

# BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Doug Moran, BPA President

This issue of the BPA Newsletter is sent to all residences in the neighborhood. The other three quarterly issues are sent only to members. The membership form is included in this issue—please fill it out and send it in before you forget. Too many people do put it off, and then suddenly realize that they are no longer getting the newsletter and are very disappointed. Starting this year, you can renew and pay dues entirely online, just go to “How to Join” on our home page [www.bpaonline.org](http://www.bpaonline.org)

Articles on local history and local people are consistently rated as the most popular features, and this issue is chock full of them. These profiles provide recognition and visibility for a few of the many individuals who make our neighborhood such a good place to live. Because our Web site has far fewer constraints than our printed newsletter, we are considering providing extended versions of these profiles and history articles, allowing for additional text (for example, sidebars) and especially additional photographs. If you are interested in past articles (starting in 1995), they are available online: go to “Newsletter Archive” at our home page.

The newsletter has limits in presenting information about issues facing our neighborhood: The gap between the time an article is written and when it arrives in your mailbox is typically 1–2 months (writing, editing, formatting, printing, and bulk-rate delivery). Our email lists fill this

gap by providing an effective method for distributing information about upcoming events. There are multiple email lists so people can choose the types of information they wish to receive. Please subscribe to at least the basic list, *bpa-news* (see article on page 15).

### **BPA Annual Neighborhood Meeting**

As at past Membership Meetings, City leaders will be a major component of this year's meeting, with a focus on where budget cuts are likely to be made. At past meetings, questions from residents covered a wide range of issues. This year, we are going to prioritize questions related to budget problems.

### **Bol Park Rejuvenation**

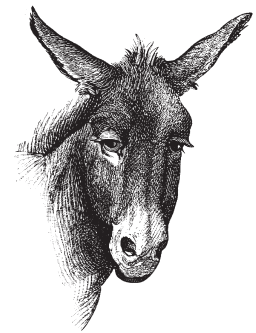
Last spring's renovation of Bol Park was very successful. Every time I go by, the play structures are being used by groups of children. The structure for toddlers (the train) often appears to be under-utilized because the toddlers quickly gain confidence and want to go play on “the big kids' structure.”

The BPA had been pushing for this renovation for over 6 years, and it had been repeatedly deferred because the City had raided its capital budget during the last recession and was slowly playing catch-up. The CityWorks program instituted by the new City Manager increased the amount of the budget being spent on capital items to close this gap more quickly, and Bol Park was just one of many facilities that received long overdue mainte-

nance and updating as part of this program. With the City facing another major budget shortfall, the dangers of shortchanging capital items should be remembered in deciding where cuts should be made.

### **May Fete**

“The dogs” return to May Fete. They were an enormously popular event at a May Fete several years ago, and they will be with us again. Fun for young and old. Paul Edwards who was the organizer for the May Pole dance and a major organizer of the music is leaving the neighborhood, and will be much missed. However, we have people picking up the slack (see article on page 11). As with all neighborhood activities, the May Fete will continue to evolve based upon the interests of its organizers and workers.



### **SEE THE DONKEYS**

*Every Sunday morning, weather permitting, the donkeys visit with people of all ages from 9:30 until 10:30 in Bol Park.*

*Bring your kids and dogs!*

*(Donkey donations are tax deductible)*

# Inge Harding-Barlow—Friend and Fighter for the Neighborhood

By Doug Graham

What does the Family History Center in Menlo Park on Saturday mornings and Bol Park on Sunday mornings have in common? In both places, you are likely to meet Inge Harding-Barlow, a friendly, blond-haired lady with an interesting British accent. Inge will be glad to help you research your English ancestors at the Menlo Park Center, which has an outstanding British Genealogical Reference Collection on Saturday or entice you to play with the Barron Park donkeys on a Sunday. However, many Barron Park residents know Inge even better from long-standing friendships or from working with her on neighborhood problems and issues, especially in her many roles with the BPA Board of Directors.

Inge has lived in Barron Park since 1966. Her heritage is English on her father's side and Dutch-German on her mother's. She grew up in Africa and obtained her degrees, including a PhD in Toxicology from CapeTown University. Inge has been an independent consulting toxicologist for over 30 years now, and loves to travel the world both for business and pleasure.

## Water Pollution in Barron Park

Inge became involved with the BPA Board, when in early 1986 Matadero Creek and several private wells were found to be polluted with trichloroethylene (TCE) and a number of other more toxic chemicals. The then president of the BPA, John Joynt was told by several government agencies, in effect "No problem, we will take care of you." Inge was angered by this (she did not believe them) and offered her professional services to the Association at no cost to them. John was delighted and Inge on her return from a 6-week overseas business trip, found herself elected to the BPA Board.

## Saving the Creeks

Immediately the Board began to take a strong leadership role to solve the neighborhood pollution problems. First they got the PA Fire Department to stop the various



culprits from dumping chemicals in the creek. Then they talked the PA Fire Department into eliminating a couple of dozen chemical drains which were flowing directly into the storm drains and thence into the creeks. Without these two actions, plant and animal life which was dying would have gone from our creeks for probably several decades.

## Groundwater Pollution

The next phase was to cleanup the plumes of polluted groundwater which were in a half dozen aquifers starting at about 12 feet below the surface and going down as deep as 250 feet in some places. This problem far outweighed the previous ones due to cost, number of parties involved and the time to completion. The BPA Board early on made a strategic decision to insist on pollution cleanup from the companies involved rather than small damage pay-offs to some of the homeowners. This proved wise, since few homeowners need declare a polluted site (soon none will need to do so) and many new homes can build basements.

## The Cleanup Project

After much negotiation the cleanup project got underway. Inge was ably aided in all the phases by Marianne Strickfadden and Art Bayce. Over a period of several years the extent of the pollution plume in each aquifer was defined, and under the direc-

tion of the State of California the actual cleanup began. Much of the polluted water that was extracted was then purified and returned to the aquifers via the creek. Today the pollution has been reduced to negligible amounts under nearly all of Barron Park and the situation is still improving. Although in a couple of years the neighborhood will be considered "pollution free", monitoring will continue for many years to make certain it remains that way!

The private wells in Barron Park which are still functioning are now pollution free or close to it. However, the City Well on the 600 block of Matadero has been shut down. The BPA has urged the city to repair and reopen this well to serve as a backup in the event of a disaster to the Hetch-Hetchy water system. We may still need the private wells and the monitoring wells, some day!

During this time period Inge also served four years as Community Representative on the Emergency Hazards Planning Board for Region II of the State of California. Region II is the biggest of the 5 regions, reach from the Oregon Border to midcalifornia. Inge's constant questions of "What if...?", were not always welcome.

## Bike Path Re-Vegetation with Native Plants

Just as the well-drilling phase of defining the pollution plume was getting into high gear, the long awaited flood control project entered its construction phase and the bike path was torn up from Gunn High School in the south through Bol Park to The Stanford Research Park in the north. Inge became involved in the BPA negotiations with and the monitoring of the Santa Clara Valley Water District and their contractors. During the revegetation planting discussions Inge insisted that as many native plants as possible be used. Later Jill Beckett and Doug Moran joined Inge in planting further native plants including some rare or endangered ones. This project is still a work in progress—any volunteers? In addition, several years ago Inge set up

webpages on the traditional uses of our local native plants. These webpages are linked to the BPA website.

**Keeping the Donkey Tradition Alive**

Not satisfied with being a Toxicologist and a Genealogist of note, Inge seeks to be “donkey-ologist” too. Donkeys have featured in Barron Park life since 1936, when the Bol family had the present Bol Park as a Donkey Pasture. When Josina Bol died in 1996, the BPA had hoped that the current Donkey Pasture would be give to the City as a permanent home for donkeys. This proved impossible, but the current owner of the pasture has generously allowed the donkeys to remain. Thus in 1996, a group of Barron Parkers became donkey handlers to take care of the needs of Mickey, who was rapidly joined by Pericles (Perry) and later just before Mickey died at the age of 31, by Miner49er. Perry is proud to say that he was the real live model for Shrek’s Donkey.

The donkey handlers who started with Edith and Leland Smith and Inge, and who were swiftly joined by Jim Bronson and Doug Moran, now number about 16. The donkeys are fed and checked twice per day. Much of the money collected for them goes to pay veterinary bills and hoof trimming by the farrier. Besides Sunday morning outings, the donkeys visit the schools, take part in at least 3 parades per year and attend local events such as weddings and memorial services. (Inge loves thinking up new things for them to do) They are the mascots and the pampered pets of the neighborhood, loved by all including the police. The handlers on behalf of Perry and Miner-49er sponsor a battered and blinded donkey, Sally, who lives in a sanctuary near the war torn Gaza strip.

**Neighborhood Evacuation Drills**

Inge has managed and organized on behalf of the neighborhood two community emergency evacuation drills. The first in the Spring of 1987 simulated a toxic gas cloud in the Stanford Research Park which drifted over part of Barron Park leading to homeowners needing to be evacuated. The second drill in the Fall of 1998, simulated the overflowing of the sediment basin near Gunn High School and subsequent flooding of certain parts of Barron Park. Both

drills paid special attention to evacuating the young, the elderly, the infirm and pets of all sizes. The problems pertaining to the evacuation of the elderly and the infirm remain ongoing. “Sorry, plastic sheeting and duct tape are to pacify us, they do not solve most of the problems,” says Inge.

**Neighborhood Safety**

Inge was a member of the first class of 8 graduates from the Palo Alto Citizens Police Academy in 1995 and a member of the first class of PANDAs a couple of years later. The PANDAs are citizens trained to assist their neighbors in large scale emergencies that initially overwhelm police, fire and other agencies. Inge believes “Simple is best” and with the first Law of Toxicolo-

gy “Only the dose makes the poison” is forever seeking safety for everyone, particularly her friends, neighbors and everyones pets.

**Board Membership and Leadership**

Inge served on the BPA Board of Directors from 1986–1999 and for most of that time was also on the Executive Committee. She also served several years as Board Secretary. Although now retired from the Board she still works on special projects, such as the May Fete, the native plants projects and naturally, many things to do with her beloved donkeys.

Inge, Many Thanks AND Plenty of Hee-Haws.

NATURAL HABITAT

By Doug Moran

**Update: Frogs in Matadero Creek**

In the Summer 2000 issue of this Newsletter (in online archives), Jeff Burch reported on an effort by three Brownie and Junior Girl Scout troupes to reintroduce Pacific Tree Frogs into Matadero Creek. In February 2003, the Palo Alto Foundation for Education (PAFE) awarded a grant to Lori Lester, a science teacher at Terman Middle School (next year), for a project to investigate the absence of tadpoles in Matadero Creek near Bol Park.

**Bats and Quail**

Over the past several years, various residents have expressed interest in projects to improve habitat for bats and quail, but there has never been the critical mass needed.

The local species of bats tend to roost in small groups, and often singly, and eat a wide range of night-flying insects. Although they eat large numbers of mosquitoes, it is unlikely that they would ever make any noticeable dent in the popu-

lation. Moths make better meals—remember the caterpillars of some moths are major garden pests (for example, the tomato hornworm). The construction and placement of bat houses is very simple: the hardest part of such an effort is identifying good sites and obtaining permission.

Last fall, the presence of Bobwhite Quail in the neighborhood for several weeks drew a lot of notice, especially since they are native to the eastern US, not here. I subsequently heard from several residents that California Quail make occasional appearances in their yards. I talked to several habitat experts, and their opinion was that habitat improvement along the creeks and the margins of the Bol Park bike path

would likely come up a little short. However, they were amazed that quail had been spotted in the neighborhood. Anyway, it’s not a real gamble: if habitat improvements did not attract quail, they would greatly benefit other birds and other wildlife.



# BARRON PARK HISTORY

by Doug Graham, Barron Park Historian

## Barron Park Pioneers

(PART FOUR OF A SERIES)

### A Lawyer Finds Mayfield Farm

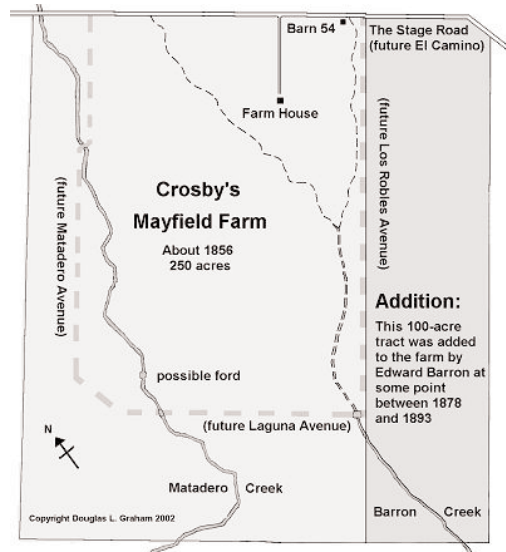
#### Mayfield Farm in 1853

In the winter of 1852–53, the State of California was only two years old, and the land that is now Barron Park was still part of Rancho Rincon de San Francisquito, informally known as Rancho Santa Rita. It was owned by the Robles family, who lived in a two-story adobe where San Antonio Road crosses over Alma Street and the CalTrain tracks today. Our land was then covered with Coast Liveoak and Valley Oak woodland and was grazed by cattle belonging to the Robles family or their lessees. It was being increasingly eyed by various newcomers who were interested in getting some (or all) of it away from its' Californio owners. One of these newcomers was Elisha Oscar Crosby, a prominent San Francisco lawyer who specialized in land cases. Crosby had been a State Senator from Sacramento and a delegate to the Constitutional Convention.

On April 10, 1853, the Robles family deeded 250 acres of their rancho to Crosby for \$2,000. He named it "Mayfield", perhaps because of the season of the year. The deed shows it as "Mayfield Ranch"; however, old maps and all local histories written to date refer to it as "Mayfield Farm", so I am going to do the same. The 250-acre estate, with a later 100-acre addition, was held as one parcel from 1853 until 1919. It constitutes the traditional "core" of the modern Barron Park neighborhood.

How can you know where Mayfield farm was—how can you relate it to what you see today in Barron Park? Some of the boundaries are easy—on the northeast it is El Camino Real. On the northwest, the Stanford Research Park. The edge of the VA Hospital and Gunn High School playing fields show where it was on the southwest. On the southeast, it is harder to understand, and really requires a map. The land that was the farm in 1856 is now

bounded by a property line that separates the lots on streets feeding into Los Robles from the lots on streets feeding into Maybell Avenue. The line extends further away from Gunn H.S. to separate the lots facing on Georgia Avenue from those on Florales Drive, and then continues northeast to El Camino Real. See the newly created map accompanying this article, in which I have indicated the modern lines of Matadero, Laguna and Los Robles Avenues to help orient the reader to the boundaries of Mayfield Farm. These streets did not exist in 1856.



#### Map Shows the Farm in 1856

The "Farm House" shown on my map corresponds with the back wing of Sarah Wallis' eventual mansion. The location of the house, at the rear of 3885 Magnolia Drive, is fairly precise—it was pointed out to me on the ground, in 1986, by Chatham Forbes, a local historian and professor of California History at De Anza College. He grew up in the mansion when it was part of his grandfather's military academy in the 1920s. His understanding was that the two-story back wing, which was used for kitchens and servants' quarters, was "the original house." "Original" certainly must refer to a house built at an earlier time than was the large square Victorian Mansion built by Sarah Wallis. Since it makes little

sense to assume that the Wallises built twice, I think the back wing was built by Crosby. However, the reader should understand that I have not discovered any actual documentary evidence that Crosby built a farmhouse or lived on the farm.

An 1876 lithograph shows Sarah Wallis' mansion, with a driveway off the San Jose-San Francisco Road (modern El Camino Real) into the farm, running straight toward the center of the front of the house. For the purposes of my map, I surmised that Crosby also had a driveway in the same location and orientation. "Barn 54" was located approximately where the Blockbuster Video store is now (in 2003). It is shown on an undated map that was probably drawn about 1859.

#### The Creeks

The modern course of Matadero Creek has not changed from that shown on the earliest maps of the area—it still runs in the same old channel. Note that I have shown a "possible ford" where there later was an automobile ford. I think that there must have been some point where the landowner could cross to access the part of his land northwest of the creek, without first going out to the Stage Road (modern El Camino).

Barron Creek was then known as "Dry Creek", and it's course from the foothills down approximately to present-day Laguna Avenue has not changed much since the early days (except for being channeled underground at Gunn High School). However, from Laguna to El Camino its course is much more conjectural. I have chosen to show it flowing along a zone of very old liveoak trees between Los Robles and La Para Avenues. These trees appear in the early aerial photos of the neighborhood, and some of them still exist today. The farmhouse stood on slightly higher ground, with minor channels or watercourses from Barron Creek flowing on both sides. This model of the land is corroborated by our records of flow directions and water depths during the flooding of January, 1983. None of the older maps show Barron Creek flowing below El Camino—

that didn't happen until it was channelized along the line of present-day Los Robles Avenue, after Crosby's time.

### What Kind of Farm was it?

There is no record of what kind of farming, if any, that Crosby did here. He only owned the land for about three years (1853–1856), and he still maintained a residence in San Jose in late 1854. It wasn't until late 1855 that there is a reference to his residence as "Santa Clara County"—indicating that he may have moved to Mayfield Farm that year (if he ever did). The land probably remained in its pastoral state and Crosby may have leased it out for pasturage—if so, probably for beef cattle. The "Barn 54" certainly suggests some kind of farming operation. Sarah Wallis purchased the place in 1856, and we know a little bit more about what she did with the property—but that's a topic for a future article.



Elisha Oscar Crosby, date unknown

### What Kind of Man was Crosby?

Crosby's photograph shows a pleasant-looking young man with a wide brow, straight thin nose, wide mouth and firm jaw. Judging from his actions as recorded by himself and others, he was very intelligent and well educated. He was probably a pretty good lawyer. His public manner was probably business-like but pleasant. He had the facility of forming deep and lasting friendships. He was ready to step forward and assume important responsibilities in public service. He was interested

in business, had a quick eye for opportunities and was often successful. However, his health was marginal and may have gotten in the way of potentially even greater achievements. Like many others at the time, he apparently became overextended just before the recession of 1857 and was forced into bankruptcy. His business and professional career was a succession of ups and downs, with peak achievements followed by times of troubles.

### Crosby's Early Life

Elisha Oscar Crosby was born on a farm in the Military Reserve near Groton in Tompkins County, in the Finger Lakes region of upstate New York, and lived there until age 17. He was educated at Cortland Academy in Homer, Cortland County, graduating in 1839. He then studied law under James Leach, a leading local lawyer. He was admitted to the bar of the Court of Common Pleas of Cortland and Tompkins Counties in 1841. Later on, he studied law in the offices of his uncle, E. G. Spaulding, a prominent lawyer in Buffalo, NY.

In July, 1843, Crosby was admitted as an attorney and counselor of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, and then, on his 25th birthday, as a solicitor of the New York State Court of Chancery (court of equity). The following year, he moved to New York City and practiced law as the junior partner of a much older and well-established lawyer, Abner Benedict. Benedict's practice was largely in admiralty (maritime) law. Crosby evidently prospered in New York City and developed a reputation as a talented and rising young lawyer. A major client of the firm was the large shipping house of Howard and Aspinwall, which, after the U.S. conquest of California in 1846, won the Federal Government subsidy for building three steamers for the Pacific Coast trade between Panama, California and Oregon. This connection was very helpful to Crosby when he later joined the gold rush to California.

### Gold Mania

Although John Marshall discovered gold at Sutter's Mill on January 24, 1848, the first stories were heavily discounted, and the gold rush within California did not really begin until mid May. It was even later before the news reached the states. A letter from the Military Governor accompanied by 230 ounces of gold reached Secretary

of State James Buchanan in Washington in mid-September. Private letters began to appear in newspapers across the states, telling of bonanzas being discovered in the American and other Sierra Nevada rivers. President James Polk confirmed the discoveries in his message to Congress December 5, and the rush began. On January 11, 1849, the NY Herald wrote: "The spirit of emigration which is carrying off thousands to California...expands every day. All classes of our citizens seem to be under the influence of this extraordinary mania..."

One of the "maniacs" was Elisha Crosby. Armed with letters of recommendations to various prominent Californians, he had sailed Christmas Day from NYC on the steamer Isthmus, bound for Chagres on the Caribbean Coast of the Panama Isthmus. He had missed the sailing of the first steamer to leave New York for California. That was the S.S. California, which was setting out to be the first steamship to "double" Cape Horn (pass from east to west against the wind and current). Crosby planned to cross the Isthmus and intercept her when she stopped at Panama City on the Pacific Coast. He made it to Panama City just five days before the California arrived from doubling Cape Horn. The local agent of Howard and Aspinwall arranged passage for Crosby, which he would not have been able to do on his own. On February 1, 1849, the California sailed from Panama for San Francisco with Crosby and 450 other passengers crowding not only the rooms below and the cargo hold, but even the open deck. Hundreds of would-be passengers were left behind.

### To Be Concluded in the Next Issue

This concludes the first half of this article. Crosby's California adventures and the contributions he made to the birth of our state will be covered in the second part of the article, which will appear in the Summer, 2003 issue of the newsletter. The Spring Issue that you are reading is mailed to all Barron Park residents, but the other issues are mailed to current members only, so don't forget to send in your dues.

**Online membership form:**  
[www.cyberstars.com/bpa](http://www.cyberstars.com/bpa)  
**Online emergency prep. form:**  
[www.cyberstars.com/bpa](http://www.cyberstars.com/bpa)

# K A T I E E D W A R D S

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By Doug Graham

**K**atie Edwards, a very good friend of so many of us in Barron Park, died January 11, 2003 after a short illness, at the age of 84. Katie was a resident of Barron Park for 28 years, from 1975 until her death. For many years, she participated on the Emergency Preparedness Committee, supporting two major BPA programs, "QuakeSafe" (earthquake preparedness) and "EvacSafe" (disaster evacuation preparedness and drills). She was a member of the Board of Directors of the Barron Park Association from 1993 through 1999. During that six-year span she initiated and led the BPA's Seniors Program, contributed to and help edit the BPA Newsletter, and made numerous other contributions.

Katie was born April 10, 1918 in Nedham, Massachusetts. She was educated and became a registered nurse in suburban Boston, where she was married in 1941. The war years took the new family to several localities in California and they ended up in San Carlos to raise their four children. In the words of her son Jim Edwards, "She was a den mother, Campfire girl leader, band mom, swim team supporter and hostess to many of the neighborhood kids in our swimming pool. At that time of her life she was focused on being a mother, and she did a good job of it."

### **Independence and Travel**

Then, about the time the kids were grown, Katie became divorced, moved into an apartment in Redwood City, and started a new life as a single woman. Her son Jim said that "...in time she became very happy as an independent woman free to do as she wished." She took art and other classes at Canada College, joined Toastmasters and was active in that club for many years. She went to work as a customer service representative at Scientific Products in Menlo Park and worked there for 15 years until retiring.

Katie bought her house at the end of Chimalus Avenue in 1975. She loved her big creek-bank lot with Redwood trees and wildlife. And she began to travel—and travel—and travel. Katie discovered cruises and began to take them regularly. She often went with her daughters, but she made new friends easily and quickly on these cruises. Many became permanent friends. One friend said Katie had gone on 17 cruises, including five times to Alaska. Her "cruise friends" were well represented at Katie's memorial gathering.

### **A Zest for Life**

Her daughter Susan said that Katie had a zest for life—an ability to turn the bad parts around into positive things. She was very adventuresome and went every-

where she wanted to go. "I tried to talk her into moving closer (to the rest of us), but she loved Barron Park and her friends here too much."

Besides traveling, and participating in community affairs in Barron Park, she was a peer counselor at the Palo Alto's Avenida Senior Center from 1990 until several years ago. Another daughter, Stephanie, told us that Katie loved her community service work, but never felt that she was irreplaceable. She reminded Stephanie of a character in Wallace Stegner's "Remembering Laughter," who would have said; "Now I've done my part—the rest is up to you."

### **An Impish Sense of Humor**

A friend from Avenida Senior Center told of Katie's sometimes impish sense of humor. "On her 80th Birthday she went to Santa Cruz and got a tattoo. Katie fooled us all with a fake tattoo over her heart. I told her 'I thought you had lost your mind.'" Another friend, Brian told of their long-term freindship. "We met in April 1996 on a 16-day cruise to Greece. We bonded, and had pet names for each other, "Norma" and "Joe." Even though we were 40 years apart in age, I have called her 3-4 times a week. I used to pick her up for dinner at Stanford Mall—one time, we went into Tiffany's and, just for fun, we started shopping for an engagement ring. You should have seen the looks on people's faces—they really thought we were a 'May and December' couple!" Her grandson Thom Hall, who lived with Katie from 1993 to 1995 while attending Gunn High School, said that she had a great sense of humor. She joked around a lot with him, and made living here "one of the best parts of my life."

### **A Calming Influence**

Gwen Luce, BPA Board Member, said, when Katie came on the Board, "The



# SENIOR UPDATE

By Mary Jane Leon



Board was mostly men in those days, but this didn't deter Katie from speaking up and giving her opinion. Everyone respected and listened to her. She was a calming influence in a very opinionated group of people!" Mick McDonald, of the Palo Alto Fire Department, first met Katie in 1981 when she was involved with Art Bayce, Barbara Brown, and Verna Graham in editing "Living With Our Faults." The booklet had been produced by Art's Emergency Preparedness Committee and Mick was helping adapt it for general use by the City of Palo Alto. Mick also spoke of Katie being a calming influence in any tense situation, such as occurred several times during the 22-hour Disaster Preparedness Training course she took from him.

Katie's son Jim told us that "...the past 25 years were some of the happiest of her life." However, over the past several years her physical health deteriorated and recently she had a small stroke with some loss of short-term memory which frustrated and embarrassed her greatly. In spite of this, she was able to live in her home until the last three weeks of her life.

Katie, it is hard to say goodbye, but we hear you—we know that you did your part, and now the rest is up to us.

## Well, Am I a Member or Not?

"How come I get the newsletter sometimes, but not all the time? Am I a member if I don't get the newsletter? Do I have to be a member of the Barron Park Association to attend the seniors lunches? Or to use the services?" If you have asked any of these questions, you are not alone. We get them all the time. So here's the skinny.

Once a year, and generally with the Spring issue (the one in your hands right now), the BPA Board sends the newsletter to every home in the neighborhood. That is some 1600 homes, give or take a dozen or so. In that (this) issue, we include the membership form and an envelope, and ask you to join, or rejoin, for another year. If you do join, you get the next three quarterly newsletters—Summer, Fall, and Winter. If you don't join, you don't hear from BPA again for another year. So we hope you will re-up, just to stay on top of what is going on in your neighborhood.

However, you do not have to be a member of BPA to be a senior citizen, and so you don't have to be a member of BPA to join us for lunches or use our services. We figure being over 65 should have some advantages.

## May Fete Coming Up!

May 18—the Sunday after Mother's Day, the May Fete will be back in its old haunts, in Bol Park. You can read all about the features of the May Fete elsewhere in this newsletter. Posters will be up around the neighborhood a few days before the date to remind you.

There is an added attraction for seniors this year. We will again have our seniors canopy up, to provide some extra shade. So we invite all of you to join us for lunch. This is just drop-in. No reservations needed, and we will not be providing any food or drink. But as I say, we do have the shade, and we always have good company. Let's see how many people we can crowd under that canopy. Bring a

lunch from home, or buy one on the grounds, and bring an easy-to-carry chair. After lunch, the chair will come in handy to get you a front-row spot to watch the May Pole dance, as well as watch the dog show, and hear some fine music by local musicians.

## Seniors Lunch at Su Hong Eatery

The Barron Park Seniors had their first lunch of 2003 at Su Hong Eatery, on El Camino Way, on February 18. More than 30 people joined us for a great meal. Lots of variety, and they gave us a gratis dessert of fried bananas.

We plan to have the lunches every other month this year, so the next one will be mid-April. We would be happy to have you join us. These lunches are a good way to renew old acquaintances and get acquainted with new friends in our unique neighborhood. Phone Julie or Mary Jane (see end of this column) to be put on our calling or email list for lunches if you are not already on it.

## Our Services for Seniors

We continue to have a group of active volunteers who offer to help out their Barron Park neighbors by doing the following:

- Run an errand for you or with you.
- Do small odd jobs at your home.
- Stop by for a visit, or give you a daily phone call.
- Find information that you might need about any specific service available to local seniors.

You can reach Julie Spengler at 493-9151 or Mary Jane Leon at 493-5248.

## COMING IN FUTURE ISSUES

Bob Moss Biography  
History Article Park II  
Report on the Annual  
Neighborhood Meeting

# EDITH AND LELAND SMITH

By Zoie Nicholas

On any Sunday morning, rain or shine, you're likely to find two long-eared friends grazing on patches of lush green grass in Bol Park, and, not far away, you're also likely to find Edith and Leland Smith, a spirited couple, who have lived in Barron Park since 1958. Many of us know of Edith and Leland through the "donkey connection," a group of volunteers who support the feeding and care of donkeys Perry and Miner Forty-Niner, but the Smith's contribution to the donkeys is simply one facet of their many years of dedication to community service in Palo Alto.

This talented couple, married for 56 years, began their lives across the Bay. They speak with great delight about the Oakland of that time — green fields and friendly streets. Edith and Leland met in the seventh grade. Great friends, they pursued their own interests. Edith's passion was art. For Leland, it was music. They shared their interests together until Leland left Oakland during the Second World War. But, rather than talk about the difficulties of that period, Leland talks about the natural beauty that he saw on his travels, composing duets for flutes on the ferry boats of Puget Sound. Edith, on the other hand, stayed in Oakland and pursued her interest in art. She attended U.C., Berkeley as a student, and later taught in the University's Art Department.

In my conversations with them, Leland's enthusiasm toward all things musical, seems only to be rivaled by the pride he displays in Edith's experience as an artist. Not only has Edith taught at Foothill College and the Pacific Art League, but her work has also been featured in shows as far away as Brussels, Paris, Tokyo and New York.

Leland himself is an accomplished musician. His music career began at Mills College in Oakland and, after teaching for a few years at Mills and the University of Chicago, Leland was offered a position in the Music Department at Stanford University. Leland is an accomplished pianist, but tells wonderful stories about his career playing the contra bassoon in the Chicago



**The Original team of donkey volunteers with Mickey and Perry. In the rear, left to right, is Ted Thomas, Pat Rogow, Edith Smith and Leland Smith. In front are Doug Moran and Inge Harding-Barlow.**

and San Francisco Opera Orchestras and the Stanford Orchestra.

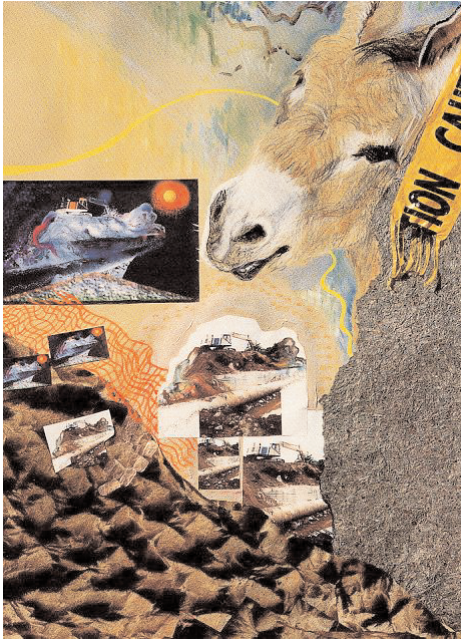
Although both retired, Edith and Leland's vocation as teachers and their love for children flow through their work with the donkeys. Now donkeys, it may seem, are an unlikely connector in this community of silicon and technology agreements, but animals often show unlikely talents. On many fall mornings, Edith and Leland can be found in Bol Park, each with a handful of alfalfa cubes in the pockets of their coats, acquainting children from nearby public schools with the joy of learning to interact with animals. In fact Edith and Leland greet any interested on-lookers with a warm reception and an ability to provide a historical account of the Barron Park area. The children, it seems, have no end of questions about Perry and Niner, and who better to answer them than the people who have played a critical role in cementing and maintaining this well-loved Barron Park tradition.

Edith and Leland were good friends of the Bols, who owned the land that is now Bol Park. The Bols had owned donkeys for a number of years, but after Cornelius Bol's death, Mrs. Bol tended their aging donkeys

until all had passed away except for Mickey. As Mrs. Bol became more frail, Edith, Leland, and their good friend and neighbor, Inge Harding-Barlow, looked after Mickey. However, upon Mrs. Bol's death, the question arose as to what would become of Mickey and of Barron Park — without its donkeys. Jim Bronson, another long term resident of Barron Park, recalls that "after Mrs. Bol died, the donkeys needed an official 'owner.' Rather than incorporate ourselves, we tried many local organizations who turned us down citing the donkeys were 'too risky,' 'not in keeping with our mission', etc. Then, we thought of the Peninsula Conservation Center. I fondly remember the night Leland and I went to present our case to the Board. Leland was even more eloquent than usual and told many heartwarming stories that melted the hearts of most of the Board Members. He was the smiling embodiment of the kinder-simpler semi-rural lifestyle that the donkeys' presence created in South Palo Alto.

"There were several obvious hold-outs, however, Board members who were sure that the donkeys would create great financial hardship and liability. After about 20 minutes of back and forth between us and them, with Leland relating tales of the kindergarten visits and the many little ones who safely enjoy the donkeys on Sunday mornings, it became clear that the resistant Board Members had a false assumption. One of them said, 'Can you make sure that an experienced person is holding them, so the donkeys don't gallop away?' We realized that they imagined that the kids were RIDING on the donkeys. As soon as we clarified that there is no donkey riding, the Board thanked us and





**Edith's multi-media painting of Mickey at the time of the flood control construction next to his pasture.**

said their response would be forthcoming. It was, and that organization has been the donkeys' official owner for several trouble-free years."

Inge Harding-Barlow, a co-instigator of the donkey connection recalls that in the ten weeks after Mrs. Bol's death, "we thought we had lost Mickey at least three times, but a bowl of hot oats always brought him back to life. Mickey would clank and creek as he followed us across the pasture led by a bowl of his favorite food." Inge also recalls that "Edith and Leland performed as handlers beyond the call of duty." During one of their missions, when Mickey was frail, he managed to fall directly on top of Leland, requiring Edith and Inge to pull a stranded Leland out from underneath poor Mickey. The three then set about righting Mickey on his feet. After that, it was merely "business as usual."

Concerned about Mickey's health, and with the assistance of Mickey's farrier, Clyde Farmer, these three friends facilitated the arrival of "Little Perry," at the donkey pasture. Perry, whose previous career had been soothing thoroughbreds at the race track soon became Mickey's smaller shadow. Niner arrived in June of 1998, shortly before Mickey's death. And more recently, the donkey-handlers have adopted a little sister for Perry and Niner in Israel through an animal rescue organization.

Over the years, the donkeys have added much character to our community. There are tales of the Bol's donkeys, up to six of them at a time, making frequent escapes and trotting along Arastradero Road in search of garden goodies, foiled only by the Smith's daughter who, bowl of oats in hand, had much of the look of the pied piper, leading the culprits back to their pasture. On another evening, Leland, in pursuit of the escaped Perry and Niner, rounded the corner of Gunn High School only to find the police, with night-sticks drawn, in a stand-off with Perry and Niner. Leland, who is rarely found without alfalfa cubes in his pocket, led the escapees back home. It was another great example of how a few gentle words works much better than the stick.

But not all of our donkey tales are quite so nefarious. We know our donkeys to be gentle, lovable creatures. Many children have sat scintillated by stories about our Barron Park donkeys. They have squealed with delight at the touch of soft-ears, or upon learning that little Perry was the model inspiring the creation of Shrek. Our

donkeys have presided over the annual Barron Park Walk-To-School, and they have graced the memorial services and tree plantings that have honored the late members of our community. For me, the donkeys are just there. I don't think much about them except on Thursday mornings (my volunteer day), when they greet me impatiently, awaiting the hay to be spread in their mangers. They are there every day — in the morning when I run by, or during my late evening strolls. They are just part of home, like the lush new sod of Bol Park, the kid's playing on the swings, the dog's — large and small, and the familiar faces I see on the path. So much of feeling that Barron Park is home is recognizing folks that I've met through the donkey connection or at one of the community gatherings organized by our residents. I'm so grateful for this community, a refuge in this hectic culture of Silicon Valley affluence. And, I'm particularly grateful for the Smith's as my neighbors. Their gentle spirits and warm smiles remind me that a small effort made in love and with joy, can make a huge difference to a whole community.

## ANNUAL NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

By Maryanne Welton

The Barron Park Association is once again sponsoring our annual Neighborhood Meeting on Sunday, April 6, from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. at Barron Park Elementary School. The goal of these meetings is to provide an opportunity for members of our community to hear about updates on BPA activities, city programs or projects that impact Barron Park and to solicit input on issues that are a concern to the neighborhood. The BPA board uses this forum as a springboard for planning our activities for the year.

About 100 people have attended the last several annual meetings, including community members, City staff and City Councilpeople. The most common issues discussed include the impact of traffic and new development on the neighborhood. And ever since All American Market closed, Barron Park residents have wanted a local neighborhood-serving grocery store. Last year there were additional comments on public facilities,

infrastructure and El Camino.

This year, we will give an overview of progress on those issues, including the updated El Camino Design Guidelines, the ongoing transportation study, and other programs and activities that affect our neighborhood. We will welcome back City Manager Frank Benest, who will provide a status report on the City's budget planning process. A question and answer period will follow these presentations and we will finish with summaries of the main issues raised during the meeting.

The Annual Neighborhood Meeting is a great opportunity for members of our community to hear what is going on in Barron Park. It's also a good way to meet your neighbors.

Please join us for an informative afternoon. Refreshments will be served. We welcome your input on ways the BPA can serve the community.

# ZONING & LAND USE

By Maryanne Welton, Committee Chair

The amount of new construction and renovations proposed for our neighborhood has been reduced dramatically during the last year. With the exception of single family homes, new development has slowed to a trickle. Here's an update on projects in our community during the last year:

### 4131 El Camino

A three-story, mixed-used project on the Island is currently under construction. It will contain two levels of underground parking, ground floor retail and office space, and residential units above. The owner has been talking to possible tenants for the retail spaces to provide neighborhood-serving retail uses, such as a sandwich shop, coffee shop, or hair salon. Construction should be complete later this year.

### Old Blockbuster Site

A revised plan for a nine-unit condominium project has been submitted for the Old Blockbuster site at the corner of El Camino and Vista Way. Neighbors have voiced concerns about auto access and adequate parking for the project so that on-street parking is not unduly impacted along Vista. A final application is pending receipt by the City and we will continue to monitor the parking and access issues.

### South El Camino Real Design Study

The Architectural Review Board and Planning Commission approved new design guidelines for all new and renovated projects proposed on El Camino in our neighborhood. The goal is to help create a lively, pedestrian-oriented, neighborhood-serving retail district. While there has been little opportunity to implement the guidelines this year, they are in place when project proposals are reviewed.

### Children's International School

This local, private school had proposed building a new school for the vacant lot on Clemo between Maybell and Amaranta.

They withdrew their application last summer and there are no known plans for the site at this time.

### Subdivision at 797 Matadero

Revised plans have not been resubmitted to the city for a subdivision of five single family homes at this site.

### Albertson's at Alma Plaza

The Planning Commission approved the proposed redevelopment of Alma Plaza last fall to include a new and expanded grocery store, additional retail spaces and housing. The plans have spent nearly five years in the review process and should go the City Council for review this spring.

### Ricky's Hyatt (at El Camino and Charleston)

The plans for an expanded hotel and 300 units of multi-family housing have been getting a close scrutiny through the Environmental Impact Review (EIR) process during the last year. BPA board members met with a representative from the Charleston Meadows neighborhood group adjacent to the site. We responded to the City on certain Draft EIR issues:

Protect the safety of pedestrians and cyclists along the school commute corridor on Charleston and Arastradero.

Provide adequate on-site parking.

Reduce the number of units.

Provide a single-family home buffer along Wilkie Way.

Prohibit auto access to Wilkie Way from the project site.

Protect the mature trees in the landscape zone.

The final EIR will be reviewed this spring and they plans will need Planning Commission and City Council approval to proceed.

Check this column in each newsletter for project updates or contact me if you have any questions on development in our neighborhood at 493-3035 or mare@robquigley.com.

## BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

\*Doug Moran, President

\*Maryanne Welton, Vice President

\*Christian Kalar, Secretary

\*Ken Tani, Treasurer

Don Anderson

\*Shirley Finfrock

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Mary Jane Leon

Gwen Luce

\*Members of the Executive Committee



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Neighborhood Businesses: Vacant

Creeks/Flood Control: Christian Kalar

Neighborhood Safety & Preparedness:

Gwen Luce/Patrick Muffler

May Fete: Doug Graham

History: Doug Graham

Membership: Don Anderson

Natural Habitat & Environment:  
Jill Beckett/Inge Harding-Barlow/  
Doug Moran

Newsletter: Nancy Hamilton

Parks: Doug Graham

School Liaison: Will Beckett, acting

Seniors: Mary Jane Leon

Traffic & Streets: Will Beckett

Zoning & Land Use: Maryanne Welton

Welcoming: Gwen Luce

BPA meetings are held the 3rd

Tuesday of every month at 7:15 p.m.

Call Doug Moran for location: 856-3302

# MAY FETE 2003 IS BACK IN BOL PARK!

**B**e sure to mark your calendar to attend the 22nd May Fete, back in Bol Park this year. The date is Sunday, May 18th (the weekend between Mother's Day and Memorial Day). The time is Noon to 4 PM. With any kind of luck, the weather should be great. The newly-renovated park is more beautiful than ever. Your neighbors and friends will be there.

Our May Fete is primarily for families. Since many of our families include pets, we are opening with a pet parade. The parade will assemble at Barron Park School 11:00-11:45 AM and will leave promptly at 11:50 AM for Bol Park, led by Perry and Miner 49er. Bob Griffin and Friends' "Wonder Agility Dogs" will perform their amazing act—your dogs will dance and plead to take part (the Police dogs do)! Talk to the experts on security, electric cars and emergency planning. Get all your bikes licensed!

There will be all the traditional May Fete activities; a Maypole Dance, music, exhibits by Barron Park artists, the Barron Park history exhibit, food and drink, and more.



### BARRON PARK ARTISTS!

Come and display your art at the May Fete at Bol Park.

Sunday, May 18, 2003, 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m.

Contact Mary Jane Leon at 650 493-5248 or [mjleon@earthlink.net](mailto:mjleon@earthlink.net) for details and to reserve a space.



### Volunteers Needed at May Fete Sunday May 18, 2003

Volunteers are needed for one-hour shifts on May Fete Day. Jobs are available selling food and drinks, helping with face-painting, and general fete setup or cleanup. Here's a chance to meet your neighbors, help the community and have fun in the sun! Contact Doug Graham at 493-0689 or via e-mail at [dougpaca@aol.com](mailto:dougpaca@aol.com).

# STREET REDESIGN Matadero Avenue

By Doug Moran

**I**f you have not recently been down Matadero Avenue between Laguna and Chimalus, you are in for quite a surprise. This much delayed project is finally done, and the results are interesting (especially for other pending upgrades). The consensus is that problem of speeding has been noticeably reduced, even though the old rough surface is now a smooth, even one. Credit is being given to visual narrowing, a technique that was also used to good effect on Los Robles many years ago. The current street with valley gutters is the same width, occasionally wider, as the old street with its shoulders. However, the gutters and the shoulder stripe create the impression of a much narrower street.

The center line is an important part of this. In the first day after the new surface was installed, speeding went up substantially. However, speeding dropped as soon as the markers for the center line were installed, and came down a bit more after the line itself was painted.

Pedestrians also report feeling safer walking along the street, partly from there being less speeding and partly because the strong visual separation between street and shoulder has encouraged people to park their cars to allow more room for people on the street.

One problem: Pedestrians report that, even when there is no other traffic, some drivers pass too closely to them rather than moving to the center of the road (it is a dotted center line).

Remaining section: The section between El Camino and Josina was originally scheduled to be done as part of this project, but the problem of pedestrian routes and parking locations was more difficult than the City realized. However, the City thinks they have those problems resolved and will be able to fix this segment this summer (budget permitting).

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

By Patrick Muffler

## Types of disasters

Why should residents of Barron Park take the time to learn about emergency preparedness and spend the money to become prepared? The simple answer is that there are four major types of disasters that could seriously affect our community: earthquakes, floods, toxic spills and terrorism.

### Earthquakes

Most of us are aware that we live in "Earthquake Country", and almost all of us have felt the small earthquakes that jolt the Bay Area every few months. Some of us remember the 1989 magnitude 6.9 (M=6.9) Loma Prieta earthquake located in the Santa Cruz Mountains, although Barron Park was spared the major damage that affected the Santa Cruz Mountains and parts of San Francisco and Oakland. Few of us, however, have ever experienced a large earthquake (M> 6.7) on one of the major faults that criss-cross the Bay Area. The U.S. Geological Survey estimates that there is a 70% chance of at least one magnitude 6.7 or greater earthquake striking the San Francisco Bay region between 2000 and 2030 (USGS Fact Sheet 152-99; see <http://quake.usgs.gov/>). Such an earthquake, regardless of its exact location, would cause major damage throughout the Bay Area. Keep in mind that the 1995 M=6.9 earthquake in Kobe, Japan, a bay-side urban area not unlike the San Francisco Bay Area, killed 6,000 people and caused over \$100 billion in damage!

### Floods

Many of us have had first-hand experience with floods in Barron Park, in particular the 1983 floods from Matadero and Barron Creeks. Maps prepared by Doug Graham show that 90 acres, or about 20% of Barron Park was affected by this flooding – and this was only a "20-year" flood. Although subsequent work by the Santa Clara Valley Water District has greatly improved the situation, there are still certain scenarios that could cause this community disaster to be repeated.

### Toxic spills

Barron Park is located next to a light industrial area with a low but real possibility of toxic spills. In addition, nearby transporta-

tion arteries provide potential sources of toxic spills.

### Terrorism

Finally, the events of 11 September 2001 shocked us into the realization that terrorist attacks are a real possibility, albeit inherently unpredictable in space, time and nature. Guidelines for preparedness and response are only now being prepared by the Federal Government.

### Emergency Preparedness in Barron Park

Emergency preparedness in a community like Barron Park takes two forms: (1) community preparedness, and (2) household preparedness. Neither alone is sufficient.

Community preparedness is represented by the activities of organizations such as the Barron Park Emergency Preparedness Committee ([www.bpaonline.org](http://www.bpaonline.org)) and the Palo Alto Office of Emergency Services. Activities fall under the general categories of education, inventory of emergency equipment, and emergency response training. Palo Alto has an excellent training program (PANDA) to provide a cadre of trained individuals to supplement and support the Palo Alto Fire Department, whose resources will be overwhelmed in a major disaster, and whose efforts of necessity must be directed towards facilities of highest priority (e.g., hospitals). The Barron Park Association has been a leader in preparedness education, having worked closely with the City of Palo Alto in the preparation of "Living with our Faults—an Earthquake Preparation guide."

Household preparedness boils down to the ability of each household to provide for its basic needs for at least several days to a week, without any assistance from an outside government or private entity. In a major disaster, each household will be on its own. We can anticipate disrupted water supplies (remember that the Hetch Hetchy water pipeline crosses right over the Hayward Fault!), absence of electricity and gas, and perhaps significant structural damage to our dwellings. We all need to have sufficient emergency supplies to tide us over the period until outside assistance becomes available and utilities are restored.

The essentials of any cache of emergency supplies are water, food, a battery powered radio and first-aid supplies. Excellent guidelines for emergency caches are presented in the 3rd edition of "Living with our Faults", published in 1994 by the City of Palo Alto—[www.cityofpaloalto.org/fire/earthquake/](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/fire/earthquake/) (see table of contents). For those who choose not to build their own emergency caches, the American Red Cross sells a wide selection of Disaster Preparedness Kits that are described in detail at [www.paarc.org/supplies/cat\\_disaster](http://www.paarc.org/supplies/cat_disaster).

### How well are we prepared?

Some Barron Park households are well-prepared, but most are poorly aware of the potential disasters and consequently are ill-prepared. Although precise statistics are lacking, perhaps 80% of our households fall in the unprepared category. In the case of a major emergency, what will this 80% do for the basics of existence? For the first week after a disaster, none of us can expect any help from government agencies, utilities or other outside entities. If those who are unprepared depend on the good will of their prepared neighbors, their neighbors' preparedness is reduced from one week to just a day or two, and then everyone is in trouble.

Hence, the major goal of the Barron Park Association and its Emergency Preparedness Committee is to greatly increase the percentage of households prepared for a disaster. The first step is an awareness of our vulnerability. The second is each household taking some simple steps to assure adequate supplies of emergency water, food, etc. for a week without assistance.

To this end, we strongly encourage you to fill out and return the form provided in this newsletter. This will achieve two things: (1) provide the Barron Park Association with a better inventory of the resources available in an emergency, and (2) encourage you to think about the steps each individual household should take to prepare for the disaster that someday surely will strike Barron Park. The on-line form is at [www.cyberstars.com/bpa/emergency](http://www.cyberstars.com/bpa/emergency).

# THREE BARRON PARK GARDENS

## Featured in 18th Annual Gamble Garden Tour

By Shirley Finrock

Every Garden Has A Story" is the theme of this year's 18th Annual Spring Garden Tour sponsored by the Elizabeth F. Gamble Garden. Visit five private gardens on Friday and Saturday, May 2 & 3 from 10 to 4 daily. Tour attendees will be "oohing" and "aahing" three beautiful gardens of our Barron Park residents. These private gardens are located on La Selva and Barron Avenue.

All are owner designed and maintained and have wonderful features for their cottages built in the 1920's. One of the Barron Park gardens is a Romantic Garden designed by a previous owner, who is a landscape historian with a specialty in preservation. She currently is a university lecturer and trained in Britain. The current owner's personal choices have added to the basic design with many new plantings and features. The second owner completely redesigned her petite garden with the assistance of a Barron Park landscape designer. She has incorporated mosaic designs in the patios expanding the visual experience in the garden. She also used many cuttings from her Mother's garden as a tribute to her memory. The third featured Barron Park garden incorporates wonderful hardscape using natural stone, a small pond, a grandchildren's garden, and the owner's favorite plants. She used many cost saving techniques to build this garden, by acquiring plants and cuttings from friends and purchasing 4" and 1 gallon size plants.

Ideas for your garden abound for unique plants, hardscape, fences, and garden designs. In addition to the three gardens featured in Barron Park, a garden is featured within walking distance of Gamble Garden in Old Palo Alto, and a fifth is in Crescent Park.

Spring Tour visitors can also participate in an array of activities being held at Gamble Garden. Shop at the very special boutique in the Gamble House is full of gifts for all occasions including Mother's Day. A plant sale in the Greenhouse area will be offering many of the plant species and heirloom varieties featured in the private gardens.

Make your reservations by April 25 to have lunch on May 2 or 3 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the patio of the Gamble Carriage House. Exhibits, talks, and garden related vendors will be on site. One vendor will feature high quality tools and provide sharpening services. You will have an opportunity to obtain products and services at the Silent Auction, always a popular event, or, just stop in for complimentary iced tea and 'Tea Thyme' cookies at the Tea House. Master Gardeners will be available and will conduct a plant clinic. Tour attendees may bring plants for diagnostic evaluation and ask specific garden related questions. A tour ticket is not required to participate in the activities at Gamble Garden.

Spend a fun three hours being a garden hostess in our Barron Park neighborhood and save on the ticket price. To volunteer, contact Collette Rudd 650-341-3572 (evenings and weekends).

Pre-tour tickets are discounted, and Volunteers can purchase tickets for \$20 prior to April 20. On the day of the tour, non-member tickets are \$30, while the price for Members of Gamble Garden is \$25. The lunch is \$15 with advanced reservation. Telephone 650-329-1356 to purchase tickets for Spring Tour, e-mail to admin@gamblegarden.org or visit, www.gamblegarden.org for more details.

The office is open from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon weekdays. This public garden is open from dawn to dusk at no charge. The Elizabeth F. Gamble Garden, 1431 Waverley Street, Palo Alto, CA 94301-3640, is located just one block south of Embarcadero Road.

All proceeds benefit Gamble Garden, a non-profit community horticultural center, which receives no city, county or other government funds. The Spring Tour is the major fund-raising event of the year, and funds one-fourth of the yearly expenses.

## BARRON PARK'S "JAPANESE COLONY"

In the 1930's most of Barron Park was in orchards, berry patches and vegetable fields. On La Para Avenue, according to an oral history taken 25 years ago, there was a "Japanese Colony" raising strawberries. There was at least one family, with schoolchildren who walked to Mayfield School. They may have still been there on December 7, 1942, when the Japanese Navy launched its surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. After we went to war, in the Spring of 1942, all of Palo Alto's Japanese immigrants and Japanese-American U.S. Citizens were forcibly "relocated" to prison-style internment camps in the desert and intermountain west. Most Palo Altoans were taken to Heart Mountain, Wyoming.



If there were Barron Park residents sent to the relocation camps, this would be an important part of our neighborhood history. I want to trace those families if possible, and learn their stories from their descendants, for inclusion in our history. If there is any reader of this newsletter who can help, please contact me: Doug Graham, Barron Park Historian, 984 Ilima Way, Palo Alto CA, 94306, 650-493-0689, dougpaca@aol.com.

# BARRON PARK DONKEY PARADE AND PARTY A BIG HIT!

By Don Anderson

Saturday, December 21 marked the third annual Barron Park Holiday Party and Donkey Parade. It was a very successful enterprise; more than 150 Barron Park residents, including kids, parents, and seniors, participated. There were also many dogs, bikes, scooters, wagons, and skateboards involved, in addition to the Gunn High School Chamber Singers with choir director Bill Liberatore, and of course two donkeys. Things got started with a procession (led by Perry and Niner) from Bol Park through the neighborhood, featuring caroling led by Mr. Liberatore. At parade's end there were refreshments served at the Barron Park Elementary School, and a wonderful performance by the Gunn Chamber Singers with Mr. Liberatore at the piano. Refreshments included home baked cookies provided by members of the Barron Park Seniors group.



**Above: Perry and Niner take a treat break as carolers sing in the background and donkey handlers Tracy Hunt, Inge Harding-Barlow, and Brandy Faulkner look on.**



**The Gunn Chamber Singers sing up a storm at the holiday party, under the direction of Bill Liberatore.**

The December 21 Barron Park parade and party really went well, and a major reason was the participation of Bill Liberatore, the Gunn High School choir director, as carol leader and pianist, and the Gunn Chamber Singers, who performed at the party at Barron Park Elementary School. The Gunn choir is making a trip in June to perform in several cities in China. The package deal of airfare, room, meals, etc. costs each family \$2,400. Although we sometimes lose sight of the fact, there are many families in Palo Alto who can't afford this kind of money. Bill has been looking for individuals or local businesses that can make a contribution, large or small. Anyone who can help should send a check made out to "Gunn Choir Boosters," addressed to Bill Liberatore, Gunn High School, 780 Arastradero Road, Palo Alto, CA 94306. Thanks!

This was truly a community event! Special thanks are due to Alice Frost, who organized the cookie baking efforts, and to cookie bakers Barbara Johnson, Myrna Westover, Jim Jacobsen, Rachel Vasiliev, Sheila Mandoli, Denise Atherton, Sylvia Faso, Harriet Moss, and Julie Spengler. Thanks also to Ralph and Mary Jane Leon, Will Beckett, and Ken Tani for major league help with party setup and cleanup. Last but not least, appreciation is due to Inge Harding-Barlow, Eric Struck, Brandy Faulkner, and Tracy Hunt for taking care of Niner and Perry during and after the parade, and to Edith Smith for running the t-shirt concession during the party.



**Event organizer Don Anderson, aka Santa.**

# KIDS KORNER

O H A N A \* A N D S T U F F

By Linda Lui, Neighbor-at-large

## Jefunira Camp at Barron Park School this summer!!

Call me goofy. One of my favorite decisions of the year is what my son will be doing in the summer. Fortunately, he had such a great time at Jefunira Camp last summer that I didn't need to hesitate when we found it would be within walking distance this year. He attended all four of their 2-week sessions. Each session began with everyone tying their camp T-shirt, which they got to wear on that session's field trip. Each session concluded with my smiling youngster on a refrigerator magnet in his work-of-art camp shirt. At the beginning of the summer I wondered what he would do with four camp shirts and I with four magnets. But given the uniqueness of the art form, every shirt was an original and I found myself eager to see how each shirt and picture turned out. ("Where is it? Where is it?")

It's a bit more expensive than some of the other camps but I think it is worth the price given the content of well-organized activities. (Definitely more than just daycare.) Camp runs from 9:00am to 2:30pm, with pre-camp and post-camp care available from 8:00am to 5:30pm. (Website: [www.jefuniracamp.com](http://www.jefuniracamp.com))

### Playgroups & Babysitting

All Aboard! Playgroup for 0-4 year olds and their moms. Juana Briones park. Second and fourth Wednesday of each month at 4:15pm. Contact Shari Daiuto at [sharid5@yahoo.com](mailto:sharid5@yahoo.com) or (650) 424-8031.

Now forming! Playgroup for incoming Kindergarten families. Bol Park. Second and fourth Saturday of each month from 2:00pm-4:00pm. Call Katja at (650) 320-8743 or Jessica at (650) 424-9359.

Barron Park's Babysitting Co-op is open



for enrollment. Contact Katy Mast at (650) 856-6969 or [ktmast@juno.com](mailto:ktmast@juno.com).

### Other Happenings

Indie and foreign film enthusiasts!! A sneak preview and film discussion series. New to Palo Alto and so convenient to us in Barron Park. One or two Saturday mornings a month at Cinearts at Palo Alto Square. They previewed "A Quiet American" in February. The discussion leader was a film instructor from UC Berkeley. There's only a couple of screenings left in the spring series but they are happy to pro-rate your membership at about \$21 a screening. Not cheap but my kind of fun. (Website: [www.talkcinema.com](http://www.talkcinema.com))

\* Ohana is the Hawaiian word for family.

**Kids Korner** articles will appear in future Barron Park Association newsletters. To submit articles, please contact the Editor, Nancy Hamilton, [jh@cyberstars.com](mailto:jh@cyberstars.com) (650) 494-2941.

## BPA EMAIL LISTS

BPA-NEWS SWITCHING TO OPT-OUT

by Doug Moran

Normal etiquette for e-mail list subscriptions is known as opt-in, that is, people should be included only if they explicitly asked to be included (the default is to not include them). Until now, all BPA lists have used this policy. Starting with this membership renewal cycle, we are switching the basic list, *bpa-news*, to be an opt-out list, that is, email addresses supplied on your membership form will be added to the list of *bpa-news* subscribers. You may remove your address from that list at any time. The other lists will continue to be opt-in.

The issue of opt-in vs. opt-out is of legitimate importance to many people, so an explanation is warranted. The advantage of moving to opt-in is that many people forgot to subscribe when they became members, or forgot to update their address when they changed ISPs (Internet Service Providers). This is not an infrequent occurrence: Currently, the *bpa-news* list contains addresses for less than half of the member households. At the same time, being on the list should not be a burden: The list has a very narrow purpose—news likely to be of significant interest to the neighborhood. Any discussion takes place on other lists. This list is moderated, that is, one of the moderators must manually approve any message sent to the list. Hence, in 2002, there were only 93 messages to this list (average of less than 2 per week). Under these tradeoffs, we decided that this particular list could justify being opt-in.

Messages to all the BPA email lists are identified by a prefix on the subject line that has the list's name enclosed in square brackets. And each message has pointers to information about list policy and (un)subscribing attached to the message.

### BPA Email Lists: Membership confirmation

A message will be sent to each email address on each BPA mailing list confirming membership. It should arrive about the time this newsletter is expected to arrive at your USPS mailbox. If you do not receive an email message for a list that you want to be subscribed to, please go to the BPA home page and follow the link to BPA Email Lists and (re)subscribe.

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION  
NEWSLETTER

Barron Park Association  
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BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION  
NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2003

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**Neighborhood Meeting!**  
**Sunday, April 6th, 4pm**