

# Saratoga Historical Foundation

PO Box 172, Saratoga CA 95071

January 2020

# Women's Rights Explored One Century Later-One century ago women were granted the right to vote; Virginia just approved the ERA-Come to the lecture January 28 and find out more!

The Saratoga History Museum is providing a lecture celebrating a century of women's rights on Tuesday, January 28 at 7:30 PM at the Saratoga Foothill Club.

Three speakers will provide a historical



perspective on the struggle for women's equality. The right to vote for women dates back to 1920 with the passing of the 19th amendment. Educator Sharon Bouska provides

a historical overview of the suffrage movement; Microsoft Director Sera Fernando offers a look at the status of diversity in the workplace; and Attorney Protima Pandey provides an update on the Equal Rights Amendment adoption.

All three are part of the Women's Equality 2020 Leadership Council in Santa Clara County. They will also provide an update on activities planned for 2020. The Women's Equality 2020 Leadership Council is a forty-six member council formed by the Board of Supervisors (BOS) to assist in the County's efforts to commemorate and honor the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage, ensure a complete census count, broaden electoral participation in 2020, and advance women's equality.

#### No Potluck

The potluck has been **discontinued** due to Saratoga Foothill Club's new rules. They are charging an additional \$225 fee to have food and beverages on-site for each meeting. We presently pay \$250 per meeting to reserve the Foothill Club and cannot afford the additional cost. We apologize for discontinuing this tradition.

#### Get Ready

The event takes place at the Saratoga Foothill Club located at 20399 Park Place in Saratoga. The lecture is free for members and a \$5.00 donation is asked for nonmembers. Join us!

Thank you Jo Rodgers, program director, for a great kickoff to 2020!



# President's Message Happy 2020!

On behalf of the SHF board of directors I would like to wish you a happy New Year. I want to especially thank you for your continued support. Your membership dues go toward our programs and services -- so thank you.

We ended the year with two successful events-



our annual Volunteer Appreciation party and holiday exhibit reception. Held on the patio of the museum, we had musicians from Foothill College, good food, and conversation.

We participated in the Village's annual Open House in November. We had our holiday exhibit and reception with the Marshall Lane Choir, the Skillet Likkers and a host of people attend. It is



#### Contact Us!

#### Saratoga Historical Foundation

The mission of the Saratoga Historical Foundation is to preserve the unique history of Saratoga for the education and enjoyment of the community.

The Saratoga Historical Park is open from 1-4 PM on Fridays and Sundays and from 10-4 PM on Saturday. For more information, i.e. group tours, you can call 408-867-4311 or e-mail <a href="mailto:info@saratogahistory.com">info@saratogahistory.com</a> or see us on Facebook at facebook.com/saratogahistory.

Newsletter suggestions can be sent to the editor at:

always amazing to hear someone say, "Gee, I haven't seen the museum in years!"-- especially when we have so many events. We plan to change that in 2020!

We are starting 2020 with a great beginning. We have added Bob Coo to our executive committee as Treasurer/CFO-- he brings a host of financial experience and energy to the board of directors.

Joan Bose has also joined the board as Social Director and has already tallied many points by bringing treats to the board meetings.

Completing the executive committee is Bob Himel, vice president and fundraising director, Barbara Marshall recording secretary and myself, Annette Stransky as president and marketing director.

Other board members include: Ray Cosyn, Bill Ford, Linda Hagelin, Ernie Kraule, Alex Nugent, Dr. Jo Rodgers, Rina Shah, Jim Sorden and Michael Whalen.

What's coming up-- a ribbon cutting and lectures on the Peninsular Interurban in the February timeframe; work on the blacksmith exhibit to begin in the June-July timeframe and maybe a surprise or two.

Thank you again for your continued support. Annette Stransky, President

#### Do Your Part



As Ann-Marie Sayers of Indian Canyon suggested in her May 2018 talk:

"Even just being nice to Mother Earth and making a pledge to the earth helps preserve

our planet.

I pledge to the earth that I will:

- Pick up 10 pieces of litter a day.
- Plant one tree every month for one year.
- Use less water while brushing my teeth/bathing"

# Willys Peck and Riding the Rails



The late Saratogan Historian Willys Peck had his own train that provided many friends with a thrilling ride around his property-- usually with a little help from Mr. Fixit David Welch.



The conductor wore a snappy outfit and would ensure people were seated safely and sometimes help push.....



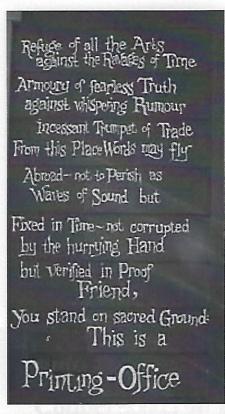
Some of the whimsical sights that could be seen while riding the rails included an authentic Interurban Stop which the Peck family recently donated to the Saratoga History Museum and a collection of buildings showcasing Willys and Betty's interests. All aboard.....







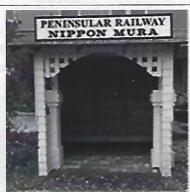
More on page 5



These are only a few of the interesting sights along the track. Most were made by Willys and Betty's friends.







## **Restoring the Interurban Stop**

The exhibit, "Riding the Rails" includes a rare, restored Interurban passenger stop. Willys Peck rescued the Interurban after the line had been discontinued and had the stop in his backyard (see article on page 4) for many years. The family donated the stop to the Saratoga Historical Foundation who in turn restored the Interurban Stop with a grant from the Farrington Historical Foundation. Our thanks to Ray Cosyn, Bill Ford, Bob Himel, John Cherbone, Alex Nugent, Ernie Kraule, Annette Stransky for helping with the restoration.

In the months to come a ribbon cutting and lecture series by Ray Cosyn will be announced with more information about the Interurban.

Today you can see the Interurban Stop located next to the Museum driveway.

The exhibit has many photos and artifacts from the 1903-1933 timeframe on the Interurban. The Interurban Stop which provided passenger comfort is believed to be the sole one in Northern California. The passenger stop was originally located near Nippon Mura, a popular resort at that time and located on Saratoga-Los Gatos Road.

The Saratoga History Museum is located at 20450 Saratoga-Los Gatos Road in Saratoga. The museum is open from 1-4 Friday, 10-4 on Saturday and 1-4 on Sunday. Admission is free. For more information go up to www.saratogahistory.com or call 408-867-4311.

### Isabella Blaney--Philanthropist and Suffragist



Bella Blaney
was very
active in
women's
rights—
including
being one of
two women to
represent
California at
the national
convention
for the

Progressive Party in 1911 and later in 1912 at the Republican Party convention.

Bella Blaney was born in the 1860's in Chicago, Illinois to Elizabeth Caroline Smith and John M. Williams. She graduated from Ogontz School for Young Ladies (later became the University of Pennsylvania) and did post graduate work at Northwestern University in 1872.

After graduation in 1872, she went to Italy with her parents and brother. While there, many artists asked to paint or sculpt her classical beauty. Her parents had a sculptor commission her face to go on her father's building on State Street—the prestigious Charles A Stevens & Brothers department store building.

Williams married Charles Blaney, on September 8, 1877 in Evanston Illinois. Due to Blaney's poor health they decided to leave the cold weather of Illinois and move to sunny California in 1882. They first lived in San Francisco and later in Saratoga where they called their home "Oak Knoll."

On September 6, 1883, a daughter, Clarissa Butler Blaney was born and named after Charles Blaney's mother. Clarissa died on July 30, 1901, at the age of 17, after suffering five weeks from typhoid fever. The Blaneys donated money to

build a wing for infectious diseases at O'Connor Hospital in San Jose in her memory.

In 1906, the Blaney's purchased land from their cousin, Jennie Farwell, to build a new home in Saratoga. Well-known architect Willis Polk designed the 20-room mansion known as Rancho Bella Vista (Spanish for beautiful view). Landscape architect Bruce Porter designed one of the gardens; Bella Blaney, the other.

She was a member of the San Jose and Palo Alto American Association of University Women (AAUW); the Astronomical Society of Pacific; and the Pasadena Music and Art Association. She also belonged to the Outdoor Art League of San Francisco.

During this period of time, —she belonged to the Century Club of San Francisco, housed in a Julia Morgan building, and the first woman's club in San Francisco. The Friday Morning Club of Los Angeles, another woman's club that focused on public kindergartens; protecting abused children; and promoted a travelling library. She also belonged to the Town and Country Club of San Francisco, an exclusive club enabling women to spend the night in the city.

She was very interested in politics and



women's rights. In 1910 she was chair and financed the Women's Club Franchise League; Executive Board of the California Equal Suffrage Association; Vice President of the Women's Roosevelt League in San Francisco and on the Executive Committee of the Progressive Republican League.

Bella Blaney died in 1933 and is buried near her husband in Madronia cemetery.

#### Wild Turkey in Saratoga?

Wild Turkey -- the bird kind-- not the bourbon by the same name-- have been around in Saratoga as far back as 1893. In fact a small area in the Saratoga Village has been named after the sometimes large and cantankerous birds.

Turkey Track Lane is the stub of Third Street near restaurant Bella Saratoga and the Inn at



Saratoga. The name had to do with the turkeys gathering there during the 1800s and leaving tracks in the dirt.
Flocks of wild turkeys also

roamed other parts of rural Saratoga in the 1800s. The turkeys thrive especially in wooded grasslands such as the hillsides. During certain periods of the year the bold turkeys can still be seen today strutting down Pierce Road and found foraging in backyards.

## New Walking Tour to Learn About Your Community



In response to many requests, Madronia Cemetery and Arboretum has printed a self-guided tour of 33 of the people buried and their history.

Plans are to create a second brochure listing additional people.

Madronia cemetery

is one of the oldest in Santa Clara County with burials beginning in 1854.

The cemetery also has an arboretum with 294 trees with 91 species. Take an afternoon off and walk around-- you will be amazed at what you see and can learn.

Madronia is located at 14766 Oak Street in Saratoga. Go up to www.madroniacemetery.com or call 408-867-3717. The cemetery is open from 8 to 5 PM.

#### The Basis of All Art

The Public Art Committee was created in 2016 by the Saratoga City Council and makes recommendations for public art in Saratoga.

One of the recent pieces completed by the committee is the utility box on Saratoga-Sunnyvale near Reed Animal Hospital.



The box has a mosaic-like appearance with colorful California poppies and quails, the text reads: "The garden is the source of all life and the basis of all art." Betty Peck

Betty celebrated her 98th birthday in



December.
Some of her many achievements include teaching kindergarten for over 50 years, originating the

Saratoga Community Garden, author of several books, and mentoring hundreds of students and teachers.

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www.saratogahistory.com or www.facebook.com/saratogahistory

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#### Saratoga Village Improvement Association-A Flowery Patch of Delight

Many of you have probably passed by this little patch of flowers in the Saratoga Village. The plaque on the rock reads:"The pots and flowers you enjoy are provided by Blossom Festival proceeds and maintained by Village Merchants."

Saratoga Village Merchants.



The Saratoga Village Association was the predecessor to the Saratoga Chamber of Commerce.

#### **Keep Informed about Museum Events**



You can keep informed about museum events in several ways:

- 1) call the museum 408-867-4311
- 2) check the website at

www.saratogahistory.com

- 3) check the Facebook page art faceebook.com/sarartogahistory
- 4) or sign up to receive eblasts by going to www.saratogahistory.com

We have some great events coming up-- don't miss out!!