

# THE RECORD

## Games in BurlinGAME

WALKING  
TOURS!!

Sunday Aug. 4

1:00 and 2:30 pm

See pg. 3

Our August walking tours this year, conducted under the umbrella of San Mateo County Historical Association's Victorian Days (see page 3 for more info) will feature past entertainment sites in Burlingame. Because our community was formed around a country club, games or entertainment became the *raison d'être* for settlement of the mid-Peninsula. In the two decades following the incorporation of the Burlingame Country Club in 1893, sports revolved almost exclusively around the horse: polo, the hunt, races and shows were all popular.

Perhaps no one exemplified the sporting life of early Burlingame more than **Francis J. Carolan**, the charismatic, handsome husband of Pullman railroad car heiress, Harriett Pullman Carolan. After their marriage in 1892, the couple lived in San Francisco, but they looked south for a more permanent home after some of the most prestigious couples in San Francisco began building here. In 1897 Harriett and Francis made plans to move to Burlingame, buying five acres at the crossroads of Willow and Sharon Avenues. That same year, after her father died and left her an inheritance of well over a million dollars, their Burlingame home plans became much more grandiose; the size of the estate they named *Crossways* expanded from 5 to 30 acres and included 30 rooms. With their new-found wealth, Francis had a lot of time for sports and he indulged his interest in horses accordingly. The Carolans, but particularly Frank, became a fixture of the country club set and their social status ascended. In 1900, the Carolans threw a memorable and thoroughly opulent party to celebrate the completion of their *Crossways* stables: Guests were brought to Burlingame from San

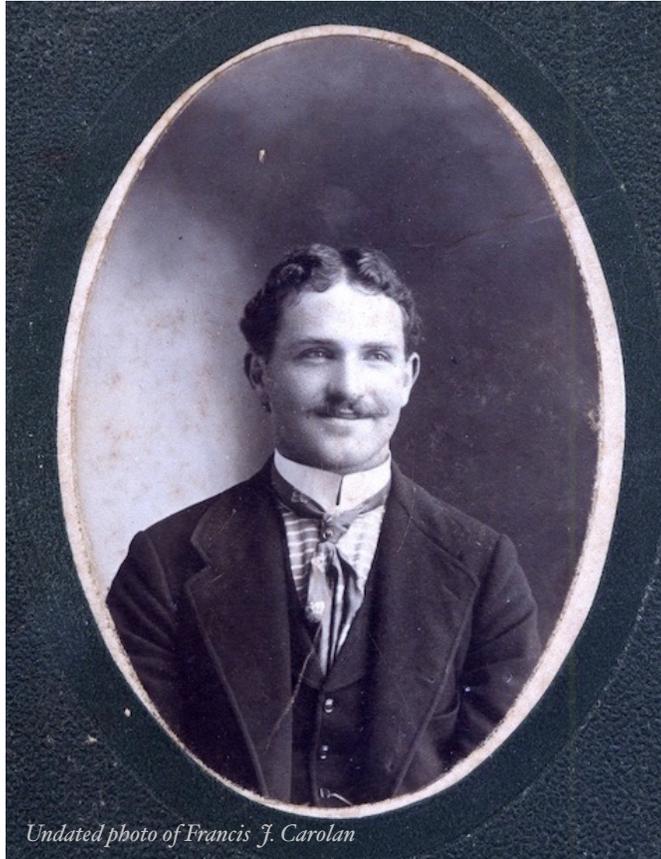
Francisco by Pullman railcar and then

escorted to *Crossways* via one of Mr. Carolan's carriages. Women were encouraged to dress like flowers and the men were encouraged to wear the pink jacket of the hunt or formal wear. A 50-piece band greeted the guests, as did 5,000 Japanese lanterns and 3,000 incandescent electric lamps specifically strung for the party. The horse troughs were filled with champagne for the party goers. Dinner was served at midnight. It was an evening to remember.

However, Francis Carolan's love for horses and hunting dogs soon clashed with Harriett's desire for elegance and French antiques. When a portion of Corbitt's horse ranch (near modern-day Burlingame High) became available in 1901, the Carolans purchased it for \$250,000 as an investment, renamed it *Crossways Farm* and in essence allowed it to become an extension of the

Burlingame Country Club. The property already had stables and a racetrack; Carolan added a polo field and pavilion. Later he also built kennels and became master of the hounds for the Burlingame Hunt Club. Harriett was happy that the horses and dogs were no longer housed at their home at Willow and Sharon Avenues. It was this sporting life of horses, hunts and polo surrounding the train station that prompted the local historian Frank Stanger to write later that before the Great Earthquake of 1906, "**...the name Burlingame was associated not with a town, for there was none yet. It stood instead for the spectacular Peninsula play life of San Francisco's richest social set.**"

**Games, continued on page 3**



Undated photo of Francis J. Carolan

**NEW ACQUISITIONS!** *With thanks to...*

Gary and Bernie Jr. Heckenkemper, for several digital scans and photos taken in the 1940s, including of their father, Bernie, a postal service employee, playing with the Burlingame Post Office baseball team at Washington Park Field (*see photo at right*), and of Peninsula Ave. at the old Bayshore Freeway, prior to the freeway overpass; **Lilliana Cifuentes and Art Morimoto of Burlingame Public Works** - Engineering Dept. for a very large, wood and plaster framed photograph of early Burlingame Mayor, Eric Lange (1910-1912), and several original watercolor scenes of Burlingame and Hillsborough, possibly by St. Paul's Episcopal church architect and artist W.C.F. Gillam (*See painting of Jennie Crocker Henderson's Homeplace, at right*); **Betsy McGinn**, for a signed copy of the new book *The Amazon Roadmap - How Innovative Brands are Reinventing the Path to Market* © 2019 by Betsy McGinn & Philip Segal; **Jim Kelly** for a Peninsula Memorial Blood Bank ID token for donors of 1 or more gallons of blood, circa 1970s; **Cathy Baylock** for two wine glasses



decorated with "We support the Broadway Arch", 1987; **Jim Shypertt** for misc. images of events, including a photo of Rotary Club members posing at the entrance of the USPO on 220 Park Road, commemorating the anniversary of Rotary international in 1955; **Nick Argeris** for 3 vintage images of Ansel Easton's Burlingame Railway Co. trolley on or near Hillside Drive, and 1 image of two 40-horsepower Studebaker buses that replaced the inefficient and underpowered trolley (1913-1918); **Ray Tyler** for videos of the July 29th 2018 mural event in Hatch Alley and a video of the Burlingame Historical presentation on the history of Burlingame's USPO, May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019, and **Bobbi Benson**, for a transcript thereof; and **Jennifer Pfaff** for a yellow polyester Botts' dot (road reflector), found dislodged on Barroilhet Ave. near Seabury Rd. in Hillsborough, (*concept developed in 1955 by Caltrans engineer Elbert Dysart Botts—usage discontinued as of 2017 due to costs, and incompatibility issues with self-driving car technology*).



**VOLUNTEER CORNER:** **Ron Bulatoff** has been volunteering for us on a regular basis for more than a decade. A life-long Burlingame resident, Ron came to us with a strong background in research and collections from the Hoover Institution at Stanford. With his dedication and work experience, there couldn't have been a better fit for us. During that period, he has helped create and index specific collections, scanned, and processed literally thousands of our records and documents into digital files, and entered them into our Museum software, "Past Perfect". **Thank you, Ron, for your dedication to your work with us, and to Burlingame's history.**

**PLEASE JOIN US on Sunday, August 4th! TWO Walking Tours : MUSEUM ALSO OPEN 1-4 PM**

**Entertainment Burlingame Style: 1 pm – 1:45 pm.** Meet at the Burlingame Avenue railroad station (290 California Drive) and explore entertainment around the turn-of-the-century up to the rise and fall of downtown theaters.

**Let Me Entertain You On Broadway: 2:30 pm – 3:15 pm**

From ice-skating, to theatre-going, learn about how the North Burlingame residents spent their leisure time. Meet at the Wells Fargo parking lot, behind 1145 Broadway.

**THANK YOU Kent Lauder**, for repairing the water spigot at the railroad station; and to all of our volunteers who help us out in so many capacities. **Very special thank you to Rich Terrones and Alicia Ader of Dreiling Terrones Architecture Inc., Burlingame**, for their ongoing technical assistance and expertise related to the Gunst Carriage House.

**IN MEMORIAM:**

Robert Wilkinson

Jean Gish

*Games, continued from page 1*

The Carolans were a big part of that social whirl. After the Earthquake, as increasing population and suburban development took its toll on open space, the polo action moved further south and west (to the San Mateo field near today's Hillsborough's South School). Hunts became more difficult without annoying the new suburbanites. A new sport, that was less land-intensive, was introduced: Beagling. Like the hunt, beagling involved a fancy uniform (green velvet coats and white knickers). It also involved fine wining and dining before and after. Francis Carolan was an enthusiastic promoter. While Francis was busy pursuing his sports, Mrs. Carolan began planning an even grander home than *Crossways*. The Carolans purchased a large tract of land and employed a French architect to design a 100-room mansion. Designed to impress both the East Coast visitors who would soon visit for the Panama- Pacific International Exposition, as well as their Burlingame peers, the mansion, dubbed *Carolands*, was situated high on the hill where the Carolans could literally look down on their neighbors.

After World War I, people continued to flock to Burlingame and new entertainment opportunities more appropriate for suburban life grew, including an afternoon at the movies -- or later bowling. By this time, the car had replaced the horse as the status-symbol of most American men and the horse-related sports waned. Perhaps fittingly, Francis Carolan, whose passion in life revolved around horses and ponies, died in 1923, just as car ownership was increasing.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

Francis Carolan's 1901 investment in land and facilities for a new polo field in Burlingame was at least in part motivated by "polo tourism" as a means to augment the resident population. According to the SF Call newspaper (April 1901) *The purpose he [Carolan] has in view is to afford Eastern and resident admirers of the sport all the facilities demanded by the widening interest in this form of outdoor exercise. The transportation companies have already derived considerable revenue from the polo tourists. Burlingame has been enlivened by the sojourn of these Eastern players, who formerly went to South Carolina. Returning East they proclaim the advantages of Burlingame as a polo resort and bring back with them other men of means who have a fancy for this style of field exercise... who come with their friends to pass the winter [and] decide to remain all the year round. The railroad companies are beginning to find that it pays to make known to the Eastern world the attractions which Burlingame presents to the disciples of polo.*

In polo circles by 1903, Burlingame's *Crossways Farm* was generally considered to be the finest polo field in the world.

**Many thanks to our New Members, Renewals, Upgrades and Donations at large  
Your support is greatly appreciated! (N - New Member)**

Barry J. Goyette  
Dotey Shafer  
Joe Legallet  
Linda Yelnick (N)  
Debbie and Don Doyle  
John Parkin  
Brian McGinn

Betsy McGinn  
Linda Merrifield  
William Glass Husain  
Catherine Wilkinson  
Kristine Cannon  
James Bailey  
Meredith Dunn

Liz Buljan (N)  
Barbara Pierce  
Jonathan Koomey (N)  
Aiden Mendoza (N)  
Susan C. Hall  
Mike Lennon (N)  
Maureen Lennon

**Address Service Requested - Time Dated Material**

Calendar

**Quarterly Meeting:**

**WALKING TOURS: SUN. AUG 4**

"Entertainment Burlingame Style"

1:00 to 1:45 pm. meet at Burlingame train station, 290 California Dr.

"Let me entertain you on Broadway"

2:30 - 3:15 pm. meet at Wells Fargo lot, 1145 Broadway.

1-4 pm Burlingame Hillsborough History Museum Open

290 California Drive

**And 1st Sun. of each month, 1-4 PM.**

**Sept 1, Oct 6, Nov. 3**

**Docents Needed!**

No experience required.

*Please remember us  
in your trust or will!*

THE BURLINGAME HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SUMMER 2019, ISSUE 159

**President's Message -Jennifer Pfaff**

This summer, Burlingame begins construction of a new Community Center, while we bid farewell to the Recreation Center that has served this community in so many capacities since 1950.

The acreage that we know today as *Washington Park* was pieced together over many decades, beginning in 1922 when the City Trustees appropriated \$30,000 to Francis J. Carolan for 10 acres of property adjacent to North Lane and Burlingame Square. The population of the city had increased substantially, and city leaders recognized that no respectable city was complete without a public park. The land acquisition was initially called simply, *Public Park*.

This was just the beginning. By 1940, Burlingame had purchased the Gunst Estate and several outbuildings from widow Ophelia Gunst for \$30,000, initially using the mansion

and other structures on site to conduct various recreational programs.

From the site's beginnings as a horse breeder's haven and lavish playground for the elite set, to the many decades serving as the city's primary gathering- and recreational spot for people of all ages, Washington Park is symbolic of many periods of Burlingame's history, and holds enduring memories for many.

As we celebrate another July 4th, it is worthwhile to mention the 1949 inscription on the brass plaque adorning the brick entrance:

***The Burlingame Community Center  
reverently dedicated to the men and women  
of Burlingame who patriotically gave their  
lives in World War II so that we might live  
and enjoy the American freedom typified in  
this living memorial.***

**Current Officers 2019:**

President - *Jennifer Pfaff*  
VP - Museum - *Russ Coben*  
VP Technology and  
Education -

*Diane Condon-Wirgler*  
Treasurer and Newsletter -  
*Joanne Garrison*

Oral histories &  
Parliamentarian-  
*Cathy Foxhoven*

Secretary - *Mary Griffith*  
Corresponding Secretary -  
*Mary Packard*

Social Media-

*Cathy Baylock*  
Membership Co-Chairs-

*Carl Martin and  
Leslie McQuaide*

Board Member Emeritus -

*Martha May*