

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

BPA Membership News

By Art Liberman, Chair

We want to thank you for your support by sending in your membership to the Barron Park Association (BPA). We hope you find the articles in the BPA newsletter about our neighborhood interesting and enjoy reading them.

There may be additional reasons that you have decided to support the BPA. Perhaps it is our email lists that keep you in touch and informed with issues in our community, or the babysitting or job postings service lists. For others it may be our social events. Many of you were at the BPA sponsored May Fete in Bol Park, our 32nd annual event, enjoying the festivities and neighborhood camaraderie with old and new friends, listening to the music, watching children dancing and playing games, tasting some foods, learning about Barron Park history and becoming aware of the importance of Emergency Preparedness and Resident Safety. Many of you were out and about the neighborhood again, as organizers or participants in the June 27th Green Tour.

We are only able to carry out these events and programs because of your support—and they need your participation. Let us know whatever it is that makes you—and keeps you—a member of the BPA. Tell us your ideas and suggestions for new activities, or your concerns that may touch the larger community. If you can, invest some time in BPA activities and affairs. We want to hear from you. You can reach me at membership@bpa.org

32nd May Fete Was a Huge Success!



See article and additional photos on page 6.

Photo by A.J.Lumsdaine

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Lynnne Melena, BPA President



One more big event before the Barron Park Association (BPA) takes a short break—the Barron Park Green Tour.

This event was so popular in 2008, we are doing it again, this time sponsored by the Barron Park Green Team—which is affiliated with the BPA. In fact, the Green Tour may be behind us (scheduled for June 27) before you get this newsletter. I really have a lot of pride in the fact that we have so many progressive homeowners living here who (1) want to open their homes for a special neighborhood event that helps build community, and (2) are doing what they can to protect our planet.

Here are some other issues the BPA is currently involved in: On May 20, we hosted a talk (“give and take,” actually) with City Manager Jim Keene at Barron Park School. The subject was the City budget crisis and about 30 residents attended. The meeting was entirely run by Jim Keene with assistance from Finance Director Lalo Perez. In my view, the discussion was informative at a level that you don’t usually get in a more formal setting. Whatever your views on the City’s budget problems, those of us in attendance learned a lot about why the City is having so much trouble funding its programs and services.

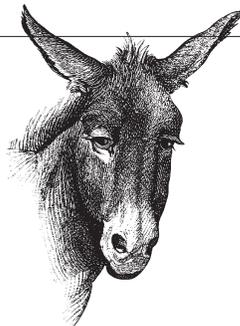
On May 27, the Chimalus neighbors set up a meeting on the City’s study of the possible amortization of hazardous chemical uses at CPI. Art Liberman writes about the meeting elsewhere in the newsletter.

On June 15, the City of Palo Alto was to hold a meeting at Juana Briones School to describe the detailed plans for re-stripping a portion of Arastradero Road to three lanes (including a left turn lane) to make it safer for all users (cars, bikes, pedestrians and especially school children). City studies show that traffic can still be accommodated, but follow-up studies will confirm whether the project is successful in reaching its goals. Road work begins this summer. Barron Park, along with other neighborhood associations and school representatives, have been attending regular meetings with City staff to monitor the project.

Editor’s note: Many meetings are announced ahead of time in our emails to residents. In order to receive these emails, you must join one or more of the lists (BPA-news, BPA-misc., BPA-jobpostings, BPA-strawberryhill, BPA-benches). The BPA also maintains a list of neighborhood babysitters. If you haven’t signed up to receive this list on the membership form and would like to receive a copy (or if you know members who would like their teenage children added to the list) send an email to membership@bpaonline.org.

Help Support the Barron Park Donkeys!

All 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@yahoo.com.

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION

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Environmental: Art Liberman

Green Team: Lynnne Melena (acting)

History: Doug Graham

Holiday Party: Don Anderson

May Fete: John King

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Lydia Kou

Newsletter: Nancy Hamilton

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Traffic & Streets: Lynnne Melena

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

E-PREP: POSITIVE NEEDLING

By Lydia Kou, Chair, Emergency Preparedness & Safety Committee



Emergency Preparedness is a two-part affair. What does this mean?

Part one is PREPAREDNESS. Disasters can

strike at any time and anywhere. Planning and preparing during a disaster is not the right time.

Part two is the part when the disaster actually happens. How do we predict how much damage? How would we know how to react? OMG!

Let's take a moment and review the earthquakes in Haiti and Chile. Chile's earthquake was much higher in magnitude than that of Haiti. However, the death toll and damage was greater in Haiti. We all know that was due to the stricter building and safety regulations in Chile. But, Chile was still impacted. Now, take a moment and ask yourselves these questions:

- 1) Where will your family be?
- 2) Will you have medical services?

- 3) Will you be able to get home?
- 4) Will you be able to stay in your home?
- 5) Can you live without the services you rely on?
- 6) How will your job be affected?
- 7) Will you have money, food, and medicine?
- 8) Will you be able to recover financially?
- 9) Will your insurance cover your losses?

Hmmmm...inconvenienced?!!

So, why should you care? Because you love your family, Barron Park is your home, and you care about your neighbors!

What can you do? A lot! You can take the leap and join the Emergency Preparedness team, become a Block Preparedness Coordinator or become a PANDA. Be a Neighbor helping your Neighbor.

If you want to know more, contact me (650) 996-0028 or Lkou@apr.com. I look forward to talking to you.

SENIORS PROMOTE DAILY CALLING TO CHECK ON RESIDENTS

There's good news for Barron Park residents who live alone and would like someone to check up on them on a regular basis: Barron Park Senior Bud Rubin has initiated an effort that will enable any resident—senior or otherwise—to receive a daily phone call, which if not picked up by the resident (or if the resident indicates distress) would cause a designated contact to be alerted.

At this early stage, with only a small number of people currently signed up, the telephone "tree" is very simple: pairs of people team up to take turns calling each other, at whatever time (or range of time) is most convenient. One calls the other daily for a week, after which they reverse the calling direction. Over time, as more people join this effort, it may evolve into a more sophisticated system (the group is open to any and all suggestions).

All Barron Park residents are welcome to join, including any who are willing to call without needing to be called themselves. One such caller, Caroline Rose, has teamed up with Bud to help organize and publicize the effort. We encourage you to call or write for more information or to sign up. Bud can be reached at 650-493-9143 or buddyboy963@yahoo.com; to reach Caroline, try 650-424-9100 or crose@differnet.com. And please pass the word on to your neighbors!

Gardening / Food Trading Bulletin Board

By Nancy Lewis

COMMUNITY HARVESTS



Eating locally produced food is the wave of the future. More and more people are keeping chickens and breaking soil for edible gardens, seeking out heirloom vegetables and the hidden local farm treasures. This summer's gardening season heralds the debut of Community Harvests, a garden trading and local food information online bulletin board for our neighborhood. The site is primarily for the use of Barron Park residents, but nearby neighborhoods are welcome to participate. The site makes it easier to tap into our local

foodshed within 15-20 miles.

Free listings can include requests for seeds or cuttings or help with a large project; to let people know you have extra fallen leaves for composting, produce, flowers or eggs; or if you want to host a canning party, know of a local farmer we might want to check out, or are looking for a certain tool.

Visit www.communityharvests.org for full instructions. You may also call 743-6715 for more information.

Barron Park Association Welcoming Gathering

Please save the date: Sunday, August 29th, 2-4 p.m! Whether "old," "new," or "in between," looking forward to our annual end of the summer/beginning of fall welcoming and getting-to-know neighbors, Barron Park Association Welcoming Gathering in Bol Park! Plans so far include free ice-cream from Driftwood Deli, Gary and Jena's Side by Side traditional song fest, Perry and Niner, our neighborhood donkeys, 2:30-3:30 p.m., and Sunday afternoon parent-child soccer game at 4 p.m! If you would like to participate in arrangements, suggest activities, or refreshments, please contact Gwen Luce, BPA Welcoming Chair: 650-224-3670 or gluce@cbnrcal.com.

City Explains Study on Amortization of Hazardous Chemicals at CPI

By Art Liberman, Vice President and Environmental Chair

Curtis Williams, Palo Alto's Director of Planning and Community Environment, met with residents on May 27 to bring them up to date on the study the City has undertaken to investigate amortizing the use of hazardous chemicals at the CPI facility on Hansen Drive.

This was an explanatory meeting. Its purpose was to inform residents about the amortization process, the status of the study currently being done by the City's consultant, and what residents might expect to happen after the study is completed. Williams provided an overview and spent most of the meeting answering residents' questions.

Williams explained that amortization is a way of phasing out "non-conforming uses." Uses are "non-conforming if they do not conform to zoning regulations. In this case, CPI's plating operation does not conform to regulations that require

"extremely hazardous chemicals in above Title 19 threshold quantities" to be at least 300 feet from a residential zone district. The regulations were enacted in 2007 following the CPI toxic fume release the previous year. CPI's plating shop and storage locations are much closer than 300 feet to some homes on Chimalus Drive. Amortization provides a time over which the owner may recoup some of their investment before the non-conforming use is eliminated.

The amortization study was 'kicked off' in January. If all goes according to the current schedule, the consultant will obtain all the information they need from CPI in June, and have the report available by the end of summer. At that point, there will be a second meeting with residents to review the results.

The key finding of the study will be the time period the consultant recommends to allow CPI (or their new owners...they are

in the process of being acquired by Comtech Telecommunications) to continue to use hazardous chemicals in the current quantities. This time period will be based upon the maximum remaining economic life of the CPI facility. Once the report is submitted, the City officials will review the results and make a determination on the time period to include in a proposed ordinance. This time period would balance the economic interests of the business with the health and safety and welfare of residents.

This process of passing the ordinance would involve public hearings before the Planning and Transportation Commission and the City Council. Assuming an ordinance is approved, CPI would have a set period of time to relocate the chemical use and storage facility to a place that is at least 300 feet from residential zone district, change processes to eliminate those hazardous chemicals, or leave the site.

WASTE WATER (SANITARY) SEWER REPLACEMENT

By Doug Moran

In 2009, the sewers in the northern portion of Barron Park were replaced, with the exception of a few that were in very good shape. This summer, the same work will be done in the remainder of the neighborhood.

Q: Why not replace just the worse lines, especially on streets that are still in decent shape? It is much cheaper to do the work in one area all at the same time, rather than bounce from one problem area to another. Expected life of sewer lines is 50 years.

Q: When will they repave the streets? Repaving/rebuilding streets is the responsibility of the Public Works Department. Sewers are the responsibility of the Utilities Department which has funding separate from the rest of the City Departments. Public Works is well aware of this project and has plans to do street repairs, although I couldn't get details. The basic

process is that the Utilities' contractor puts in a temporary (cold) patch, and then after the backfill has had a chance to settle, they come back and do a more permanent (hot) patch. Whether or not a more substantial resurfacing occurs depends on the condition of the street and a variety of other factors that Public Works uses to prioritize repairs.

Q: Why isn't Utilities work better coordinated with street repaving? The current policy of Public Works and Utilities is to try to avoid any major work on a street for 5 years after resurfacing/repaving. There has been better coordination than in the past (when there was none): When I talked to Utilities staff about this project, they were already aware of the ages of the streets.

Notification of Street Closures

In 2009, the contractor and Utilities Staff provided me with information about the work schedule for me to distribute on the

BPA-News email list. I fully expect to be able to do the same this year—the same staff members are supervising this project and they appreciated the wider notification provided by email. The contractor will provide notification several days in advance by leaflet on the doorstep of houses within the segment to be closed.

Main Pipe Replacement Detail

Rather than trenching the length of the street and pulling out the old pipe, the technique being used is *pipe-bursting* (you may be able to get more info via a web search). Briefly, a device, called a *pig*, is inserted into the existing pipe and pulled slowly down its length. As the pig moves, it pulverizes the existing clay pipe with pneumatic "hammers" in its sides (this is the incessant pounding that you hear). The replacement pipe is modestly flexible plastic (high density polyethylene) and is attached to the back of the pig, so that, as

the old pipe is pulverized, the new pipe is immediately slid into place.

Most of the main sewer lines in Barron Park have a 6-inch diameter, and current standard is 8-inches. So as the pig moves down the existing sewer line, it is not only pulverizing the existing pipe but compressing the surrounding soil to allow the larger pipe to slide in.

The work is done in segments between the manhole covers (actually the utility vaults under those covers).

An alternative to this approach would be to install a liner in the existing pipe. However, because many of the existing pipes are in such poor condition, it would provide much less bang-for-the-buck in terms of extending the life of the current pipes. The pipes being inserted have a rated lifetime of 100 years, but the City's current assumptions (for budget) are "only" 50 years.

Disruption of Sewer Service

For people not living on the segment being replaced, there is no disruption: Sewage can be pumped around that segment using a hose running down the street.

For people living on the segment being replaced, you need to minimize what you put down the drains. Especially avoid using your washing machine. The critical portions of replacing a segment takes about 2 days, about a half day to replace the main pipe and the remainder to attach all the lines—the "laterals"—from houses in that segment. Until your lateral is connected to the new pipe, anything you put down the drain either stays in the lateral or leaks into the ground. For most circumstances, this presents no problem. Part of the reason for this delay is that the pipe may have stretched while being pulled and needs a little time to "relax." This movement could break the joint to the lateral if it were done too soon.

Disruption of Water and Gas Service

There is no need for the City to turn off water or gas service. However, if a water or gas line to a residence passes too close to the sewer line, dragging the new pipe into place could also drag one of those lines, breaking it. The City Utilities is aware of such possibilities and monitors for it. If there is a break, the City will shut off that service until it can repair that line.

Construction standards call for the various lines to be spaced far enough apart, both

horizontally and vertically, so that this should not happen. However, in Barron Park, there are many non-standard items, from before we became part of Palo Alto.

Lateral Pipe Replacement

The *laterals* are the pipes connecting your house to the main sewer line. The City has responsibility—for both maintenance and cleaning—for the section up to your property line, and you are responsible for the line from there to your house.

The City Utilities is replacing all the laterals as part of this project because it is much cheaper to replace them in a batch rather than piecemeal: The equipment is already on-site and set up. Plus the laterals won't need maintenance or replacement for 50 to 100 years, eliminating the need to cut through and then patch the street. Also, be aware that many of the laterals are as old as the main pipe and have deteriorated badly and would likely need replacing soon (next decade or so, which is "soon" in terms of these projects).

For the laterals, they will use a lesser *pipe-bursting* technique. Because the replacement line is smaller and runs only a short distance, the "pig" used does not have air-hammers, but bursts the pipes simply with the force it exerts while being pulled through the existing pipe.

Important: Many houses in Barron Park do not have clean-outs at the property line. In this case, the replacement of the lateral will include installing a clean-out at the property line. This allows the City to clean-out their portion of the line without the hassle and delay of contacting the resident to get permission.

Driveway Access

Project work is roughly 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. If you are likely to need to go out during the time your segment is being worked on, I would strongly encourage you to park your car outside of the work area. You might want to leave a note on the dashboard with contact information (in case there is a problem). People who have extra space in driveways just outside the project area might want to offer it to those affected.

The contractor is required to provide access to your driveway during the project. However, when work is being done on your segment, getting in and out can require a major disruption and corresponding delay. This is worse when the

main line is being replaced (first day) and not that much of a problem during the remainder (when laterals are being replaced). Those near a manhole will experience the most serious difficulties: The hole is quite large and there need to be several trucks parked near it. And they will be obstructed when the pipe is being pulled down into the hole, and then again when the pipe is being pulled toward that hole.

People on one side of the street in the segment just up from the segment where the pipe is being pulled will also be obstructed. The pipe is continuous and needs to be laid out on one side of the street. Naturally, the number of driveways affected decreases as the day progresses. The aim is to have the replacement done by about 2 p.m.

Background

This work is being done as part of the City's Master Plan for Sewer Capacity established in 1988 (yes, 20 years ago). This work got way behind schedule because the City decided to defer maintenance on infrastructure (in 2000, former City Manager Frank Benest was brought in to address these problems). In 2006, the City Utilities assessed the condition of all 200 miles of waste-water sewers using video (rather than extrapolating from repair and maintenance records).

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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M A Y F E T E 2 0 1 0

by John King



This page: photos by A.J. Lumsdaine



This years' 32nd May Fete was a huge success and I would like to begin by thanking the many volunteers who helped to put on the event this year.

I want to personally thank our event organizer Sarah Van Zanten. She put together another wonderful event on a perfect day at Bol Park.

The entire Van Zanten family pitched in to help with the event, as Sarah has been away at Chapman University during most of the spring, and organizing the event from afar.

Larry Breed and the May Pole committee, Bob Fraley and Paul Edwards, did a beautiful job of processing the May Pole and making sure all the ribbons were in the right place as well as moving tables and chairs to and from Barron Park and Juana Briones Schools which kindly allowed us to use them for the event.

Gary Breitbard organized the music and the dancers to guide the May Pole ceremony.

Lydia Kou organized the Emergency Prep exhibit and brought in the PANDA's (Palo Alto Neighborhood Disaster Activities). Did you meet your BPC?

Doug Graham every year presents a wonderful Barron Park history exhibit, this year with help from Steve Luce. I'm told many people love our newsletter because of Doug's History articles.

Jeff Smith brought in Pack 52 Cub Scouts and the Troop 52 Boy Scouts to demonstrate fire extinguishers and emergency preparedness activities.

I was personally on the BBQ and want to thank my daughters Lauren and Gillian, and Lauren's friend Alexandra Allen for helping out with serving up the burgers and hot dogs. I thought that Jamba Juice was a terrific addition to the refreshment line up this year. They are also giving us 25% of the proceeds from the sales as a donation to BPA.

Sarah had many of her friends helping out with setting up tables and chairs, serving up cold drinks and assisting with the kids games and activities.

Hassan of Barron Park Florist kindly donated the flowers for the May Pole.

Susan Breitbard created the beautiful May Fete artwork which you see on the posters, postcards and program and above.

If I have errantly missed thanking anyone, please let me know as there were many casts of characters and I would love to provide recognition for your efforts.

A big thank you to the May Fete sponsors!

Copy Factory, Palo Alto German Car, Celia's, Ernie's Wines & Liquor, Mikes One Hour Cleaners, John St. Clair and Lydia Kou, Al Peterson Roof, Jim Davis Automotive, Taqueria El Grullense, Phillip Fletcher DDS, Ace of Sandwiches, Gwen Luce, Josh Becker for State Assembly, Carlsen Volvo, Barron Park Florist, Creekside Inn, John W. King.

Looking forward to next year's May Fete!

This page: photos by Jo Hamilton & Art Liberman



Ross Bedillion, Anna Astromoff, Sean Goldie, Stuart Kim, Jesse Kim, Nathan Brown, Leland Wei, Sam King (Boy in stretcher). Standing on the far right is Cooper Smith from Pack 52.



Barron Park Green Team members from left: Lynnne Melena, BPA President, Annette Puskarich, and Romola Georgia. The Green Team event was held on June 27th. Please see our fall newsletter for more...



PANDAs and a BPC.



Kate Van Zanten volunteered at the tickets & raffle table. Raffle donations included: Blockbuster: \$5 gift card & Michael Jackson photo collection; Pizz'a Chicago: ten \$10 gift cards; Driftwood Deli: two \$20 gift cards; Celia's Mexican Restaurant: one \$22 gift card; Ace of Sandwiches: four \$25 gift cards; Super Feet: one premium insole package; Starbucks: one mug + 1 lb. Starbucks breakfast blend coffee; Fish Market: one \$50 gift card; Creekside Inn: one night's free lodging.



Surrey with the fringe on top: owned by Bob Cool, peddled by David, Aiden & Robbie. Bern is on bike.



Bob Fraley, May Pole dance leader.

May Fete



Fiddler Craig Martin looking dapper in his top hat.



Jena Rauti playing accordion in her new butterfly hat.



Donkey handler Diane Boggie with her granddaughter Lydia.



Gary Breitbard, fiddle; Karl Franzen, guitar; Peter Tommerup, hammered dulcimer.



Paul Edwards, founder of the Barron Park May Fete with Nancy Hamilton, newsletter editor since 1993. Paul started the BPA's traditional May Fete in Bol Park May 14th, 1978.

This page: photos by A.J. Lumsdaine

The Story of Our Local Bayside-Sutter Cannery

FEATURING BARRON PARK APRICOTS, PEARS AND TOMATOES

By Douglas L. Graham, Barron Park Historian

Palo Alto's Biggest Industry

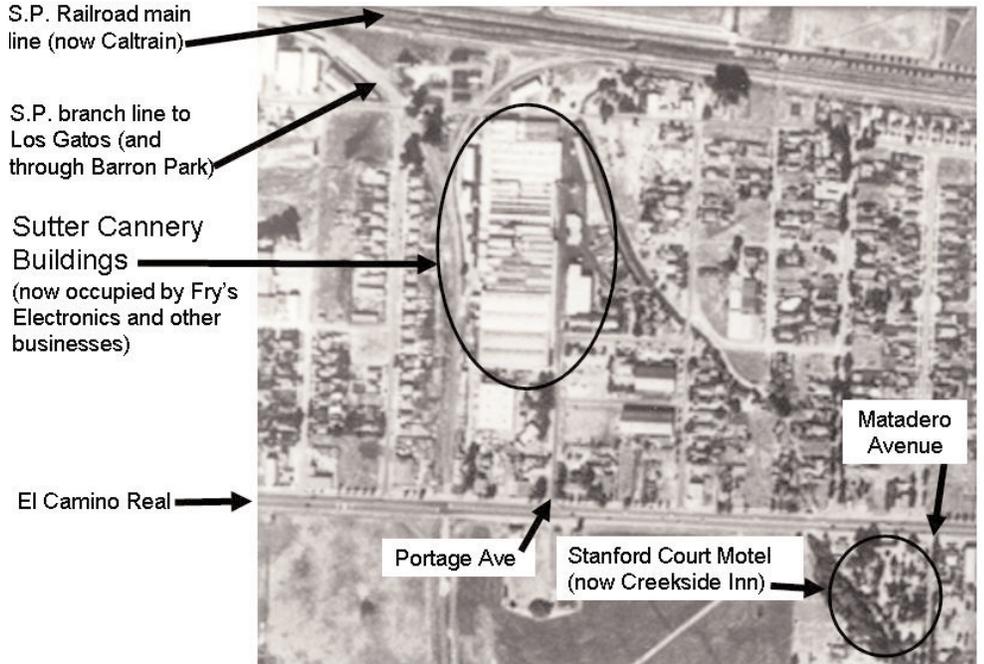
Before Apps there were Cots. Before it was Silicon Valley, it was "the Valley of Heart's Delight", and the largest business in Palo Alto was raising and canning fruit. Do you shop at Fry's Electronics? If so, you are treading the floor of the old Bayside Cannery, which in its day was the largest industry in Palo Alto. The cannery had a good run, 31 years, beginning in 1918. On March 19, 1949, readers of the Palo Alto Times learned that the City's first and largest industrial plant, the Sutter Packing Company, was closing its doors. There would be no canning season in 1949. It was called a "million-dollar industry" because Palo Alto would be losing a \$1,000,000 annual payroll. This may not sound like much to the reader in 2010, but in 1949, a well-paid engineer or middle-manager made about \$5,000 annually.

What happened to Sutter Packing? The short answer was a rapid conversion of nearby orchards and crop fields to housing tracts. The construction industry strained to provide new homes to World War II veterans and all the families who put their "American Dream" of a new home on the shelf during the war emergency from 1941 through 1945. This was exemplified in 1949 by the building of 45 new homes in Encina Grande Park, nearly filling up the 162-lot subdivision laid out in 1946. These homes replaced several sizeable prune plum orchards.

On the question of Sutter's closing, the more complicated answers involved aging absentee owners (Yuba City peach growers), Safeway's interest in backwards-integration (acquiring the suppliers who provided their canned goods for retail sale), and a higher labor cost in the Palo Alto area (as compared to San Jose, or, especially, the Central Valley towns).

Located on Portage Avenue

The cannery was located on Portage Avenue off El Camino Real, just a few yards from Barron Park. See the annotated 1948 aerial photograph of the area included in this article. It shows the cannery buildings along the curve of the railroad tracks—the old "Los Gatos Cutoff" that ran through



Sutter Cannery Area—1948.

Barron Park where the bikepath runs today. The Cannery occupied the building that now houses Fry's Electronics and other businesses—as well as most of the other buildings nearby. Canneries had to have direct rail connections in those days, as most canned goods were shipped by rail, long-distance trucking being too expensive.

Barron Park Growers

The location virtually ensured that Barron Park orchardists and farmers would sell their fruit to Sutter. The existence of the cannery is probably one of the main reasons so much of our acreage was put to fruit and tomatoes. The cannery was founded in 1918, and the old Barron Estate came on the market the next year. In 1919, the estate, which had a long-established orchard, was purchased by Driscoll and Reiter, Watsonville "capitalists" who had a strawberry packing plant and were looking for new growers. They divided up Barron Park into larger plots that they sold to would-be orchardists, and smaller plots for strawberry and tomato growers. The Driscolls were the same family that still owns the Driscoll berry packing plant and importer in Watsonville today. Note the label the next time

you buy berries in your market.

Strawberries Down, Pears and Apricots Up

Unfortunately for the Driscolls, the strawberry boom in Barron Park was brief, because the fields soon became infested with red spider mites and production levels became uneconomic. Thus a second wave of orchard planting ensued—the spider mites did not infest pears or apricots, both of which performed very well in Barron Park's climate, which is very similar to that of Los Altos, Cupertino, Campbell and Los Gatos (to name some of the most prominent fruit-growing centers in the 1930s, 40s and 50s). In our neighborhood, apricots were the most widespread, having been planted in the upper Los Robles area, on both sides of Maybell and Arastradero. Pears were along La Para (hence the original spelling of La Pera—"the pear"), El Centro, Barron, and Laguna. Tomatoes were planted between Los Robles and La Pera, along Barron and La Donna, and on Laguna.

The Chews, Local "Canning Kings"

In January, 1918, the *Palo Alto Times* announced plans by Thomas Foon Chew to



A group of Bayside Cannery employees, Mayfield, September 23, 1918.

spend \$200,000 to buy land and build a modern cannery on four acres of land in Mayfield. Chew's father, Sai Yin-Chew had emigrated from Chungshan, and although initially impoverished, had risen founding the Precita Cannery in San Francisco. After the 1906 earthquake, he moved it to Alviso and renamed it the Bayside Cannery. He was tremendously successful, becoming known as the "Asparagus King" after he developed the first process for canning the vegetable. Bayside became the world's third largest cannery in the 1920s (after Del Monte and Libby), under the direction of both Sai Yin-Chew and his son, Thomas Foon Chew. To further expand the busi-

ness, Sai Yin-Chew planned to build a second plant in Mayfield.

Mayfield's Bayside Cannery

It opened for business on July 16, 1918, with 350 people canning apricots. By August the cannery was still frantically recruiting women to cut pears, at \$3.00 per day. Because the World War was still in progress, wages were fixed by government regulation. A free bus to and from the cannery picked up workers at "Redwood" at 6:20 a.m. and at "University Gate on the State Highway" (El Camino Real) at 6:30. A majority of the cannery workers were women, Portuguese and Chinese immigrants. There was no union, and the work day started at 6 a.m., ending only when all the fruit and produce on hand was processed.

See the photograph of some of the workers, taken on September 23, at which time they would have been canning pears and tomatoes. By October they were swamped with tomatoes and enticing "inexperienced" workers with wages set at 20 cents per hour for an 8-hour day. They could work up to as much as \$4.75 per day. Several times during that first season, the cannery turned to the local newspapers with appeals for workers to help process the crops, so it seems that the new cannery was a success from the start.

The 1920s and 30s

In 1919 the Bayside Cannery built 19 houses for workers and a large warehouse. By 1925, when it opened for the summer season on 3 July, it expected to produce 250,000 cases, half for export, of apricots, peaches, pears, tomatoes and fruit salad. In 1928 it invested \$20,000 more on new

machinery. By the late 1920s Bayside was canning large quantities of peaches from orchards in Sutter County.

Production figures were rarely supplied to the newspapers, but in 1929 the forecast was for; spinach—750,000 cans, apricots—1,500,000 cans, peaches—5,000,000 cans, pears—1,000,000 cans. The record daily pack in 1928 was 200,000 cans of peaches sealed in 11 hours. They calculated the "interval from tree to can" was 30 hours.

Sutter Takes Over

After Thomas Foon Chew's untimely death in 1931 at the age of 42, the cannery started slipping. It was purchased by Sutter Packing Company of Yuba City about 1933. Sutter was a consortium of a handful of the largest peach growers in Sutter County. They wanted to integrate forward by buying their customer. By running their own cannery they could maximize the profits from their orchards. Sutter ran the plant quite successfully for 15 years, through the Great Depression and World War II.

War Planning in 1940

By 1940, it was obvious to most forward-thinking planners that the U.S. would get sucked into World War II sooner or later, one way or another. In that year, Sutter spent \$175,000 on improvements, new warehouse, relocating office functions, machinery, landscaping—you name it. Capacity was increased 25-30 percent and output was expected to be 50% greater than the year before. I am sure that they were expecting demand to increase greatly, as it did in World War I. The U.S. would again have to "feed the world", and there would be a lot of money made in doing it.

Canning Calendar

Spinach

Mid-March to mid-April

Apricots

Late June to about August 1st

Peaches

Starting between August 1st and 10th and continuing for about six weeks

Pears

From mid-August through September

Fruit salad or cocktail

August

Tomatoes

Beginning in late August and continuing until frosts in November or even the first week of December (in exceptional years)

SUTTER PACKING CO.

Needed at Once 30 MEN! 100 WOMEN!

To work on Tomatoes both day and night shifts, particularly the night shift.

● PEACHES are still coming in large volume this week.

● TOMATOES start Tuesday at 7 a. m.

You may not need to work but WE NEED YOU!
The Armed Forces must have tomatoes!

Apply

Sutter Packing Co.

EMPLOYMENT OFFICE

First St. and Portage Ave. South Palo Alto, Ph. 6188

EMPLOYMENT OFFICE OPEN 6:30 A.M. TO 9:30 P.M. DAILY
Palo Alto Times 8 Sep 1942

Recruitment advertisement in the *Palo Alto Times*, September 8, 1942.

1942—the first Wartime Canning Season

In 1942, the U.S. was at war, and the newspapers were full of desperate appeals for labor. On August 15 the cannery appealed for 300 women and 100 men at once! This desperate appeal was repeated three days later. On the 21st, it was noted that the workers were protesting the hiring of soldiers for the canning jobs. The union charged that it was a violation of their contract because they were given only six minutes notice before soldiers “from the Page Mill Road camp” were brought in. This must have been settled amicably, because the next story was another appeal, on the 26th, for night shift workers: 60 women for peach cutting, 20 for canning and 10 men (not stated what for). For an example of these appeals, see the above ad from the *Palo Alto Times* of September 8, 1942.

On September 16th they made a joint appeal with other local canneries for 400 women and 150 men to work a 10-hour night shift, starting at 7 p.m. The final appeal, on September 26th, was for more help in “saving crops” (for the war effort). It was recorded that Sutter must reserve 35% of its pack for armed forces.

“Keeping the Trucks Rolling” in 1943

1943 was basically a repeat of 1942, with

the added problem of keeping the trucks “rolling at all times” or facing threats of losing them to the Office of Defense Transportation (who would shift them to other war contractors).

A “Tent City” Goes Up in 1944

In 1944 a “tent city” was constructed across El Camino Real on Stanford Land (where CPI is now) to house 300 night shift workers in 75 tents. Shower, toilet and laundry units were built, all in ten days. This was apparently a great success, as it was repeated the following year.

The files do not reveal any production figures for the World War II years: perhaps these were considered secret. It is clear, though that the figures given earlier for 1929 must have been greatly exceeded, probably by several multiples.

In 1945, a major sugar shortage hampered canning throughout the U.S., including here at Sutter.

Also in 1945, the tent city was expanded and improved with a supervised playground—most tents now housed families. The war ended in Europe on May 7th, and some of the urgency began to ease, although most people believed the war in the Pacific would last at least one more year.

The Labor Problem Persists After the War Ends

After the atomic bombing and sudden surrender of Japan, the problem remained to obtain enough labor, as the armed forces, allies and our own citizens still needed to be fed. On August 22nd, an appeal noted that the local cannery needed lots more help. It’s up to the women to do the job. 200 women are needed on night shifts, either the “victory shift” from 7 to 12 pm or the “all-night shift.” They were needed “for the next three months, full-time, both night and day. Even in October, they were still appealing, with a large ad showing a housewife looking into her kitchen cupboard, showing only one can. The ad said “Is this YOU in 1945?”

The Post-War Years: Safeway Takes Over

After reading the record of the war years, the problems of peace seem dull indeed. In 1946 Sutter got in trouble with the City for clogging the sewer with tomato skins and peach pits. A union election that year raised anxieties among both labor and management. The Sutter Cannery came under the management, then the ownership, of Safeway, apparently some time in 1946.

The End Came Swiftly in 1949

In 1949, Safeway concluded that the cannery would have to be closed; In the ensuing dispute, management minimized the prospective loss of a million-dollar payroll to Palo Alto by claiming that “The majority of workers were transients who spent their earnings elsewhere.” The union responded by minimizing Safeway’s claim that costs made it uneconomical to continue operating the plant, pointing out the costs were at least as low as those of any other cannery in this area, and that the others were making money. Never the less, the plant did not open for the 1949 season, and was leased in June to Coca-Cola for a bottling plant.

How Significant was the Employment?

Employment, of course, varied by the season and the size of the crops. Newspaper stories provide snapshots from different years. In 1934, there were 30–35 “permanent” (year-round) workers (in the office, mechanical and shipping departments). This probably remained fairly stable over the life of the cannery. For canning spinach in the spring, there were 350–375 temporaries for 20 days in 1933. There were probably about 315 temporaries in 1936, and 175 in 1939. For canning apricots there were 350 in 1918. For the peak season in August during the World War II years of 1942–45, there were up to 1500 temporaries.

During the war years, the cannery frequently ran ads seeking from 50 to 400 workers on an urgent basis to handle expected crops. In 1946, 1,000 employees were expected to vote in a union election, but the actual work force was certainly higher.

In 1949, when the cannery was closed, it was estimated that Palo Alto would lose “a million dollar payroll” (which probably translates to 1,000 or more workers). This would be the equivalent of nearly \$20 million today. It was the largest employer in Palo Alto at that time.

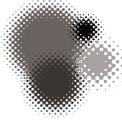
Did Barron Park Residents Work at the Cannery?

There is simply no way of knowing how many residents of Barron Park worked at the cannery, but it must have been a significant number over the years. In those years, Barron Park had a much more “blue-collar” population than it does today, and seasonal cannery employment may have been a meaningful addition to many a family’s budget.

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