

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

JOIN US FOR MAY FETE 2010!
SUNDAY, MAY 16TH AT BOL PARK FROM NOON TO 4 PM



Come and enjoy live musicians and dancers. They will perform all afternoon, with a Maypole dance at 2:30. Bring the family and a blanket and make a picnic of it. Enjoy Driftwood Market sandwiches and bake-sale desserts. Hamburgers and hot dogs will also be for sale. Wear ribbons. There will also be jugglers, games and crafts for the children, donkeys and donkey art, and the history exhibit.

Activities will include face painting for children, donkey parade, history exhibit, fire truck and more. Suggestions for other activities from the Barron Park community are welcome.

The fete is a volunteer effort. If you'd like to help, or if you'd like to propose a display or activity, contact the event organizer John King at 650-483-2710.

Join/Renew BPA Today!

We hope you enjoy reading the "Membership" issue of the Barron Park Newsletter. This issue is sent to all residents in Barron Park and marks the start of our Membership campaign for 2010-2011. You can find the membership application in the center of this issue.

Members of the Barron Park Association will receive three more issues of our newsletter during the course of the year. You won't want to miss any of these issues, so fill out the membership application, clip it out and send it in along with your membership dues right away! Alternatively you can join/renew online at <http://www.bpaonline.org/>, and click on the "HOW to JOIN" button.

Your membership in the Barron Park Association also supports BPA sponsored social events, such as the upcoming May Fete, our popular BPA email lists, and our neighborhood's efforts on Emergency Preparedness. In addition, only members of the Association are eligible to participate in our BPA Babysitting List and take advantage of the new BPA-jobpostings email list. Join/renew today!

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Lynnne Melena, BPA President

Are You a Member of the Barron Park Association?

You'll know for sure if you got four great newsletters last year and read about:

- The history of the Verna Jean School that existed for 30 years on La Selva Drive.
- The new electronic job exchange we set up to match job seekers (especially young ones) with people who needed a small task completed.
- How neighbors near Cypress Lane joined together to clean up that alley (between Military and Barron) and got the City to help.
- What's going to happen to Arastradero Road this summer (re-stripping to three lanes from Donald Drive to El Camino).
- The heyday of restaurant row—about the many eating establishments that have lined El Camino Real since the 1930s.
- Who is behind the native plant garden at the corner of Matadero and Laguna on the edge of Bol Park
- The first installment in an oral history of growing up in Barron Park, featuring Bob Henschel.

Besides publishing a popular newsletter, the Barron Park Association has other successes for our neighborhood. We have one of the best organized emergency preparedness programs in Palo Alto. The program operates under the umbrella of the Palo

Alto Neighborhoods Association (which provides leadership, training sessions and citywide organization), but we have lead the way by being the first to outfit our Block Preparedness Coordinators (BPCs) with orange vests and training binders created by Lydia Kou (our Neighborhood and Safety chair). Both are being copied by other neighborhoods.

The Association sponsors major annual events, such as its May Fete, annual meeting, welcoming party and caroling party. In the past year, we allocated funds to the native garden plot which helped seal the deal for a substantial donation from the Palo Alto Parks Foundation.

During the past year, we lost two very valuable Board members: John St. Clair, who started his tenure by organizing the May Fete three years ago and ended it as vice president, and Mircea Voskerician, who was our business liaison and who wrote features on several of our neighborhood businesses. We thank them both for committing time and care to our neighborhood. Now we badly need several people to step up and help the rest of us carry the load. Being on the Board is fun and interesting because you know everything that's going on around you and even get a chance to influence local policy decisions. It is not hard work—just a matter of carving out a meeting per month.

Join now—the Association, the Board or both!

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.

Save June 27 for Green Tour

The second ever Barron Park Green Tour of energy-saving homes and sustainable gardens is set for June 27. Watch for announcements by email and post card. Brought to you by the Barron Park Green Team.

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lynnne Melena, President
 Art Liberman, Vice President
 Linda Elder, Secretary
 John King, Treasurer
 Nancy Hamilton
 Christian Kalar
 Lydia Kou
 Gwen Luce
 Doug Moran

Committee/ Activity Chairs

Beautification: Vacant

Civic Affairs Liaison: Doug Moran

Parks & Creeks: Christian Kalar

Environmental: Art Liberman

Green Team: Lynnne Melena (acting)

History: Doug Graham

Holiday Party: Don Anderson

May Fete: John King

Membership: Art Liberman

Neighborhood Businesses Liaison: Vacant

Neighborhood Safety & Preparedness:

Lydia Kou

Newsletter: Nancy Hamilton

Seniors: Vacant

Traffic & Streets: Lynnne Melena

Welcoming: Gwen Luce

Zoning & Land Use: Vacant

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

Big Turnout for 2010 Annual Association Meeting



City Manager Jim Keene gave an audience of over 100 residents a primer on the City of Palo Alto budget which will be experiencing big cuts in the next year.



Barron Park and City officials after the meeting: Councilmember and Gunn High graduate Yiahway Yeh; BPA Board member Doug Moran; BPA Board president Lynn Melena; Mayor Pat Burt; Councilmember and Barron Park resident Gail Price; Planning and Transportation Commissioner and Barron Park resident Samir Tuma, and City Manager Jim Keene.



Emergency Preparedness Chair Lydia Kou (teaming with Bob Sikora) described the emergency preparedness program for Barron Park.



Block Preparedness Coordinators and neighborhood PANDAs.

BARRON PARK BLOCK PREPAREDNESS COORDINATORS (BPC)

By Lydia Kou, Chair, Emergency Preparedness & Safety Committee



I would like to introduce your Block Preparedness Coordinators (BPCs) to you.

Who and What are BPCs?

BPCs are Block Preparedness Coordinators who are your neighbors. They have volunteered for this position to promote emergency preparedness education, getting neighbors set up with Emergency Family Plans and Emergency Supply Kits, checking in on residents with special needs during emergencies and getting updated phone tree lists are just some of the tasks. The list is long and for 2010, the BPC team goal is to resolve to have residents have: 1) a Plan, 2) a Kit and 3) to Be Aware. Additionally, BPCs play a major role during times of disaster by being the "eyes and ears" for certified First Responders, PANDAs (Palo Alto Neighborhood Disaster Activities).

If you or someone in your household would like to request special help during an emergency owing to age, handicap, critical medical devices, etc., please fill out and turn in the Emergency Preparedness Survey page in this newsletter.

Barron Park is a large neighborhood and some streets are not fully covered or are simply not covered at all. WE NEED YOU to fill in the blank areas. To find out the Block Preparedness Coordinators coverage areas, please log onto Barron Park Association's website at www.bpaonline.org, click the *Activities & Committees* tab and then the *Emergency/Earthquake Preparedness link*. Then click the link for BPC Coverage Map. Place your cursor over a colored shape and click. As you will notice in this map, large portions of Barron Park are not colored which means there is no coverage there. Again, we need YOU!

Emergency Preparedness, whether you need help or if you want to volunteer, is all inclusive, members and non-members, homeowner and non-homeowner. It is all about community, "Neighbor helping Neighbor."

To find our further information about the BPC Program or the PANDA program, please contact me at Lkou@apr.com and / or (650) 996-0028

Block Preparedness Coordinators have City of Palo Alto-issued ID badges. Please ask to see the badges when the BPCs come visiting.

Not shown: Steve Denger (Barron Square/Thain Way), steve@degner1.com; Jeanne Chisholm (La Para), Jeannechisholm1@earthlink.net; Donna Pioppi (El Cerrito), dpioppi41@yahoo.com; Sally O'Neil (Barron Ave.), sally.oneil@stanford.edu; Maurice Green (Thain Way), mauryg3@comcast.net; Gisele Green (Thain Way), giseleg3@comcast.net.



Pat Steck
Chimalus
patsteck@gmail.com



Donna Pellizari
Chimalus
donnasapron@gmail.com



Jeff Dean
Chimalus
jadient@gmail.com



Annette McGarr
La Calle
annettemcgarr@yahoo.com



Joan Marx
La Para
joan_marx@arczip.com



Marie Mandoli
La Para
mariemandoli@gmail.com



Sheila Mandoli
La Para
sjhmandoli@gmail.com



Pat Marion
Barron
pmarion@stanford.edu



Karl Konnerth
Encina Grande
Karl_konnerth@usa.net



Larry Reeves
Los Robles
lreeves@ieee.org



Katia Reeves
Los Robles
Katiareeves@sbcglobal.net



Solomon Wong
Los Robles
swong.0088@gmail.com



Marianne Strickfaden
Matadero
Marianne_str@hotmail.com



Jean Wren
Matadero
wrenjp@gmail.com



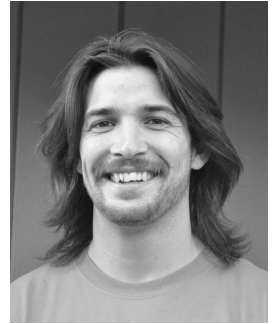
Margarita Casanova Cohen
La Jennifer Way
casanova@gmail.com



Janet Leader
La Para
jleader30@hotmail.com



Darren Ashworth
Barron
dnashworth@yahoo.com



Robbie Parry
Barron
robbie228613@yahoo.com



Robin Theil
Kendall
robin123@sbcglobal.net



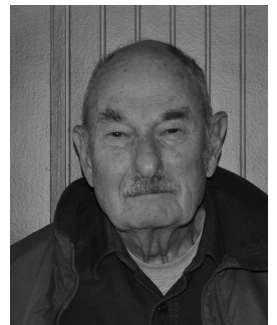
Teena James
El Cerrito
mikerjames@aol.com



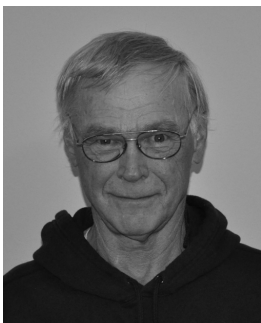
Daniel Lilienstein
Manzana
Daniel.lilienstein@intelsat.com



Heike Schmitz
Amaranta
heike.schmitz@gmail.com



Irwin Roth
Amaranta
irwinroth@sbcglobal.net



Joseph Melena
Magnolia
josephmelena@aol.com



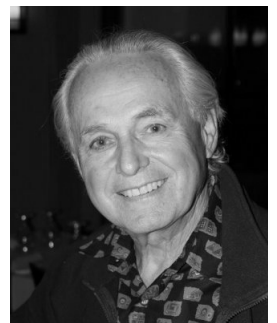
Lynn Melena
Magnolia
Jeannechisholm1@earthlink.net



Leila Van Gelder
Georgia
leilavg@pacbell.net



Becky Thomas
Vista
beckydsthomas@gmail.com



Joel Davidson
Barron Square, Thain Wy
joelscott@gmail.com

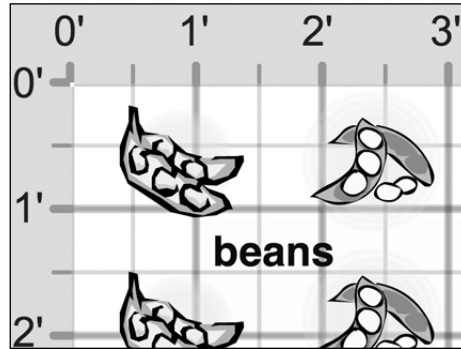
Starting Vegetable Gardens With A Little Help From Technology

By Nancy Lewis

Even if you have some experience in planning a vegetable garden, two useful online tools can help streamline, record and store each season's activities. These are especially good for beginners or the overwhelmed who aren't sure what to plant when.

Plangarden and Growveg are both web-based applications with generous trial periods. Both are easy to use with lots of information and are programmed by avid gardeners who also happen to be software designers. Each continues to improve their interface with helpful features explained by enjoyable tutorials, and both maintain your records from year to year. As calculation resources and a way to jump start your spring planning, they are very different in some respects. After trying them both, I found their features complimentary, so it would be hard to choose just one.

Growveg (www.growveg.com) has an extensive plant list with unusual varieties, a lot of well-written information including how to garden with children, and a great blog. However, the drawing and design tools are a bit limited and convoluted, although not difficult. It has a crop rotation feature which flashes when you design a bed for the next season with repeating plant families. A bar chart indicating planting and



harvest times is a boon to the novice gardener. With a trial period of 30 days, the subscription price is \$25 per year or \$40 for 2 years, and gift certificates are available.

Plangarden (www.plangarden.com) is a larger program and less expensive, with more features and easier to use drawing tools. Highlighted features are a harvest calculator, area-per-vegetable calculator, garden log which is exportable to Excel, planting bar chart and a forum with optional garden plan sharing. Heavy on tool features, the program's plant list is meager, general and not customizable yet. The trial period is 45 days, with a subscription price of \$20 per year or \$36 for 3 years. Rates are discounted for public schools and qualifying non-profit organizations.

For the iPhone app-savvy, the free Pocket Garden, a mobile growing guide for vegetable gardens features information on many types of vegetables with a customizable list. For \$1.99, Vegetable Garden is another encyclopedia-style app with planting and harvest chart, and garden pest list. However, the chart is based on the UK and Ireland, not a mediterranean climate. (And I found a typo.) Botanical Interests at \$5.99 has growing and harvesting information, a multiple-criteria search for 300 varieties, favorites list, garden tips, and a 5% coupon for your first seed order.

Although they are no substitute for hands on experience and the wisdom of gardening neighbors, these tools of technology are still wonderful for getting a jump start on the season or into a vegetable garden for the first time. The generous trial periods allow ample time for exploring the programs to see how they can supplement your food gardening activities. It's pretty amazing to be able to carry around an encyclopedic app in your pocket, too.

NEW URBAN  GARDENS
www.new-urban-gardens.com
 650.743.6715

City Studies Phase-Out of Hazmat at CPI

By Art Liberman

The City of Palo Alto is investigating phasing out the use and storage of hazardous chemicals at the Communications and Power Industries (CPI) site on El Camino Real and Hansen Way in the Stanford Research Park. CPI uses and stores more of these highly toxic materials than any other facility in Palo Alto. The bulk of these materials are in a plating shop and in the associated chemical storage and delivery areas at the rear of one of its buildings, just behind homes on Chimalus Drive.

The process being studied by the City, called amortization, would grant CPI some

time before any changes in zoning rules take effect in order to allow CPI to recoup its investment. After that time, CPI would be required to remove the chemicals and relocate that part of its manufacturing process elsewhere. The City has followed this procedure in the past, including nearby auto repair shops on El Camino Real which were rezoned in the late 1970s and amortized over 15-20 years.

Steps toward the City's amortization study began last summer. A group of residents, including Jeff Dean, Bill Kelly and Art Liberman, met with City Manager James Keene, Deputy City Manager Steve Emslie

and Director of Planning and Community Environment Curtis Williams. The City officials acknowledged there is no place for a hazardous material site that poses the risk of a serious toxic fume release adjacent to residences in Palo Alto. As a result of those discussions, it was agreed that the City would hire a consultant to prepare an amortization study of the CPI plating shop that would analyze the steps necessary to remove and or relocate the plating shop.

This group of residents had been very active in organizing others in the Chimalus/Matadero area to pressure the City to take action after a release of nitric acid

fumes from CPI drifted over the neighborhood following a February 2006 accident (which CPI did not report to the Palo Alto emergency response authorities and for which it was fined \$20,000). In 2007 the City Council passed zoning changes that require facilities using large amounts of hazardous materials to be at least 300 feet from residences. But this requirement applies only to new or newly reconstructed facilities and does not directly affect the existing CPI hazardous material site. Since 2006, there have been several smaller toxic vapor releases and spills from CPI. Residents feel that, because of their proximity to the hazardous materials and the speed of a spreading toxic gas plume, a serious incident affecting their safety could happen at any time.

The amortization study, conducted by the San Francisco consulting firm CBRE, is now underway. Planning staff met with the consultant team on January 20 and turned over relevant permit information, assessments and other pertinent land use data. The study will consider the remaining useful or economic lives of the buildings as well as the improvements and equipment within the buildings.

Chimalus/Matadero area residents who read about the amortization study in a Palo Alto Weekly article (February 26, 2010) are encouraged by the steps the City has taken so far. These residents, who have put up with this situation for many years, are still fuming over how they were left out of the decision process in 2004–2005, when CPI remodeled their facility, and made a bad situation for them even worse. The key outcome of the study, which will be keenly watched by residents, will be how long a time frame the City study proposes to give CPI for the phase out period.

Planning Director Williams said he would hold a meeting with residents to discuss the specifics of the study and to solicit community input. But before that happens, he plans to meet with CPI management about the process.

Steve Emslie, Deputy City Manager, said he expects to receive a draft report from the consultant by the end of March that would be reviewed by City staff and made publicly available sometime in April. He also said he anticipates the study will recommend zoning changes that will need to go through the Planning and Transportation Commission and the City Council, which could take another four to six months before being adopted.

Good Old Fashion Neighborhood Summer Camp

By Beth Delson

Among the fruit trees, fish pond and turtles, children gather in the summer on Barron Park's La Para Avenue to swing on a zip line or water play, all at the enchanting large backyard and home of Chaia May.

Each day offers creative art and construction activities or musical guests arrive at "Camp Chaia." With the relaxed and engaging fun, campers don't want to leave! The kids feel very comfortable and enjoy playing as she weaves in threads of science and nature, music and art, language and cooking and social skill development throughout the day. Children are encouraged to try new activities, such as Yoga or drumming, and are encouraged to dig in fully.

Chaia May is a local fulltime educator and music teacher with a flair for creative play and a can-do attitude she imparts on her students. Always with a warm smile, she is inviting and talented in welcoming children to explore new activities. In the summertime, Chaia opens her home and sets up fun-filled and thematic week-long summer camps for children ranging from 4–13. The camps for the older children include field trips to the Coast and visits to farms and overnight camping. The younger ones explore the neighborhood and with art and science projects and meet visiting performing guests.

Chaia hires teen counselors to assist and she and trains them in conflict resolution, safety, and in Chaia's philosophy of "extending play" so campers start with

their own experiential learning and are taken further in their explorations with the teens warmth and skills.

With the very good camper-counselors ratio, "Camp Chaia" can offer a lot of individual attention. This summer, Chaia is formally inviting children with Sensory Integration, ADHD and Autism to join camp and have skilled help for kids to gain social skills and have fun in a safe new environment.

Each camp week has a theme. Some are travel camps, taking children to the North Bay daily to explore all the animal sites: including visiting hands on programs at rehabilitation centers, touring at Twilight at the SF Zoo, or visiting with Wildlife Rescue. During the second week, Camp Chaia will take children to live on a farm for a few days and explore with the children of farmworkers working and learning on a farm and also get a behind the scenes tour of the Monterey Aquarium.

This year, the last week of Camp Chaia also has a Spanish Immersion component with an International Arts camp. Children can join a band, do drama, dance and art all combined with outdoor play and cultural activities!

Camp generally run from 9:30–3:30. Scholarships and extended care are available.

For more information, call Chaia at 650-493-3450 or email: chaia@learningplaywithchaiamay.com, or visit <http://learningplaywithchaiamay.net/home.html>.

Hope to see you there!



Vector Control—State Relaxes LBAM Quarantine Guidelines

By Sue Luttner

Good news about the Light Brown Apple Moth (LBAM) quarantine: We are now free to share plants among ourselves within the quarantine area. Neighborhood Master Gardener Ann Burrell has passed along the word from the county Master Garden director.

As with produce, which was approved for transport between properties last summer, we should inspect the materials and move only healthy fruits and foliage from our yards.

To check for evidence of the LBAM, look for lines of surface damage on fruits and leaves from the caterpillars, and for the tents spun of fine white threads where the insects pupate. Please dispose of any suspicious clippings through the city compost, which is treated as though tainted.

In other good LBAM news, the state released a map at the end of February that clearly excludes our neighborhood from any potential aerial spraying of pheromones. The LBAM eradication plan allows for spraying only in "essentially unpopulated" areas, defined as fewer than 100 residents per square mile, and excluding urban parks and environmentally sensitive areas.

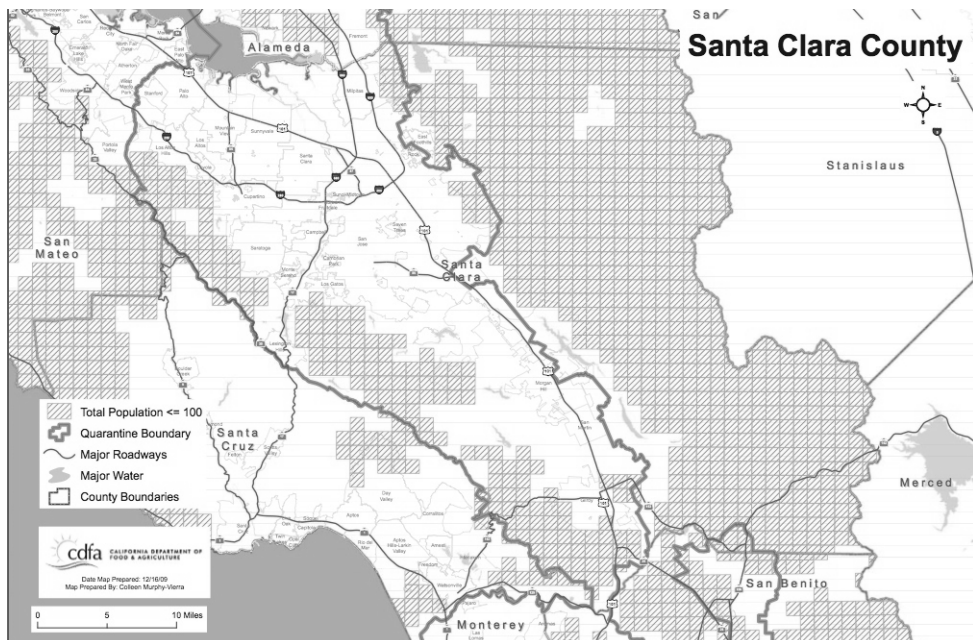


LBAM larvae spin a protective tent of white fibers, often in a curl of leaf or a crevice in the fruit, where the pupae mature. If you find foliage in your yard with evidence of the LBAM, please dispose of it in the city compost bins.

Approved eradication efforts in populated areas include the release of sterile specimens, pheromone-baited twist ties intended to disrupt the moth's mating patterns, and ongoing inspection of commercial nurseries within the quarantine area. The first test releases of sterile insects started in September.

The state has been using baited traps to track the spread of the LBAM, an Australian agricultural pest, since the first specimen was discovered in the East Bay in the spring of 2007. Santa Clara County has shown a slow but steady increase in its moth count: While our numbers remain small (540 specimens collected in Santa Clara County over three years, 384 in the past year), the number of moths per trap has increased dramatically (from 0.003 in the summer of 2007 to 0.062 in 2009). Illustrating how mild the local infestation is, the trapping rate in San Francisco this past summer was 63.079, and the total count in San Francisco has reached nearly 79,000.

The state's conclusion from the trapping numbers is that the pest was indeed introduced to California in the past few years. The goal of the LBAM project is to eradicate the pest, although not everyone considers that goal attainable.



The cross-hatching shows areas where aerial spraying of pheromones would be allowed if eventually deemed necessary. So far, there are no plans for spraying anywhere in Santa Clara County.

BARRON PARK ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Barron Park Association
724 Barron Avenue
Palo Alto, California 94306

Nancy "Jo" Hamilton
EDITOR

Patrick Coyne
DESIGNER

Doug Graham, Lynn Melena,
Gwen Luce
COPY EDITORS

Beth Delson, Douglas Graham,
Lydia Kou, Nancy Lewis, Art Liberman,
Sue Luttner, Lynn Melena
CONTRIBUTORS

A Journalistic Team in War and Peace

SHELLEY AND CARL MYDANS—FORMER RESIDENTS OF BARRON PARK

By Douglas L. Graham, Barron Park Historian

In the early 1950s, Barron Park was briefly the home of two of the most famous people who have ever lived here: the then-famous Time-Life combat photographer and war correspondent team of Carl and Shelley Smith Mydans. This article is a much abbreviated version of their productive and fascinating careers. They both wrote books about their experiences and many of the quotes in this article are from those sources.

When Shelley returned to the U.S. in the summer of 1950 from a three-year work stint in Japan, she initially lived with her mother at Stanford University. For Shelley, who was a native of Palo Alto and a Stanford Alumna, the relocation to Palo Alto was a return home.

A New House on Matadero Hill

Shelley began looking for a permanent home for Carl, she and their two children, and soon located a property in Barron Park. Construction started in the autumn on a custom-built, modern, ranch-style home at 995 Matadero Avenue. The site,



Photo A: Shelley Smith Mydans (date and source of photo unknown).



Photo B: Carl Mydans, Manila 1945

near Matadero Creek, looked out over oak-dotted cow pastures where the Stanford Research Park now sprawls.

From remarks made later to reporters writing stories about the famous couple, it appears that they planned to reside permanently in the neighborhood. However, fate in the guise of Time-Life Management intervened, as it did so often in their careers and personal lives, and they had to leave Barron Park long before they probably planned to. This is their story.

A Palo Alto Girl

Shelley was a native of Palo Alto, having been born on May 20, 1915 in the old Palo Alto Hospital to Professor and Mrs. Everett W. Smith. Professor Smith was founder and head of the Journalism Department at Stanford. Both her parents were writers and she said, later in life, that she had invariably gone to sleep to the sound of typewriters. She attended school in the Palo Alto Unified School District and graduated from Paly. She was attending Stanford University in 1936—her senior year—when she left for New York City to become a dancer and

actress. However, she instead took a job at *The Literary Digest* and later joined the staff of the brand-new *LIFE* magazine as a researcher (see Photo A, Shelley Mydans). There, in 1938, she met and married *LIFE* photographer Carl Mydans.

A Boston Boy

Carl Mydans was born May 20, 1907 in Boston, Massachusetts. His grandfather had been a bookbinder in a villa near Odessa in the Ukraine. His father was a professional musician. After his birth, the family moved to Medford on the Mystic River where Carl grew up. He worked in boatyards after school and on weekends and began developing his strong work ethic, his ability to learn, and his desire to do the best that he could in anything that he worked on. He began writing, and sold local stories to the *Medford Daily Mercury* for three dollars each. He later sold stories to the *Boston Globe* and *Boston Herald* before graduating from Boston University School of journalism at 23 (see Photo B, Carl in Manila, 1945).

Picturing the Poor People of the South

After graduation from Boston University, Carl went to New York City and worked as a reporter for the *American Banker* newspaper. Soon he was recruited to work for the Farm Security Administration, which was trying to deal with the economic and social devastation of the Great Depression. His mission was to photograph the rural poor in the West and Midwest, New England and the South, particularly in hard-hit Arkansas. He bought one of the new 35mm cameras, which facilitated a new style of photography. He generally used available light rather than flash bulbs. One editor said there was depth and a sense of action caught in the pictures that brought excitement to the page. Carl Mydans became adept, then expert with the new camera and he exemplified “the new breed” of photographer.

Carl Comes to *LIFE* and Marriage

However, Carl really hit his stride in his profession when he took the job with the



Photo C: Shelley and Carl Mydans talking with Sikh Indian troops, 1941.

brand-new photographic news and feature magazine, *LIFE*. And the first thing *LIFE* did with their new recruit in November, 1936, was to send him to Hollywood to photograph stars—his first and last “soft” assignment. Next he went to West Texas to record the last great cattle drive from Mexico and then to the new oil boom towns of East Texas. He took assignments anywhere, and criss-crossed the country, staying in cheap hotels or little rest camps—anywhere that advertised “ice-cold running water” for developing his film. But he spent enough time at headquarters to meet, woo and wed a bright and attractive *LIFE* researcher from California, Shelley Smith.

Shelley and Carl Cover the Outbreak of World War II

When Hitler invaded Poland on September 1, 1940, Carl was on a shoot of advanced military aircraft, at Wright Field in Dayton, Ohio. He was ordered back to New York and brought in to confer with the editors. They were also talking with Shelley and it transpired that they wanted to send them both to Europe as a photo-journalist team to cover the rapidly expanding war. As Carl told the story later, “...as you know, at *LIFE* magazine no decision is ever made until there isn’t (any) time (left) to go home and get your toothbrush.” But someone thought of gas masks and was able to

inveigle two of them from the army, “...one for Shelley, and one for me.” One editor gave Shelley the gift of a money belt, and another one did the same for Carl. But nobody thought of visas, and they sent the team off without any. Carl said; “Somehow we made it to Europe, though, and then because the French and the Germans sat quietly watching each other in what became known as the “phony war,” we were sent to London. It was while we were working there on Britain preparing for war that the news suddenly came that the Russians had bombed Helsinki (the capital of Finland), and that was really the beginning of my wartime career.”

The Russo-Finnish War and Other Prequels

Carl immediately left for Stockholm, and then to the far-North Finnish frontier, where he walked across a frozen river to enter the country. He worked with the Finnish Army and took a lot of photos of frozen Russian dead. The censors would not release any photos of Finnish dead. Even though the initial battle was a disaster for the Russians, they so outnumbered the Finns that the war was short and Russia gobbled a great chunk of southern Finland. During this time, Shelley stayed in Stockholm, editing and captioning his film, writing copy and shipping it all to New York.

From Helsinki, Carl was sent to Rome to photograph the strutting dictator Mussolini and his fascist troops, who were less than enthusiastic about joining Germany in the war. When Hitler finally unleashed his panzer tank divisions against France in May, 1940, Carl was there briefly but left before the French and British collapse and the French armistice with Germany. Carl and Shelley were recalled to New York on July 4, 1940 for a respite.

An Assignment to the War in China

In early 1941, Time-Life publisher Henry Luce, a strong supporter of the Nationalist Chinese leader Chiang Kai-Shek, sent Shelley and Carl to cover the Japanese “bombardment” of China. China was torn by the invasion and war forced upon it by the military dictatorship of Imperial Japan. When Carl and Shelley were sent there, full-scale war between Japan and China had already been underway for about four years (the infamous “Rape of Nanking,” the Nationalist Capital, had been in 1937).

The Mydans team was sent to the new capital, Chungking. Shelley said that their home in Chungking (now Chongqing) was “...a single cubicle with a mud floor and thatch roof.” Carl said; “(the hut) was called the press hostel: fifteen to eighteen of us from various countries who lived in little adobe mud huts with straw roofs – no running water or sewerage. The heart of the story was in Chungking, which in the first months we were there was bombed by the Japanese virtually every day and often at night. They stayed in China about eight months, until, in the fall of 1941, Japan’s military grip on the country tightened and most Americans left China.

From China, the Mydanses accepted assignments in Burma, Singapore and Malaya. It was in one of those locations (most likely Singapore) that a picture was taken of Shelley and Carl together, talking with some Sikh Indian troops. As far as I know, this is the only photograph of Shelley and Carl in the field, working together (see Photo C, Shelley and Carl with troops).

Bad Luck in Manila

The Mydanses went to the Philippines in October, 1941, to cover the war preparations there. Carl later told that “...we found General MacArthur (who was commander-in-chief of the Philippine Army) trying to build an army out of promises



Photo D: Part of the Gymnasium at Santo Tomas Internment Camp, Manila 1945, showing hundreds of internee cots. Many of the internees kept personal possessions on top of their mosquito netting during the daytime.

and a willing people who were lacking in materiel and training. The sense of approaching war was very strong and we were not reassured when an officer on MacArthur's staff told us that we should be ready to hold off an attack "by March." That was three months away, and we got the impression that he thought the Japanese would wait that long. But of course they didn't."

Trapped!

Carl said, "In a state of intense activity we shipped our story on the preparations for war in the Philippines." It went out on a Pan American Clipper, which turned out to be the last commercial plane to fly out of Manila in four years. That was on December 8 (December 7 in the USA). Japanese air raids struck Pearl Harbor, Hong Kong and the Philippines that same day. "Just before the cables were blown and all communications cut we received a message from New York that the story had arrived and was the lead for *LIFE* for that week. But by then the Japanese had invaded, brushed aside the small American force and the barely trained Philippine Army and had drawn a net around Manila, and Shelley and Carl were trapped. They spent the next two years in Japanese internment camps.

The Santo Tomas Internment Camp

After the American and Philippine forces withdrew from Manila and declared it an "open" (undefended) city, the Japanese army moved in to occupy the capital. Within a few days, all American and European civilians in Manila were rounded up or turned themselves in for "registration" at Santo Tomas University.

As Shelley tells in her novel *The Open City*, they expected to be allowed to return to their homes after registration and

to be repatriated to their respective countries soon thereafter. They were told to bring only a change of clothes and food for three days—nothing else. When they arrived at the administration building of the abandoned university, they were assigned, about 20 men or 20 women, to each small, bare room with no furniture. They slept on the concrete floors, on their extra clothing. Slowly they acquired blankets, straw mattresses and a few other amenities, mostly from Filipino friends who braved humiliations and injuries from the Japanese guards to provide food and personal items to internees. Ultimately there were about 3,700 prisoners in the camp. Although they did not know it when they entered the gate, this was to be the home of most of them for the next three years (see Photo D, the Gymnasium filled with hundreds of internee cots).

In an interview for a book on his work, Carl related his feelings when herded into Santo Tomas; "...suddenly I was sitting on a concrete floor in a prison camp without a camera in my hands, a dream gone out of me. Everything had stopped for me while outside the world was still going on. It was the most difficult period of my life, especially the first weeks, when the war raged nearby on Bataan and Corregidor and Japanese planes flew overhead and the

sounds of bombing and artillery fire came into the camp night and day. I lost two years of covering the world."

Sorting Weevils

Shelley became involved in helping the volunteer committee run the camp. She was a monitor of the women's room and a member of the sanitation committee, one of the detail which picked weevils out of the cereal before cooking.

After eight and one half months at Santo Tomas, Shelley and Carl were shipped to Shanghai on a Japanese troop transport and interned again at Chapei (the Civil Assembly Center near Shanghai), spending another year in captivity there.

Lucky to Leave Internment Behind

Shelley wrote in 1944, in the foreword to her novel, *The Open City*: "We were among the fifteen hundred out of fifteen thousand civilian prisoners of the Japanese (Ameri-

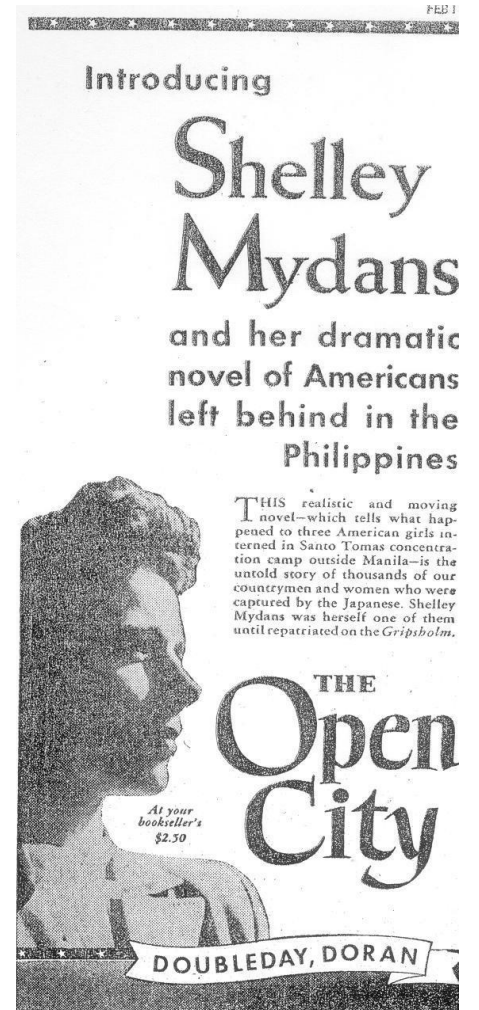


Photo E: Advertisement in the San Francisco Chronicle, February 15, 1945.



Photo F: General Douglas MacArthur wading ashore at Lingayen Gulf on Luzon, Philippines, January 9, 1945

cans and Europeans) whose luck was good; we came home to America on the last trip of the exchange ship Gripsholm, in December, 1943. We left Chapei on a hot, bright Chinese morning and rode out the gate to freedom—the luckiest people in the world looking back at the unlucky. They stood behind us in a crowd at the main building, their arms raised in farewell. The “band” played for us as we drove away—the Negro hot-jazz trumpeter, the Texan with the battered banjo, the kid from the high-school orchestra. They played “God Bless America” and “Auld Lang Syne.” We heard it a long way off.”

Carl Goes to Europe: Shelley Writes a Book

After a few months of recuperation in the U.S., Carl returned to work on the war fronts in 1944, going to Italy for the liberation of Rome and then to the liberation of southern France. While Carl was in Europe, Shelley fictionalized their experiences at Santo Tomas under the title “*The Open City*” (see Photo E, an advertisement from the San Francisco Chronicle of February 10, 1945). The book made quite a sensation when it was published, as it was the first detailed information made available to the American public about the fate of the internees and conditions in the camp. It is still a good read today.

Back to the Pacific

The Mydans team returned to the Pacific in late 1944, where Carl covered the Leyte landing and then the landing at Lingayen Gulf on Luzon—right where the Japanese had come ashore in 1941. Carl produced some of the most notable photographs of the war in the Pacific, including the iconic picture of General MacArthur wading ashore at the invasion of Luzon—the photo that came to symbolize the return of the United States to the Philippine Islands (see photo F, MacArthur).



Photo G: Two former roommates of Carl's at Santo Tomas, Manila, 1945.

The Surrender Photos

General MacArthur and Carl Mydans hit it off right from the beginning in Manila and on Bataan in 1941. Their relationship was later renewed at Leyte and Luzon in 1944-45. That long-term relationship earned Carl the best position of any photographer on the Battleship Missouri in Tokyo Bay when the Japanese signed the surrender documents on September 2, 1945, ending the war. Most of the photographs that you see of that occasion in history books are Carl's, because he was given the best camera angles.

Liberating Santo Tomas

While Carl was covering battles in the Philippines, Shelley landed there also and they both participated in the liberation of the civilian internees at Santo Tomas University in Manila (see Photo G, Carl's picture of two of his “roommates” who barely survived the three years of near-starvation rations. It must have been wrenching for both Carl and Shelley to see so many of their old friends from Manila and Santo Tomas in the pitiful conditions they were in.

After the liberation of Manila, Carl went on North to cover the Okinawa campaign and then the surrender, while Shelley was assigned rear-area duties in the Philippines, Saipan and Guam. The *Palo Alto Times* wrote a story ostensibly about her book being published but really about her writing up the “flight nurses” of the Pacific, who were nursing seriously wounded soldiers on hospital flights from Saipan to Honolulu. She focused attention on their record of transporting 37,000 soldiers with only one in-flight death.

TIME for Women

After the war, Shelley and Carl Mydans returned to the U.S. again. In January, 1946 *TIME* magazine began a daily news broadcast entitled “Time for Women.” It was planned to be coast-to-coast, but apparently ran only on ABC in the East. Commentator for the news broadcast was Shelley Mydans, and *TIME* gave her quite a publicity buildup. As they said in a press release, “With her husband, *LIFE* Photographer Carl Mydans, she has covered most of the warfronts of the world for *TIME* and *LIFE*. As a result, she has seen more of the world in the last six years than almost any other woman journalist.”



Photo H: Carl and Shelley Mydans, New York, 1946.

A Son is Born

The Mydanses were in New York on July 21, 1946, when their first child, Seth was born. The next day, the *Palo Alto Times* ran a large photograph of Carl and Shelley with the story (see Photo H, Carl and Shelley Mydans). Carl had been away again to cover the preparations for the first hydrogen-fusion bomb test in 1946 at Bikini Atoll in the Pacific.

Occupation of Japan

In 1947, Carl was assigned to Japan to cover the occupation and rebuilding of the country. Carl and Shelley served as “joint bureau chiefs” in Tokyo for Time-Life (Carl was formally the Bureau Chief, but he was out on assignment most of the time and apparently Shelley “really” ran the bureau). Then the North Koreans attacked South Korea in June, 1950 and their comfortable sojourn in Japan came to an abrupt end.

Shelley Comes Home to Palo Alto

Carl went to Korea to cover the new outbreak of war. Shelley decided not to go, and came home to stay with her mother on the Stanford campus, bringing the children, 4-year old son Seth Anthony and infant daughter, Shelley “Junior” (later known as “Misty”). In the words of a *Palo Alto Times* story headline on August 21, Shelley was content to “sit this one out.”

A little later when Carl came too, they decided to make their home in Barron Park where Shelley had located a prime building

lot. They purchased an acre at 995 Matadero Avenue and commissioned an architect and builder to construct a permanent home for them. Shelley characterized the location to the *Palo Alto Times* reporter as being on “Roble Ridge,” which caused me some extra research and wheel-spinning before discovering their actual address.

Shelley was struck by how much housework a middle-class American wife had to do in 1950. She ruefully commented to the *Times* reporter that she was now “being introduced to the heavy load that is the daily lot of the average American mother. Frankly, I’ve lost pounds since I’ve been back.” She explained that she and her husband had been living in hotels for most of the time since their marriage, “...and the last three years we’ve lived the comparatively lush lives of the average American family in Japan, with all the servants we needed.”

Once the house was finished, they lived there for about two years until *LIFE* sent Carl to Europe again, London this time. The Mydanses put their dream home up for rent and Shelley joined Carl in New York in late 1952.

Later Years

Shelley spent most of the rest of her life in the New York area, while Carl roamed the globe for *LIFE*. Shelley wrote two more novels, *Thomas*, based on the life of Thomas a Becket, and *The Vermilion Bridge*, set in eighth-century Japan. In collaboration with Carl, she wrote *The Violent Peace*, a report on wars, insurgency and terrorism following World War II. Meanwhile, Carl, as his obituary said, kept up the globe-trotting pace of the *LIFE* photographer, traveling to Britain, Switzerland, France, Germany, Egypt, Italy, Iran, Norway, Portugal, Nigeria, Hong Kong, Greenland, Samoa, Russia, Yugoslavia and Vietnam.

Carl made another widely popular photograph in the aftermath of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in November, 1963. Carl was late getting to the *LIFE* office that day when everyone was called in, and all assignments had been given out. Not knowing what to do, he wandered over to Grand Central Station and got on an evening commute train. He immediately noticed the silence as everyone was holding up newspapers, reading the details. The aisle was lined with repetitive images of the same 3-inch high headline. According to one of his obituary writers,

the resultant photograph was “haunting in its clarity” and “remained emblazoned on the minds of anyone who saw it.”

After *LIFE* ceased weekly publication in 1972, he continued work for *TIME*, *Smithsonian*, and other publications. He worked 40 years for Time-Life. His books include a memoir, *More than Meets the Eye*, *The Violent Peace* (with Shelley), and *Carl Mydans: Photojournalist*, a 1985 retrospective of his work from the 1930s through the 1970s. The quotes about Carl’s work in this story are all from that book.

Both Shelley and Carl lived into the Twenty-first Century. They lived their last years in Larchmont, New York. Shelley died at age 86 in 2002 and Carl at age 97 in 2004.

Part of Barron Park History

Although the Mydanses were not able to fully realize their dream of a quieter life on Matadero Hill, with Shelley raising their children and writing books at home and Carl managing the west coast for Time-Life from the San Francisco office, they did live here for several years. They continued to own the house at 995 Matadero for a while after relocating to the New York City area, perhaps indicating that the dream lingered on even after they left. For many years afterward, their house at the end of Matadero Avenue was pointed out by neighbors as “the house where the famous Time-Life people lived.” Shelley and Carl Mydans have to be included in the list of the most famous people who have lived in Barron Park.

If any of the readers of this article have personal recollections of the Mydanses, or even second-hand stories about them from their time in Barron Park, I would like to talk with you. Please contact me at dgrahampaca@gmail.com or 650-493-0689.

EMAIL LISTS

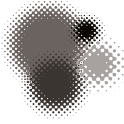
The BPA has four email lists: bpa-news, bpa-issues, bpa-misc and bpa-jobpostings. They are hosted at Google Groups (moved last January). To join bpa-news, go to <http://groups.google.com/group/bpa-news> and click on “Join this group.” Similarly for the other lists.

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

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