on A Street near the railroad depot. Mr. Groner helped the family get started.



Martha Durham

Ott Durham passed away on June 19, 1909, and Martha Ellen Teague Durham passed away on Jan. 3, 1914; the couple is buried in plot 106L in Union Cemetery.

The George H. Rice-Mary Louise Teague and Family



About the death of George H. Rice “on the Friday prior,” the Redwood City Democrat of April 29, 1909, noted: “Undoubtedly, no name in San Mateo County is more entitled to a permanent place in the annals of California than that of George H. Rice, who for nearly half a century has devoted the best part of his life in promoting the commercial, financial and educational institutions.” Mr. Rice was born in Fairfield, Herkimer County, New York, on March 27, 1833. He received his primary education in the New York schools and was reared on his father’s farm. George went to New York City and at the age of 19, he left for California. He arrived in San Francisco on May 2, 1857.

He traveled across the bay to Alameda County, where he took up farming, remaining there for three years. He then came to Redwood City, where he engaged in the process of making shingles in the redwood forests, primarily on the western side of the mountains. George did his work in what was already a primitive way, using a draw shave. In 1867 he developed a partnership with A. Halliburton and purchased a mill site on the west side of the mountain from the Hanson and Ackerson Lumber Company. They then began the manufacture of shingles by machinery. They operated the mill until 1873, when George suffered an accident that resulted in the amputation of his left arm.



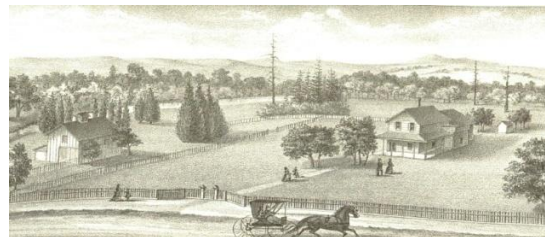
Mary Louise Teague Rice

Prior to this accident, George married Mary Louise Teague. They lived happily in Woodside until the unfortunate incident. The accident, however, did not keep the couple from producing children. A daughter was born on Sept. 10, 1874, and named after her mother, Mary Louise. They also had Roscoe, who died early; Herman, Morris, both who also died early, and Stanley. George Rice died on April 23, 1909.



George Rice

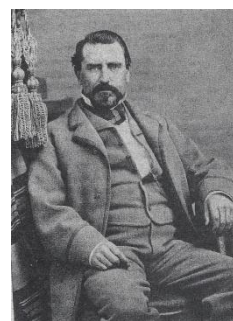
George left the mountains following his accident and was rather quickly elected to the position of county clerk and recorder for San Mateo County. He was well prepared for this position because of his excellent penmanship, which was well known. After a number of years, he retired from public government and worked on his own business as professional record searcher for the County of San Mateo and San Francisco.



Moore & DePue lithograph of the Home of George and Mary Rice in western Redwood City

Stanley Rice, whose given name was George Stanley Rice, became a member of the firm of Rice and Hinton, agents for Buick and Chevrolet vehicles, in 1928. Their garage was at 502 Main Street, Redwood City.

William C. Clark and Rebecca Teague



William C. Clark came to San Mateo County in 1856 from his native Illinois. He left Springfield for California, and when he arrived in this county, he became the constable and worked at that occupation for a number of years. He was also the first auctioneer in San Mateo County.

Clark married Miss Rebecca Teague in 1858, and in 1861 the family purchased the two lots on Sampson Street at the corner of Arguello Avenue from Simon Mezes. The lots are in block 6, range "B" on the Mezes map of Redwood City. The block is bordered by Arguello, Hopkins, Warren and Sampson. In 1863 Clark joined Benjamin Lathrop and John C. Edgar in a gold mine at Point San Pedro, which was incorporated on Oct. 1, 1863, with a capital stock of \$200,000.

It became known as the San Pedro Mining Company. The certificate was good for 50 years, but I suspect the mine was not so good, since nothing is mentioned about the three well-known individuals, getting very rich over this investment.

Clark knew Abraham intimately since he came into the grocery store where Clark worked, usually in the evenings. The Associated Press reported that Clark knew him as "Abe."

The San Mateo County Times Gazette reported on Nov. 11, 1873: "A son was born to the wife of William A. Clark. This was George W. Clark. A sister joined the family a few years later.

Rebecca died on May 5, 1880, and was buried in plot 77D in Union Cemetery. She was 30 years old.

Clark lived to be 100 years of age. He left this area and moved to San Diego after his wife passed away. On his 100th birthday, he told the people at his party about a party he had thrown in Illinois to which Abe Lincoln and Ann Rutledge came with several other young people. He said he could not help, but notice that Abe paid particular attention to Ann, although his actions were those of a very bashful country boy.

Clark was buried in San Diego, a long way from his birth home at Fancy Creek, 10 miles from Springfield, Ill. The Clarks had two children—George W. Clark of Oakland and Mrs. John W. Herd of Bakersfield. William and Rebecca had at least one son named William Albert, who died in 1933 and was buried in Union Cemetery next to his mother in plot 77, immediately behind the large monument to George and Sarah Wentworth.

Cornelius N. Christ



Cornelius Christ lived at the corner of Madison and Monroe streets in Redwood City. He was a son of John Christ, who was the Redwood City town marshal for a period of time. The newspaper called Cornelius' death "one of the most lamentable bereavements that have occurred in this city." He died at the home of his parents "on the island (meaning Diller's Island) in the center of town" on Jan. 7, 1900. He was only 29 years old when the angel of death took him.

Cornelius was the brother of John Christ, who was the town marshal of Redwood City for many years. According to the 1875 Redwood City Times and Gazette

The newspaper stated: "Born in Redwood City, January 16, 1875, to the wife of John Christ, a daughter." As one can see they were rather brief on such matters, and they certainly did not mention the name of the lady who bore this child. Nonetheless, the child's name was Charlotte. She turned out to be a beautiful young lady. She married Frank P. Wentworth, the son of George Wentworth and Sarah Ann Teague Wentworth.



Charlotte Christ Wentworth

Charlotte became quite well known in Redwood City, as the newspaper announced on Oct. 25, 1923, that Mrs. Wentworth was one of the most prominent women of the community. "She was exceptionally talented, with a pleasing, beautiful soprano voice," stated the Redwood City Standard on that date. The Wentworth and the Christ families were prominent members of the Congregational Church. Unfortunately, the article was published on the date of her death, so the article was her obituary.

In 1922, Mr. and Mrs. Christ moved briefly to Berkeley before moving to Cloverdale, where their other daughter was the wife of the Reverend Rathbone, the former pastor of the Congregational Church in Redwood City. He had been transferred to Cloverdale. Charlotte and Cornelius Christ are buried in plot 134 in Union Cemetery.

San Carlos' Circle Star Hosted Big Names

By *James O. Clifford, Sr.*

When the subject is show business on the Peninsula, the Circle Star Theater in San Carlos is usually brought up—as in “Whatever happened to the Circle Star? I saw some great shows there.”

Great shows, indeed. The theater hosted the likes of Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Wayne Newton, Bob Hope, Tony Bennett, Richard Pryor and George Carlin. The Circle Star seemed to have everything going for it when it opened in October of 1964 with Jane Powell starring in “My Fair Lady.”

Most importantly, none of the 3,743 seats was more than 50 feet from the round, rotating stage (Circle Star – Get it?). Don't worry about a blocked view. The only support posts were located in the rim surrounding the arena behind the last row of seats. The rotating stage had its problems. Some stars complained it made them seasick. Emmy Lou Harris became so disoriented she fell off and landed in the audience.

Producers Sammy Lewis and Danny Dare, both theater veterans whose resumes stretched back to vaudeville, boasted that the \$2.5 million venue was the largest, most comfortable and best equipped theater-in-the-round in the nation. The Circle Star had a restaurant, executive offices, a rehearsal hall, dressing rooms, workshop and scenery storage room.

The arena had 16 aisles and 20 rows of seats converging toward the three-level stage. There was 35 inches of row space as well as cushioned seats that folded up, along with the arms, an action that allowed late-comers to reach their seats with little inconvenience to the more prompt.

The theater's designers had plays and musicals in mind when they envisioned the future of the Circle Star. A network of 24 microphones and lights placed over the stage were hidden from the view of the audience. The orchestra pit was placed off the edge of the stage.

Before the opening, Lewis and Dare had inked big names for a first season slated to run 46 weeks with musicals, celebrity shows, comedies, opera and ballet.

In addition to “My Fair Lady,” the first season called for “Damn Yankees,” starring Red Buttons, “Bye Bye Birdie” with George Gobel, the Nat King Cole Show, and “She Loves Me,” featuring Dorothy Collins.

Investors in the venture included such show business draws as Debbie Reynolds, Nate King Cole, Steve Allen, Johnny Mercer and Tony Martin and Cyd Charisse. What could go wrong? Something did because within a year Lewis and Dare were singing a different tune.

The Redwood City Tribune reported on Sept. 22, 1965, that the owners were “preparing to make a major shift” in policy. The summer's run of musicals failed to “generate much excitement at the box office,” even though some shows drew outstanding reviews.

The first year of operation proved one thing, according to Robert Hulter, the Circle Star's company manager. He told the Tribune that the Peninsula is not a good market for musicals or plays staged in the round.

What's in a Name?

On the other hand, celebrity shows that ran for a week or so played to packed houses almost every night. The stars included Judy Garland, Harry Belafonte and Liberace.

“Attendance at our musicals has been spotty,” Hulter said. “The people just seem to be staying home. Hulter theorized that area residents wanted “the Lake Tahoe or Las Vegas-type show.”

There was more to the problem than that, but whatever the reason, money was the root. Originally, Circle Star built and produced its own musicals and plays. The high cost of doing so locally, however, forced it to switch to shows that were put together elsewhere and then went on the road. These shows included the Broadway production of “The Odd Couple” that paired Don Rickles and Ernest Borgnine.

Earlier studies indicated there was a market on the Peninsula for professional musicals and plays. Hulter said there had been “a strange” change in taste. However, just how big was that market? Could the area support two similar entertainment sites?

The Circle Star was competing with the Hyatt Music Theater in Burlingame. At one point, it even adopted a tactic used by its up-Bayshore rival when it expanded its runs from the usual one week to three weeks, the theory being that an audience for each show gets bigger each week.

The Hyatt’s run was short compared to the Circle Star’s. Opened in 1964, a decade or so later it was a movie house. The 2,500-seat Hyatt, also a theater-in-the-round, was lambasted for having “a dangle of microphones” hanging over the actors on stage. According to the Burlingame Historical Society, plastic glasses were used to serve beer and wine, and there was a charge for parking. Other complaints included no checkroom for coats, insufficient drinking fountains and poor air conditioning.

Cinema Treasures, a website favored by movie house fans, received a posting from “Paul in New York” who recounted his experience at the Hyatt.

“As a kid, I saw Peter Pan with Kathryn Crosby,” he wrote. “It couldn’t compete with the Circle Star in San Carlos.” Paul said there was an attempt at using part of the building for the movie and part for theater. The result was “terrible.”

He remembered watching the play, “Fiddler on the Roof,” and hearing the sound from the movie, “The Poseidon Adventure,” “bleeding into the theater.” Paul moved out of the area but made a business trip to Burlingame in 2006.

“I was staying at the Hyatt, so I went to see a forgettable movie one night,” he wrote. “The restrooms were filthy and rundown, and the theatre had the unmistakable air of death.” The movie house closed the next year.

More Competition Ahead

There would be more competition down the road – literally. The Circle Star hit hard times in the late 1980s when bigger venues, such as the Shoreline Amphitheater in Mountain View, lured away top stars. The theater changed hands a few times and went in to foreclosure in 1993. It drew squatters, and in April of 1997, a fire destroyed part of the backstage area. By that time the San Carlos City Council had already approved plans to tear down the building to make way for the Circle Star Center, a complex of office buildings and a small hotel.

Heavy equipment tore down the Circle Star in a three-day demolition operation that started on July 23, 1997. The Redwood City Tribune reported that the destruction drew “the curious and sentimental,” among them Doug Caraway, a former sound man at the Circle Star. Caraway managed to salvage a piece of a dressing room wall that contained doodled words made with a felt-top pen. They said: “May 1992 Sinatra.”

Please give to the Archives Committee of the Redwood City Public Library and the Historic Union Cemetery Association by filling and cutting out the applications below. Mail to either:

Archives Committee of the Redwood City Public Library
 Redwood City Public Library
 1044 Middlefield Rd
 Redwood City, CA 94063

Or

Historic Union Cemetery Association
 PO Box 610033
 Redwood City, CA 94063

**Archives Committee of
 The Redwood City Public Library**
 1044 Middlefield Road, Redwood City, CA 94063
 Federal Exempt Org. 94-2539136

Membership levels:

\$10.00 Individual \$25.00 Business / Corporation

\$50.00 Sustaining \$100.00 Life Membership

My check is enclosed, payable to Archives Committee of the Redwood City Public Library

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State/Zip _____

Historic Union Cemetery Association
 PO Box 610033, Redwood City, CA 94063

Membership levels:

\$10.00 Individual \$25.00 Business / Corporation Organization (By donation)

My check is enclosed, payable to The Union Cemetery Association

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State/Zip _____

Editor's Note

Thank you to the Redwood City Civic and Cultural Commission for their monetary and vocal support for this journal.

Hope you enjoyed the Journal of Local History of the Redwood City Public Library. Please send us a line at gsuarez@redwoodcity.org or call me, Gene Suarez, at 650-780-7098.

We welcome any comments or constructive criticism. Our next issue will appear in the Summer 2011. From all of us at Redwood City Public Library's Archives Committee, we wish you a pleasant Spring.

