

# BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Lynn Melena, BPA President

### Alice and Bob Frost—They Just Keep on Volunteering



If you are one of the donkey caretakers, you know Bob Frost.

If you are a member of the Barron Park Seniors, you know Alice and Bob Frost.

If you are a member of the Barron Park Green Team, you know Alice and Bob Frost.

This amazing couple—50-year residents of Barron Park—is so active in our neighborhood, and outside of it, that they are truly role models for the rest of us.

I first heard of Bob Frost as the person who managed the donkeys. Then, when we started up the Green Team and they were among the first to join, I began to see that there was much more than donkey care and feeding in their repertoire.

It's hard to know where to begin. Perhaps when they got married 53 years ago! A few years later, in 1960, Alice and Bob moved to a house on Josina. That was when Bob took a job at Watkins Johnson where he worked on microwave technology. (He retired 40 years later, to the day.) In 1966, they moved to their present home on El Cerrito Road. Their four children grew up in Barron Park, attending the multiple schools that opened and closed during that time. Mark lives in San Jose, Curtis lives in Virginia, Robin is in Tennessee and Stephen lives in Oregon.

Bob was very involved in Boy Scouts (Scout Master of Troop 54) and Alice in PTA. At the same time, Alice resumed her college education, starting at Foothill while it was still in Mountain View and continuing at San Jose State where she got a bachelor's degree in Physics and Mathematics, and master's degrees in both Applied Mathematics and in Computer Science—not your traditional disciplines for women of that time. After that, she worked for small computer companies and still does tax work as an Enrolled Agent for a CPA.

I began to take a new interest in this couple's accomplishments when I saw Alice Frost featured in the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) newsletter as an "outdoor education leader." She has been leading MROSD hikes since 1990, and in 1996 began leading school-age children on environmental science-based field exploratory field trips. That's where "Alice really found her niche with the District," according to the newsletter.

There's more. Sometime in the 1990s, Bob and Alice began tutoring students at Alta Vista High School in math and science. Alta Vista is the continuation high school for the Mountain View-Los Altos High School District. It also serves Palo Alto students. They spend one morning a week in the classroom. "It's a great feeling when you walk out," said Alice.

Meanwhile, back in Barron Park, Bob manages the phone and email tree for the Barron



Alice and Bob Frost.

Park Seniors. That involves tracking the RSVPs and lunch orders for the 25–40 seniors who get together every other month. (Rosemary Jacobsen and Julie Spengler manage restaurant reservations and other planning activities for the seniors).

Bob also sets up the feeding calendar for the approximately 20 volunteers who regularly feed Perry and Niner—making sure there are no gaps when someone can't make it. He is also lead trouble-shooter when any problems come up. (Bob reminds us to keep the donations to the donkeys coming.

Bob and Alice show up for almost every Green Team activity. For the recent Green Tour, they were in charge of assembling the meeting notice signs and getting them out into the neighborhood. They have also generously opened their home for the Team's December dinner and other meetings. And their two cars are both Priuses!

So what do they do for relaxation and exercise? Hiking and bicycling with friends. Plus, when I interviewed them for this article, Bob was just back from a kayaking trip, and Alice had had her regular ballet class that morning.

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# Grow It! Find Inspiration, Grow Your Garden...Share it with Others

By Nancy Lewis

**A**s the fall planting season rolls around, consider these benefits of having your own beautiful food garden:

**Better taste.** Homegrown food has superior taste, freshness and nutrition, especially from organic, high-quality soil.

**Better health.** Homegrown produce is pesticide-free and more nutritious. Gardening is good exercise, meditative and calming.

**Higher quality of life for kids.** A garden draws the family outside more. Children are highly receptive, and a garden sparks their imagination and curiosity.

**More control.** You become the food producer, not just the consumer. You know exactly how it was grown, freshness is guaranteed and you control the cost.

**Less waste.** Packaging is greatly reduced. Unused green matter gets composted and returned to the soil.

**Reduced fossil fuels in the food chain.** Petroleum based fertilizers, plastic packaging and trucking are eliminated.

**Increased property values.** Well-kept yard, water-efficient yards with curb appeal and excellent soil boost home value and become jewels of the neighborhood.



**Stronger connection with nature.** We become aware of natural laws and cycles and the interdependence of all life forms through the seasons. Many natural wonders await when we are outside to witness them.

For those aspiring to have a vegetable garden, a bounty of help is available. *Blotanical* (<http://www.blotanical.com>) is a worldwide hub for garden bloggers that is a rich source of tips, lore, humor and how-to pictures.

Also, a new and exciting website for the rapidly expanding community of gardeners in California has launched and is looking for contributors! The site, *www.YourGardenShow.com*, was created by a Master Gardener and an Emmy-award-winning producer and is designed to be easy-to-use, fun, and inspire new and seasoned gardeners to share their experiences. More information about YourGardenShow.com can be found in this online press release: [www.prweb.com/releases/gardens/plants/prweb4073104.htm](http://www.prweb.com/releases/gardens/plants/prweb4073104.htm). More and better gardeners means better public health and stronger communities! Here's a recent CBS news report: [kdkc.com/video/?id=73950](http://kdkc.com/video/?id=73950).

**NEW URBAN GARDENS**  
[www.new-urban-gardens.com](http://www.new-urban-gardens.com)  
 650.743.6715

## Help Support the Barron Park Donkeys!

**A**ll those who care about Perry and Niner seek to guarantee their proper on-going care and shelter, as well as to ensure that assets will be available for health concerns as the donkeys age. The handlers hope that those generous neighbors who have contributed in the past will consider increasing their support this year. Contributions for the donkeys' care may be sent to: The Palo Alto Donkey Project, ACTERRA (Action



for a Sustainable Earth), 3921 East Bayshore Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303-4303. The check must be made out to "ACTERRA-Palo Alto Donkey Fund." All of the above must be included.

For further information about making a contribution on behalf of the donkeys, or if you would

like information about how to become one of the volunteer donkey handlers, please call Bob Frost, 493-8272 or email at [bobfrost34-at-yahoo.com](mailto:bobfrost34-at-yahoo.com).

### BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION

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*Seniors:* Vacant

*Traffic & Streets:* Vacant

*Welcoming:* Gwen Luce

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BPA meetings are held the 3rd

Tuesday of most months at 7:15 p.m.

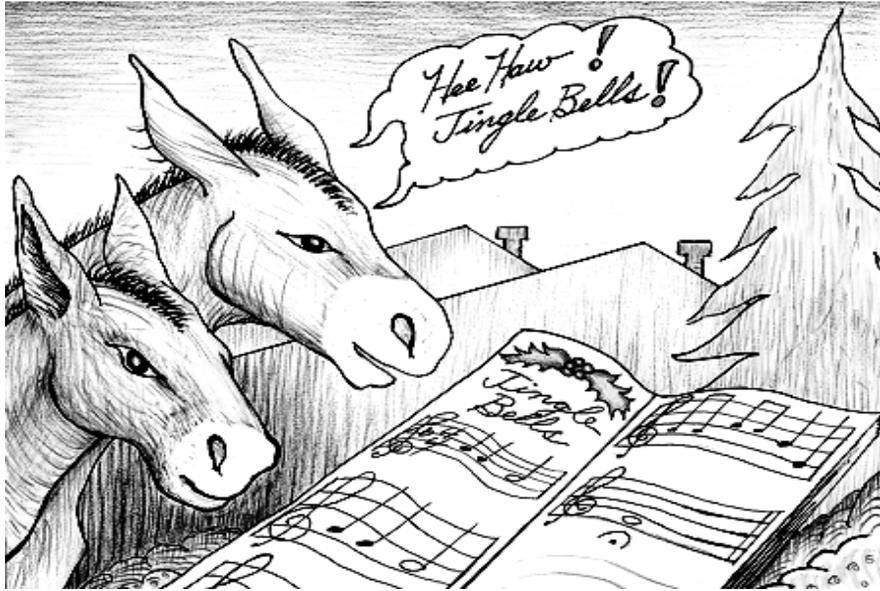
Call Lynnne Melena for location: 493-2135

[www.bpaonline.org](http://www.bpaonline.org)

\* ELEVENTH ANNUAL \*

# Barron Park Neighborhood Holiday Party and Donkey Parade

*Featuring the Gunn High School Chamber Singers*



Pericles (Perry) and Miner 49er (Niner), the Barron Park community donkeys

Say hello to Perry and 'Niner—Stroll through our neighborhood!  
Sing seasonal favorites! Bring your kids and animals!

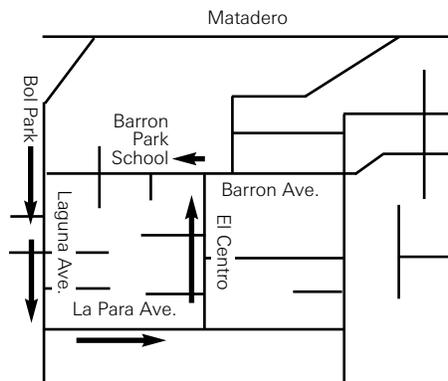
Saturday, December 18th

Parade: 2:30 pm Bol Park – Rain or Shine!

Party: 3:15 pm (Approx.) Barron Park Elementary School

## Parade Route:

Meet at Bol Park 2:30 pm  
Leave Bol Park 2:45 pm  
Laguna to La Para  
La Para to El Centro  
El Centro to Barron  
Barron to Barron Park School



Refreshments and singing at  
Barron Park Elementary School  
Multi Purpose Room 3:15 pm  
(If you can bring goodies for the  
party, please call Alice Frost  
at 493-8272)

# WELCOMING PARTY IN BOL PARK

by Gwen Luce, BPA Board Welcoming Chair



**Gary Breitbard and his musicians entertained.**

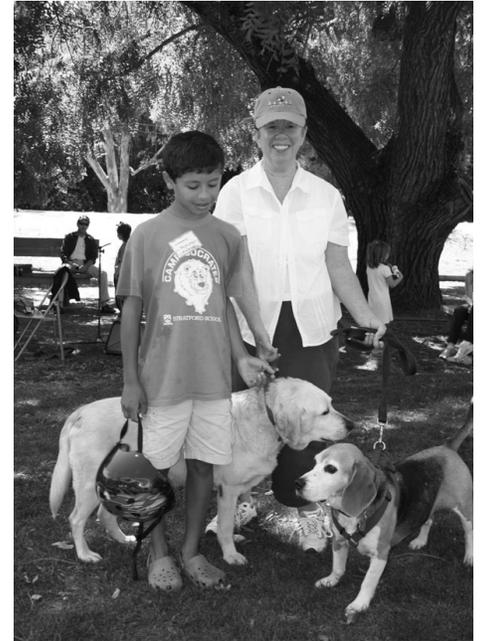
**B**ouquets of thanks to all who made the BPA Welcoming Gathering happen on a beautiful Sunday afternoon at the end of August in Bol Park! So important were the set-up and clean-up crews: Bud Rubin, and his trusty truck, who helped transport the 8 foot tables, 52 chairs, and large thermoses for fresh water graciously provided for us by Juana Briones' Principal, Matt Nagle, aided by Science teacher, Karen Kessler, who helped facilitate, along with Steve Luce, who with Clint Smith, Perky Perkins, and Louis Lehot were instrumental in putting up and disassembling the canopies provided by John King and Karen Saxena.

Entering the Park, neighbors were warmly greeted by Sally O'Neil, Alice Frost, Art Liberman, BPA Board Membership Chair, and teen members of the BPA Babysitting List, Paulette Wolak, Maia Adar, and Hannah Allison, who welcomed Newcomers, Not So New/In-Betweeners, and Long Time/Old-Timers with color coded nametags to identify their longevity in the neighborhood.

Barron Park's Historian, Doug Graham's ever fascinating history exhibit was carefully transported to and from the Park by David Taylor, who joined Mircea Voskerician, his sister, Gabriella, Aileen Cohen, Louis Lehot, Shanae, Lydia Kou, BPA Emergency Prep Chair, and Barbara Kurth scooping 18 gallons of 6 flavors of Driftwood Deli ice-cream into 400 cones and/or cups. Ice-chests to keep the ice-cream cold were provided courtesy of Anne Anderson, Teena James, Joyce Hoppa, Chaia Pienknagura and Lee Taylor, of PA Fire Station #5, who not only provided all the ice we needed, but along with his colleagues kindly gave fans tours of their fire truck.

Side by side of unlimited helpings of jamoca almond fudge, chocolate chip, cookie dough, vanilla bead, mint chip and rainbow sherbet, Gary Breitbard and Jena Rauti lead their musician friends in enthusiastic serenades of traditional songs and Hawaiian tunes, inspiring dancing, too.

Miner and Perry's Head Donkey Handler,



**Susan Swendseid (standing) and Raj Rambo with Susan's Beagle, Jack, and Bella, a yellow lab whom Susan & Raj "rescued" until Bella's owner arrived to pick her up. Seems Bella knew there was free ice cream and crashed the party alone.**

Bob Frost accompanied the donkeys and handlers, Janet Guzman and Leonard Simpson, to delight young and old in the Park with their visit. Inge Harding Barlow patiently and knowledgeably answered questions about the donkeys' history, displaying hand-painted donkey t-shirts by Barron Park artist, Edith Smith.

Nearby, Annette Puskarich provided information about the Barron Park Green Team, and its plan for an October cycling tour.

Last but not least, the indefatigable duo of Moira Saxena, one of our BPA Baby Sitters, donated her artistry to a continuous long line of face-painting recipients, and close by, Lisa Herndon, unceasingly and generously shared her expertise about nourishment, fermentation, canning, even offering food samples of items she teaches how to make in fall workshops in her Barron Park home. It was a great day in the neighborhood—photographed by our talented BPA Newsletter Editor and Board member, Nancy Hamilton.



Free ice cream was a huge hit: 6 flavors/18 gallons from Driftwood Deli.

Gwen Luce, event organizer, with Reina and Alex Rampel and their son Cameron (17 mos.)



Moira Saxena volunteered her face-painting talent.



Naureen George with daughter Aliya (7) and son Zeshan (1).



From left: Lydia Kou, BPA Emergency Preparedness Chair, Joel Davidson, Neighborhood Preparedness Coordinator, and "Perky" Perkins, member of PANDA.



The soccer game was the grand finale of the event.

# BARRON PARK AT WAR—1943

(HISTORICAL FICTION—PART ONE OF THREE PARTS)

By Douglas L. Graham, Barron Park Historian



Photo by Jo Hamilton

**Doug Graham points out the location of the Southern Pacific Railroad "flag stop" station in Barron Park, to Bern King in front of Doug's Barron Park history display at the Welcoming Party.**

## Remember the Stouffers?

In the spring, 2009 edition of this newsletter, you were introduced to the Stouffers, a fictional family, and you read about "their day in Barron Park" (Wednesday, May 4, 1949). You met **Richard**, who rode the train to work in San Francisco, from Neal Station in Barron Park. You spent much of the day with his wife **Anne**, following her social activities and housekeeping. You were introduced to their three children; **Peter**, a teenager at Palo Alto High School, **Annie**, a sixth-grader at Barron Park School, and their baby sister **Debbie**, a kindergartner there. They lived at 849 La Para Avenue (a fictional address). You also met some of the Stouffers' friends and learned some things about Barron Park in the late 1940s, such as about the "frog symphony" on Matadero Creek. Reader reaction was very positive, and some of you specifically asked to hear more about the Stouffers.

In this issue and in the two following, we will travel farther back in time and meet the Stouffers again, six years earlier, in the middle of the U.S. involvement in World War II. The "Home Front," as it was called, was a vital part of the gigantic system that was gearing up, in 1943, to achieve victory at all costs over the aggressive military tyrannies that had seized control of so much of Europe, Africa and Asia. In California, we were far from the fighting but thoroughly involved in the research, manufacturing, food production, shipping and training that went on to make up the greatest logistical war effort ever seen on the planet. The people who were living in Barron Park at the time all shared in that effort, in their own small ways, and the purpose of this article is to bring home and personalize the story of that time.

## TUESDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1943

(See Box #1, Palo Alto Times headlines)

### Anne Stouffer prepares for shopping

**A**nne sat down at her kitchenette table, opened her purse and checked the vitals; her driver's license, her wallet, her coin purse, and her war food Ration Book #3, with a few coupons left. She spread all the rationing stuff out on the table. Her coin purse contained a small pile of the new red and blue pasteboard war ration tokens, also called "ration coins." They were about the size of a penny, and were given out by shopkeepers as change for any excess of points your coupon entitled you to as compared to the points your purchase actually required. Each hard, pasteboard disc was embossed with a big "1" in the center, with the words "OPA Red Point" or "OPA Blue Point." She thought "so, why do they say that?"

**Box 1: Headlines of the Day**

*Palo Alto Times*

Tuesday October 5, 1943

68,676 fans see Yanks nip Cards in series opener: Defending champs lose 2-4 duel by Gordon's 400-foot homer

Air bases in Greece pounded: Nazi resistance stiffens. Frankfurt gets no rest from bombs

Two vital airbases in Italy occupied: British 8th Army makes progress

Ration Board Prepares to cut gas consumption 10%

The color is obvious. She counted them up, separating the red points (for meat and cheese) and the blue points (for “processed foods, especially canned goods). Then she contemplated the meat ration stamps remaining in her War Ration Book #3. She read: “Meats and Fats: Red Stamps (Book Three) good for 10 points of each, October 1 through December 28. Processed Foods: Blue Stamps good for 10 points of each, October 1 through December 28. Sugar: Stamp No. 24 (Book Three) good for five pounds, October 1-10.” She thought: “and they are no good if the moon is full? Someday we will look back on all this and think how ridiculous it was.” The doorbell rang and she knew it was her ride to the grocery store, Linda Maguire.

**Sharing rides and building friendships**

Linda drove a 1937 Oldsmobile Business coupe, a sleek sporty model. As they got into the two-seater, Anne looked at her own car sitting in the driveway. It was a blue deluxe Chevrolet two-door sedan that seated six. She and Richard had bought it new in 1940. She asked Linda, “Did you and the Captain buy your car new?” Linda laughed: “Golly, no! We bought it used when we got married in 1940. Now Anne smiled as she replied, “Oh, yeah, I remember now—you both graduated, he was commissioned and you got hitched, all in one glorious week.” Linda replied with a wry smile “Hellish would be a more appropriate adjective.” The two women,

although they had known each other but a short time and were almost a decade apart in age, were rapidly becoming very comfortable with each other. Anne thought to herself: “Maybe it's because of the war, but it seems easier than ever to make friends these days—maybe especially here in California where most people come from somewhere else.”

**“A” and “B” ration stickers**

Earlier that morning Linda had driven her husband, Captain Patrick Maguire, out to Camp Page Mill in time for him to have his breakfast with his troops in the mess tent. It was about a three-mile drive. Now, as she drove down La Para Avenue with Anne, she saw that she needed to get gas before going to Palo Alto and back, so she headed for the Barron Park Texaco Station. As Linda pulled up to the pump, a young woman attendant came running out of the repair shop to pump her gas. She waited while Linda fumbled in her purse for the coupon book. Linda said “Hi Louise, here's my coupon book. I see gas has gone up again.” Louise said “Yeah, a half-cent up: ethyl's now 15 1/2 cents a gallon and regular is 14 1/2. You want ethyl, right.” Linda told her “Yes, please: we have to keep this old wreck going for the duration.” Anne said, “I see you have a 'B' sticker.” Linda replied “Yes, since we're military, we qualify for it as ‘essential war workers.’ I think you have an ‘A,’ right?” Anne said “Right—we can get four gallons per week, which is supposed to be enough to get you to work and make one shopping trip. Thank heavens my Richard takes the train to the City.”

**Why they used to be called “service stations”**

After Louise pumped Linda's weekly B ration of eight gallons of gas, took the ration stamp and cleaned the Oldsmobile's windshield and windows, she offered to check the engine oil level. Linda looked at her watch and quickly said, “No, thanks, I'm late already” (see Illustrations A and B).

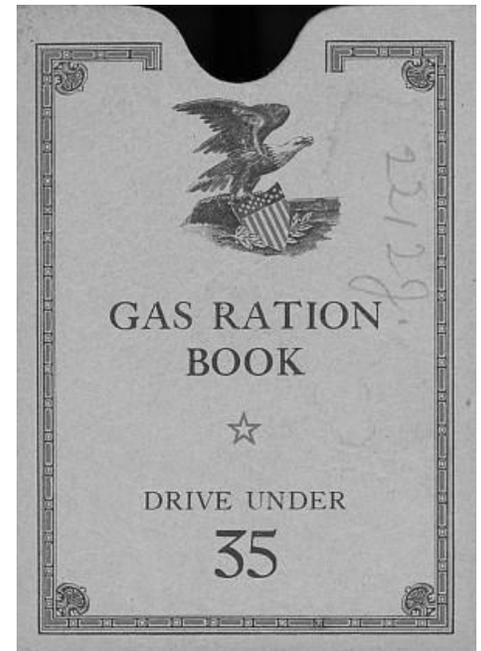
**Christmas in October**

When they got to downtown Palo Alto, Linda parked on Waverly near Hamilton. Anne had an errand at the Post Office so they went there first. The new Post Office, recently built by the WPA, was a pleasant place, although the usual queue had already formed. Anne explained “This is a

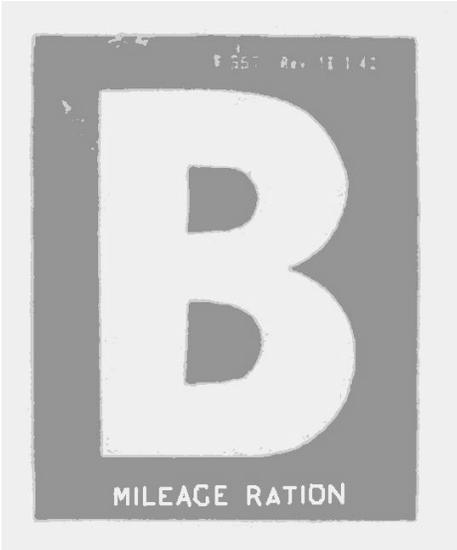
Christmas package for my cousin Joe. The deadline is just a little over a week away—Friday next week, the fifteenth. The APO (Army Post Office) address is New York, but we know he's overseas, probably fighting in Italy somewhere. It gets cold in Italy at Christmas, doesn't it?” Linda replied, “Well, our boys have only got to southern Italy, of course. I think it's probably a lot like Central California—chilly, cloudy and wet with snow on the higher mountains.” Anne said “Anyway, I'm sure Joe can use these wool socks and scarf that I knit for him. It makes me so sad to think of them over there in the mud and getting shot at.” When the package was safely mailed, she and Linda crossed over Waverly to the Purity Market.

**Counting blue points**

When the women entered the Purity Market (see Illustration C) they were immediately greeted by John, the proprietor. He greeted Anne by name and asked to be introduced to Linda. They chatted for a few moments, making small talk, until Anne said, “Let's see what they've got in canned goods.” At the canned goods section, Anne spotted some cans of yellow wax beans and asked the clerk to hand her one. It was a nineteen-ounce can for 43 cents but also required 14 blue points, which was more than Anne thought she



**Illustration A: Gas Ration Book Cover—Ames, Iowa Historical Society webpage**



**Illustration B: Gas Ration windshield "B" sticker—Ames, Iowa Historical Society webpage**

wanted to use for beans today (each person only got 48 points per month for canned goods, which made up the bulk of the 'processed foods' that were rationed). She handed it back to the clerk. However, after finding that 16 points were being charged

for peas and 14 for corn, she changed her mind and took the beans, as well as the corn. She remarked to Linda, "What the heck, I might as well get them. The stamps are only good for a few more weeks, anyway, and Paul's Grocery (on El Camino Real in Barron Park) never seems to have much left when I get there." The next stop was the meat counter: Anne thought Purity was especially good for meats. Anne decided to get some lamb chops and frankfurters. Linda made her purchases, and led the way to the produce section. "Here are some nice carrots, don't you want some?" Linda prompted. Anne said "Not necessary. We have lots from our Victory Garden. As a matter of fact," she said, lowering her voice, "Why don't you just let me give you some"? Linda said, "But, aren't you canning next week? You'll need all the carrots you can dig, to can for the winter." By now, the clerk had carried their items to the cash register at the front counter. John totaled the purchases and collected their ration stamps.

**Window-shopping for clothes**

The two friends left their groceries in the

car and walked along Waverly to University. Linda was thinking, "We must make a fine sight, two pretty young women shopping together." Linda had dark hair, cut in short bangs in front and hanging to shoulder height in the back. She was wearing a bright floral print cotton dress. Anne, on the other hand, had a slightly more matronly build, was a natural blonde with bobbed hair, and was wearing a slacks and shirt outfit. Both women were wearing flat shoes, saving their remaining high heels for special social occasions. Reflecting a national style shift (which may have begun in California), neither wore a hat. They stopped in front of a clothing store that had the fall outfits on display in the windows. The two friends contemplated the display in silence for a minute and then Anne said, "Did you ever see such a listless-looking display of new fall fashions?" "Listless—I like that," said Linda with a smile, while looking at a dull grey-brown dress that was hemmed just below the knee and looked a lot like the 1942 model she was wearing. Anne said, with a good deal of animation, "Did you read about the new order, which restricts the "silhouette"



**Purity Market—Palo Alto Historical Association (PAHA) archive, 1941**

of new dresses to that of 1942? 'War Production Board Limiting Order L-85' or something like that. It says that significant changes in fashion are forbidden, so as to avoid changes in manufacturing equipment, techniques and labor. Colors are also restricted to soft, pale shades, so less dyestuff will be manufactured." They considered all this for a moment, then Linda said "Ah, the hazards of wartime—how can we possibly survive?" They both started giggling, and Linda looked around to see if they were attracting any attention.

**Victory garden on Yoshimura land**

On the way back to Anne's home, they decided to stop at the Stouffer's Victory Garden. Linda parked at the empty lot next to the Stouffer home. Anne explained that she had planted a 40 by fifty foot plot or about 2,000 square feet, mostly in tomatoes and squash. It was a small part of the land belonging to the Yoshimura family. She had gotten their permission to garden here, by writing to them at the Japanese incarceration camp in Arkansas. Anne showed Linda around the garden, saying "Meggie Thorpe helped me get it started. Last year, I helped her with her garden over on Chimalus Avenue." She made sure that Linda picked a few tomatoes and some of the last of the yellow crook-neck summer squash to take home, and then said: "Now I've got to hurry—it's almost time to walk over and pick up Annie from her "Nursery School" class."

**Annie Stouffer is in "nursery school"**

Linda was interested—"Oh is there a nursery school in Barron Park?" Anne grinned and said, "Not really, I just call it that. We set up a sort of cooperative class for kids that are at least four years old but not old enough to go to Kindergarten. Annie won't be five until November, so she can't start at Mayfield School until next fall. She's already reading, but she's awkward around kids her age. We think nursery school is just right for her. There are four other kids, including Annie's best friend Ginny Walsh." "How does the school work?" asked Linda. "Well, the five families all pay into Mrs. Miller, who uses her living room and dining room for the class. She seems to know what she's doing, and Annie just loves her. She and her husband rent a house up on Rincon Circle, by Bar-



**Illustration D: Paper Doll—Mary of the WACS**

ron Creek." Linda said, "You mean Dry Creek?" "Yes, some people still call it that—you probably heard that from Seph Weiler" (Linda's landlord at the Tourist Court, Sepharin Weiler—Joe Weiler's father).

**Paper Dolls**

When Anne picked her up at Mrs. Miller's, Annie was beside herself with excitement. She was in a hurry to get home and work on her new paper doll. When they got back to their house, a five minute walk, Annie had to be wheedled into eating lunch first. The paper doll book was called "Mary of the WACS," and it had come in the mail the day before (see Illustration D). A WAC was a member of the Women's Army Corps, and all the clothing sets for this little paper doll were uniforms. There were uniforms for all occasions, from military balls to drill and calisthenics. Annie was so excited because Mrs. Miller had taught the children how to use scissors today and Annie figured she was ready to tackle the job of cutting out all the uniforms. First, Anne had to show her how to cut around the tabs that she would need to fit the uniforms on the little doll body.

**The Philco Radio Console**

Anne had turned on the radio again, in the big Philco console in the living room and tuned it to station KGO (see Box #4, Philco

Radio Console). She was highly amused when they started playing the most popular hit song of 1943: "Paper Doll." Anne sang along as the Mills Brothers belted out the lyrics of the chorus;

"I'm gonna buy a Paper Doll that I can call my own  
A doll that other fellows cannot steal  
And then the flirty, flirty guys with their flirty, flirty eyes  
Will have to flirt with dollies that are real"

After a half-dozen stanzas, the song ended with these lines;

"I'd rather have a Paper Doll to call my own  
Than have a fickle-minded

real live girl"

"Momma," asked Annie, "what does 'flirty' mean? Luckily for Anne, her whistling tea kettle called her to the kitchen just then.

**Box #4: The Philco Radio**

Philco console-type combination radio and phonograph record player/changer (1940).

This "radio" was finished in "curly" grained maple wood and was about the size of a typical top-loading washing machine. It provided two bands of radio tuning, regular AM for U.S. broadcasts and short-wave to bring in overseas broadcasts. It also had a record turntable and changing mechanism so that you could load a stack of 78 rpm 12-inch shellac discs played with needles made of cactus spines (which went dull and had to be changed frequently). The console had lots of vacuum tubes, and the sound was considered not too bad by people who had never yet heard "HI-FI" sound recorded at 33<sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> rpm on long-playing vinyl records.

By the time she came back with her cup of tea and a prepared (if somewhat lame) answer, Annie was thoroughly engrossed, with her tongue stuck out one side of her mouth, cutting around a tab on a pair of olive drab paper doll slacks.

**Radio station surfing**

Peter Stouffer got home about 3:30 and burst in the kitchen door along with his best friend, Ted Bancroft. They were both third-graders at Mayfield School on El Camino Real, where all the Barron Park kids went for elementary school. "Mom! Mom!" yelled Peter, "Can we listen to the radio?" Assured that they could, they raced into the living room and KGO cut out. Anne overheard the boys talking as Peter twiddled the big tuning dial, bringing in each local station in turn. She heard a snatch of Harry James singing "I've Heard That Song Before" (another top hit in 1943) and Benny Goodman's "Taking a Chance on Love." Then Ted's voice rose above the radio chatter, "Aw, come on, Peter, there's nothing good on until 'Terry and the Pirates' at 5:00 pm: you know that!" The radio went off and the boys appeared in the kitchen. They each grabbed an oatmeal-raisin-molasses cookie from the pan that Anne had just taken out of the oven. "Can we go up to the Bols' farm, Mom? Huh, Mom?" Anne agreed and they tore out the back door before she could do more than shout after them; "Don't be late for supper!" Ted and Peter went through a hole they had made in the back fence of the Stouffer's yard, which, not coincidentally connected to the Bancrofts' backyard. Ted got an OK from his mother, and they jumped on their bikes.

**The Bol Horses and smoking butts**

Enjoying the lovely October afternoon, Peter Stouffer and Ted Bancroft rode their bicycles up La Para to Laguna Avenue and along Laguna over the bridge across Matadero Creek. Past the creek, they stopped by the Bol pasture fence to pet one of the Bols' horses that ambled over to see if they had any food for it. "Eeyuw" said Ted, as the horse nuzzled his hand. "He's getting me all slimy." "Won't hurt you any," replied Peter, "And by the way, he's a she." "How can you tell?" asked Ted. Then he blushed and giggled. "Never Mind," he said, "I know" (see Box #5—the

**Box# 5: The Bol Family**

In 1936, Cornelis and Josina Bol and their sons emigrated from Holland to California to escape the growing Nazi threat in neighboring Germany. Cornelis had been invited to Stanford as a research assistant. Cornelis is best known as the inventor of the Mercury Vapor Lamp, for long the brightest artificial light source and still widely used. Josina is best known as a neighborhood benefactor, having sold the land for Cornelis Bol Park to the neighborhood for far under market value. Their five sons grew up in Barron Park, tending the family "farm" and helping Cornelis manage, maintain and expand the Barron Park Water Company. The water company owned deep wells, pumping stations, water mains and fire hydrants, and supplied domestic and agricultural water to the north end of Barron Park. The pasture which became Bol Park was home in 1943 to several goats and horses. The donkeys came later, starting with one to keep the last horse from getting too lonely.

Bol Family).

The two boys rode on, following Laguna as it turned to parallel the Southern Pacific tracks, to the small shelter that served as a commuter flag stop and was called Neal Station. They stopped for a moment and looked inside the open-faced shelter. "Peter said, "sometimes you can find cigarettes here, you know, that have been lit and then they stubbed them out because the train came." Ted said, "So, do you smoke them?" "Oh, sure. I've smoked a lot of them," Peter lied. He had really never had the courage to try one. "Eeyuw!" said Ted, that's worse than horse slobber," and they both started giggling, making Ted begin coughing. When he stopped, he said, "I've got a penny. Should we put it on the track and let the train squash it?" Peter looked dubious and slowly replied, "We might have to wait too long. I don't know when the next train will come along."

**Mrs. Bol and goat games**

The boys crossed the tracks and turned left up Roble Ridge. At the end of a very long driveway, they came to a modest cottage and met a nanny goat. She was edging away from a determined-looking middle-aged woman who said, in heavily accented English, "Hello, boys. Help me catch her, neh? She might get in the way of the train again and I have to make her go back to the pasture." Peter answered, "Sure, Mrs. Bol." The boys got off their bikes and carefully approached the goat from two different directions, around the ends of a short hedge, cutting off its escape routes from the woman. The goat looked at them with a nonchalant air and ate a weed. As they edged closer, the goat looked at one and then the other and suddenly bolted toward the pasture gate, which the woman had opened invitingly. Safe in the pasture, it ran beyond a horse and decided to eat another weed, looking as if it was pretending that nothing had been happening. After she shut the gate, the woman took some wire she had with her and walked along the tracks to a fence post that was leaning over. The boys came along and watched her as she wound the wire back and forth to close a gap in the fence. "Yah, now that will hold her until Kees can repair the hole this little ninny has made"" Kees was one of her sons, only she pronounced his name "Case," which sounded very foreign to the boys. They knew Kees: he was friendly with all the kids. Mrs. Bol invited them in to the house for a glass of apple cider and told them that the goats would be more trouble than they were worth, except that they made her laugh, so she kept them anyway. Ted asked what else the farm had. "Hah! The farm?" She laughed. "That is what my boys like to call it. We have our tractor to pull the mower and cut hay, like on Colonel Duggan's property across the creek. We have some horses. We have some vegetables." She got up and said "And now I have to go and find Kees because one of our water customers down on Matadero has a leak where his lateral comes off our main, and it's flooding the street. Come by and see the animals anytime you like, boys—maybe on the weekend when my husband Cornelis is here?"

**Peter's radio hour**

After stopping to watch the horses for a

few minutes, the boys rode back to their homes, agreeing to meet in the morning to walk to the school bus as usual. Peter lay down on the rug in the living room to listen to the daily serials on KGO; Terry and the Pirates at 5:00 pm, Dick Tracy at 5:15, Jack Armstrong ("The All-American Boy") at 5:30, and Captain Midnight at 5:45.

His father usually took the 5:20 pm train from San Francisco. It was an express, with only three stops before it reached Mayfield (California Avenue in Palo Alto) where it switched to the Los Gatos cutoff and became a local. Most of the commuters on his train were going to Los Altos, but the first stop after California Street was at Neal Station in Barron Park. Dad said that the trains were awful crowded now, with the war on and all. If he was late leaving the office he might have to stand up all the way home. The trains ran slower now, too, because they were saving coal and never ran at top speed. They spent more time in the stations because so many passengers were getting off and on. Dad said the railroad company had to make all new War Schedules. Then, when he got to Neal, he still had about a seven or eight minute walk home. This meant he usually didn't get home until about 6:30.

Peter didn't care much for the news, which came on at 6:00 pm, so he headed for his room to read a comic book. A new Walt Disney Comics had come in the mail today and he wanted to read it. As he passed the kitchen door he was singing the Lucky Strike cigarette jingle: "L.S.M.F.T.: Lucky Strike Means Fine Tobacco!" His mother hated that, and she made him stop. "It's bad enough I have to listen to those stupid jingles on the radio all the time without you singing them, too!" Peter thought: "Ah, mothers. What can a boy do, anyway?"

**"Victory Cooking" at the Stouffers'**

Supper was called at 6:45. Annie had to be separated from her Paper Doll book, but even the Disney comic book couldn't keep ravenous Peter from the supper table. Anne set out four generous-sized soup bowls. Peter, in a critical voice said, "Gosh, Mom do we have to have stew all the time?" After a moment, Richard quietly but firmly said, "That's enough, son. Your mother has a tough job to make us solid meals with all the rationing. The Victory

Cookbook recommends using every bit of food that comes into the house, and the best way to do that is to make soup with all the leftovers and odd bits." Anne said softly "Peter, there's some chicken in the stew tonight, so I think you'll actually find it pretty good. There's fresh-baked corn bread, too, and I found a little leftover oil and sugar to make it taste better. Richard said, "There's nothing better than fresh corn bread." Annie said, "I will eat anything so long as it isn't liver," and they all laughed in agreement. History would not record such a small fact, but fact it was, that all the Victory Stew got eaten up.

**Continued in the next two issues**

I hope you have enjoyed this fictional glimpse into the lives of Barron Parkers on the Home Front during World War II. In Part Two you will have breakfast with the Bancroft Family, meet Meggie Thorpe, listen to a lot of true stories and rumors at the Stitch-and-Gab Society, learn how Los Altos got shelled, and read about how Palo Alto teenagers helped the war effort. If you have any questions or comments, you can contact me at; Douglas L. Graham, 984 Ilima Way, Palo Alto CA 94306, 650-493-0689, or [dgrahampaca-at-gmail.com](mailto:dgrahampaca-at-gmail.com).

**Barron Park Love Story**



**Diane and Wade, with Wade's mother, Marjorie.**

**D**iane Akerson (Grisell) and Wade Garland Larsen were reacquainted at their 40th High School reunion last year and were married this July in Barron Park. They were married by Diane's daughter Kimberly, and were assisted by Diane's son Wes, and Wade's sister, Susan.

Diane and Wade met in first grade at Barron Park School. They both attended BPS, Terman Jr. High and graduated from Gunn High School in 1969. They were familiar with one another and had many mutual friends, but never dated or socialized in tight circles. Both attended Foothill and DeAnza colleges but had no contact there. Diane was married in 1979 and settled in the Santa Cruz Mountains while raising her family and working for HP and Agilent Technologies. Wade was married and in the 1980's, moved to Yosemite where he has worked as a mountain guide and historic preservationist. Wade and his sister Susan Larsen Ward (BPS, Terman, Cubberley) returned to Barron Park to help care for their mother, Marjorie, age 94, who has been in the same home in Barron Park since 1951.

Diane and Wade's parents, Faye and Al Akerson, and Art and Marjorie Larsen, moved to Barron Park in the early 1950s. Al Akerson worked for Pacific Bell and Hewlett-Packard in Palo Alto. Faye worked for a number of pharmacies including Rexall on California Ave. and then worked at The Emporium (now Nordstrom) at Stanford Shopping Center. Art and Marjorie met at DuPont. Art worked at Dow Chemical Co. in San Francisco and Marjorie at The Emporium. The couples did not know each other through the years.

Diane and Wade will make their home in the Sierra Nevada region in the near future.

**BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER**

Barron Park Association  
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# 2010 GREEN TOUR DRAWS A CROWD

By Linnie Melena



The Green Tour started at Bol Park where visitors picked up their guides to the 13 houses and the native garden featured on the tour.

Despite a warm day, Barron Park's 2010 Green Tour drew about 275 people to Bol Park on Sunday, June 27. At the park, they were able to pick up maps/guides and visit with private and non-profit vendors about living

more environmentally aware lives. Then, they took themselves on a tour of the 12 featured homes and the native garden at Bol Park. The homes on the tour had drought tolerant landscaping, organic gardens, composting, energy efficient designs, photovoltaic panels and other energy efficient elements—all here in Barron Park.

For this second Barron Park Green Tour (the first one was in 2008), there were also talks by experts on vegetable gardening, native plants, composting and raising chickens at four of the homes.

This year the Green Tour was organized by the Barron Park Green Team, again with support and funding from the Barron Park Association. The Green Team's goal is to foster awareness about environmental issues and to identify, create and implement sustainable environmental solutions. To contact the Green Team, send an email to [barronparkgt@yahoo.com](mailto:barronparkgt@yahoo.com)



Tom McCalmont describes how he completely remodeled his house with extensive use of recycled and reused materials and a wide array of energy and water saving devices.



Star Teachout gets energy conservation information from the City of Palo Alto utilities representative at one of the booths in Bol Park.

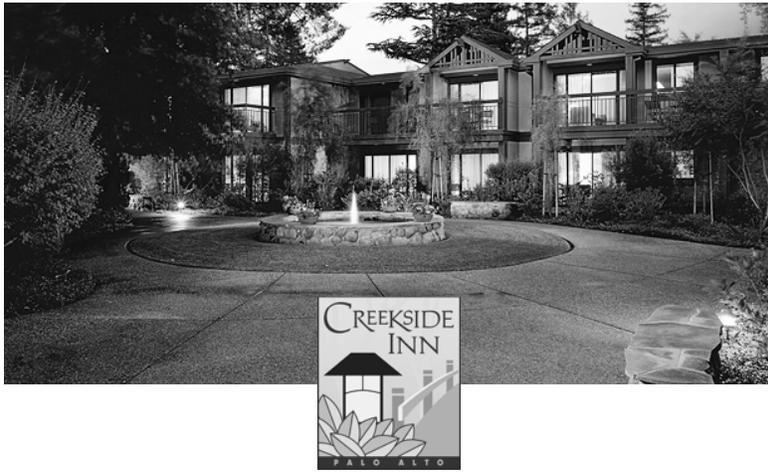


Carolyn Spitz, whose house was on the tour, described how to start and maintain a native garden to several tour participants, including Gee Gee Lenhart (facing the camera).

## EMAIL LISTS

The BPA has four email lists: [bpa-news](mailto:bpa-news), [bpa-issues](mailto:bpa-issues), [bpa-misc](mailto:bpa-misc) and [bpa-jobpostings](mailto:bpa-jobpostings). They are hosted at Google Groups (moved last January). To join [bpa-news](mailto:bpa-news), go to <http://groups.google.com/group/bpa-news> and click on "Join this group." Similarly for the other lists.

For more information on these email lists, go to the BPA home page—<http://www.bpaonline.org> and click on the button "BPA Email Lists."



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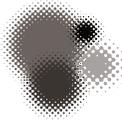
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