Letter from the Editor:

This year we repeat one of our earliest, and most successful walks, down Miller Avenue. Once again the Mill Valley Historical Society provides us with a picturesque, present day view, of the past days of Mill Valley. It gives us insight to the early Indians who foraged the area; to more modern times, of charming houses and families who were hosts to the many visitors; the vital railroad that linked our town, and the people who were responsible for Mill Valley’s continued growth.

As the newly appointed editor, I would like to thank our past editor, Jeremy Gorman, the founding father of the Review, for his many years of participation and service. Also, I would like to thank all of the people, who for the last nine years, have made the Review the document it is today. However, giving due credit would be an edition in itself. So in brief, I would like to thank this year contributors. Thank you Dory Bassett, Henri Boussy, Carol Budds, Paul deFremery, Fred Sandrock, and all the others whom I have not mentioned. A special thanks to The Mill Valley Library for the use of their photographs and continuing support.

About the Cover
Looking down Bernard on to Miller Avenue where the train station is at the left. Throckmorton crosses at center in front of the depot. After 1915.

Above
Taken from Oakdale Avenue above the Post Office. El Paseo is now located in the two story building, extreme right foreground. The prominent building front left is now the Golden Valley Market, Sunnyside at East Blithedale. Circa 1920.

Panorama at Right
Mill Valley Marshlands viewed from the Northwestern Pacific tracks over Arroyo Corte Madera Creek. 1952.

1800-1889

The vestiges of primeval forest along the Corte Madera del Presidio Creek show how the alluvial plain looked to the Miwok and to the first visitors. It was a valley heavily wooded with willow, elder, maple, oak and redwood along the banks of a vigorous stream formed by the confluence of the Corte Madera del Presidio and Cascade creeks. It flowed out onto open grassland and marshes with channels that were navigable as far as the Montford Avenue of today. Trails on the stream gave access to fresh water for game as well as leading visitors to the abundance of the bay and the trade routes it provided. It was along this route that history came to Mill Valley from the sea.

The pioneer settler of Mill Valley was an Irish sailor, John Reed, who came to the bay area in 1826 as a navigator and explorer. He became a Mexican citizen in order to receive a land grant from the Mexican government, the first grant north of the bay, in 1834.

Reed’s first home was a small adobe built in the Locus area to provide a home for his bride, Hilario Montoya, daughter of the commandant of the Presidio in San Francisco. His rancho was named, “Corte Madera del Presidio,” where wood is cut for the

---
1800-1889

The vestiges of primeval forest along the Corte Madera del Presidio Creek show how the alluvial plain looked to the Miwok and to the first visitors. It was a valley heavily wooded with willow, alder, maple, oak and redwood along the banks of a vigorous stream formed by the confluence of the Corte Madera del Presidio and Cascade creeks. It flowed out onto open grassland and marshes with channels that were navigable as far as the Montf ord Avenue of today. Trails on the stream gave access to fresh water for game as well as lending visitors to the abundance of the bay and the trade routes it provided. It was along this route that history came to Mill Valley from the sea.

The pioneer settler of Mill Valley was an Irish sailor, John Reed, who came to the bay area in 1826 as a navigator and explorer. He became a Mexican citizen in order to receive a land grant from the Mexican government, the first grant north of the bay, in 1834.

Reed's first home was a small adobe built in the Locust area to provide a home for his bride, Hilaria Sanchez, daughter of the commandant of the Presidio in San Francisco. His rancho was named, "Corte Madera del Presidio," (where wood is cut for the Presidio), and it was from this area that wood was probably harvested and shipped. A dirt road along the creek may have given access to the mill that Reed had built along Cascade Creek, (a rushing stream in those days). Logs and lumber could have been hauled or floated down to the bay for shipment to the Presidio giving rise to Marin's first industry.

The three venerable almond trees that are located on LaGoma at Sycamore are all that remain of the orchard that Reed was required to plant as part of his grant agreement. It was commemorated in later years as "Sollom's Orchard Tract."

After 1836, the year of Reed's marriage, the area around Locust was alive with activity as cattle were rounded up for shipping; sailing ships took on water and provender off shore; and lumber was marketed. As Reed's family increased, a larger adobe was planned for the high ground at LaGoma and Lookie Lane but Reed died in 1841, before it was completed. This adobe burned in 1851, but the adobe walls, three feet thick, remained until 1915 as the last remnants of the pioneer settlement.

In 1841, Reed acquired a neighbor when Captain Richardson and his bride moved into their new adobe on the Rancho Sausalito, the land grant that lay to the west of the Reed lands. The boundaries between the two ranches were set by court order, in 1860. The land west of Corte Madera del Presidio Creek was granted to Richardson's heirs and east of the creek to Reed's heirs.

Before Richardson's death, in 1856, he had turned over the management of his estate to Samuel Throckmorton, a San Francisco financier. Throckmorton built a hunting lodge at Montford Avenue and Linden Lane which he named "The Homestead." A large palm tree identifies the site of this, the second home to be constructed in Mill Valley. The building was divided into two parts; one half of the house was a home for the superintendent and his family, and the other half was reserved for Throckmorton, his
Thr ockmo rt on divid e d the propert y into
descendants were to contribute greatly
guests. From 1868 to 1873, the foreman was Jacob
Gardner, Gardner and his
the dairymen build their own houses on
the rented land and the practice was
continued after his death in 1883. The
house that stood for many years on the
site of 329 Miller Avenue was built
under this rental plan in 1884 by
Manuel Faustino de Machado, a Portu-
guese immigrant known as Manuel
Fostine. His first and second wives and
their nine children lived there. Fostine
bought five lots at the 1890 auction for
$450. From then on he owned his own
homestead.

Another example is the house at 330
Miller, which is thought to have been built
for the Bettencourt family, “milkers” who kept dairy cows on the
Thrckomorton ranch.

The construction of the North Pacific Railroad in 1871, from Sausalito across
Richardson's Bay to Strawberry point
made the area accessible to hikers and
hunting companions and his weekend
guests. From 1868 to 1873, the foreman
was Jacob Gardner. Gardner and his
descendants were to contribute greatly
to the growth and development of Mill
Valley.

To make the ranch more profitable
Thrckomorton divided the property into
large plots which were rented out as
dairy farms to dairymen who paid a cer-
tain number of gold pieces per cow per
month as rent. They sold the dairy
products themselves for income.

It was Thrckomorton's policy to let
the dairymen build their own houses on
the rented land and the practice was
continued after his death in 1883. The
house that stood for many years on the
site of 329 Miller Avenue was built
under this rental plan in 1884 by
Manuel Faustino de Machado, a Portu-
guese immigrant known as Manuel
Fostine. His first and second wives and
their nine children lived there. Fostine
bought five lots at the 1890 auction for
$450. From then on he owned his own
homestead.

Another example is the house at 330
Miller, which is thought to have been built
for the Bettencourt family, “milkers” who kept dairy cows on the
Thrckomorton ranch.

The construction of the North Pacific Railroad in 1871, from Sausalito across
Richardson's Bay to Strawberry point
made the area accessible to hikers and
camping parties. In order to keep tres-
passers off his land, Thrckomorton
erected a fence running from Sausalito
to the Locust area with a series of eight
gates. One was located at the site of the
present Tamalpais High School. A
wharf used for shipping hay and dairy
products stood where the high school
playing field is today. By 1884, the rail-
road had an extension over the marshes
from Tamalpais Junction to Alto mak-
ing the "valley" even more accessible.

The construction of the North Pacific Railroad in 1871, from Sausalito across
Richardson's Bay to Strawberry point
made the area accessible to hikers and
hunting companions and his weekend
guests. From 1868 to 1873, the foreman
was Jacob Gardner. Gardner and his
descendants were to contribute greatly
to the growth and development of Mill
Valley.

To make the ranch more profitable
Thrckomorton divided the property into
large plots which were rented out as
dairy farms to dairymen who paid a cer-
tain number of gold pieces per cow per
month as rent. They sold the dairy
products themselves for income.

It was Thrckomorton's policy to let
the dairymen build their own houses on


1889-1900

After Thrckomorton died, his
daughter Susanna was obliged to take
out a loan of $100,000 to settle the
debs of the estate. As security, she
granted 3,790 acres to the San Francisco
Savings Union, of which Albert Miller
was president. (Mill Avenue was
named in his honor.) In 1890, the
Tamalpais Land and Water Company
was formed to administer the property.

Joseph Eastland, president of the new
company, retained Jacob Gardner as
manager. It was Gardner who built the
decorative victorian house, "The
Maples," high on the hillside above the
shops now in the Locust area, as a
model of house construction for the
Mill Valley terrain. At that time maple
trees covered the property which ran
between Miller Avenue and Ethel
Avenue above.

Eastland persuaded the North Pacific Railroad to run a spur line from Mill
Valley junction by Tamalpais High
School, along Miller Avenue to the
center of Mill Valley in 1889. The
engineer on the first run described the
route as having, "no houses, no roads,
no men, no women." Shortly after, a
siding was installed at what is now
Presidio Avenue to serve the Dollar
Lumber Company, (now, Mill Valley
Lumber). It was one of the earliest com-
mercial establishments in Mill Valley.
One of the storage sheds was originally
the stable for their draft horses.

The pivotal year in the growth of the
city was 1890. In March of that year the
first passenger train rolled into town on
the railroad spur and in May, it carried
the crowd of bidders for the Tamalpais
Land and Water Company picnic and
auction of lots held in Old Mill Park.
The first lot sold faced Miller Avenue
on the corner of Bernard and Thrck-
morton Avenues, (now O'Leary's Pub).
By 1892, the corner was occupied by a 2
story victorian building with a tower
housing the Wheeler Martin Grocery.

As land along Miller was undeveloped
and heavily wooded, the lots were rela-
tively inexpensive so that purchasers
had to buy large parcels which were
developed as estates over the next
decade.

The Hertha A. Meyers family owned
a property on the wooded hillside where
Cascade Creek crosses Miller Avenue.
They built a cabin with a rustic fence
and a bridge over the creek with a
ing bridge up the steep incline to Ethel
Avenue. During the summer months liv-
ing was outdoors under the trees, sleep-
ing in tents and eating in a shaded din-
ing tree.
camping parties. In order to keep trespassers off his land, Throckmorton erected a fence running from Sausalito to the Locust area with a series of eight gates. One was located at the site of the present Tamalpais High School. A wharf used for shipping hay and dairy products stood where the high school playing field is today. By 1884, the railroad had an extension over the marshes to the Lucott area with a series of eight wharves used for shipping hay and dairy products to the present Tamalpais High School. A road had an extension over the marshes to the valley floor. By 1884, the railroad to run a spur line from Mill Valley to the Lucott area by Tamalpais High School, along Miller Avenue to the center of Mill Valley in 1889. The engineer on the first run described the route as having, "no houses, no roads, no men, no women." Shortly after, a siding was installed at what is now Presidio Avenue to serve the Dollar Lumber Company, (now, Mill Valley Commercial). It was one of the earliest commercial establishments in Mill Valley. One of the storage sheds was originally the stable for their draft horses.

The pivotal year in the growth of the city was 1890. In March of that year the first passenger train rolled into town on the railroad spur and in May, it carried the crowd of hikers for the Tamalpais Land and Water Company picnic and auction of lots held in Old Mill Park. The first lot sold faced Miller Avenue on the corner of Bernard and Throckmorton Avenues, (now O'Leary's Pub). By 1892, the corner was occupied by a two story victorian building with a tower housing the Wheeler Martin Grocery. As land along Miller was undeveloped and heavily wooded, the lots were relatively inexpensive so that purchasers tended to buy large parcels which were developed as estates over the next decade.

The Hertha A. Meyers family owned a property on the wooded hillside where Cascade Creek crosses Miller Avenue. They built a cabin with a rustic fence and a bridge over the creek with a wagon trail up the steep incline to Ethel Avenue. During the summer months living was outdoors under the trees, sleeping in tents and eating in a shaded dining area.

1889-1900

After Throckmorton died, his daughter Susanna was obliged to take out a loan of $100,000 to settle the debts of the estate. As security, she granted 3,760 acres to the San Francisco Savings Union, of which Albert Miller was president. (Miller Avenue was named in his honor.) In 1889, the Tamalpais Land and Water Company was formed to administer the property. Joseph Eastland, president of the new company, retained Jacob Gardner as manager. It was Gardner who built the decorative victorian house, "The Maples," high on the hillside above the shops now in the Locust area, as a model of hillside construction for the Mill Valley terrain. At that time maple trees covered the property which ran between Miller Avenue and Ethel Avenue above.

Eastland persuaded the North Pacific Railroad to run a spur line from Mill Valley junction by Tamalpais High School, along Miller Avenue to the center of Mill Valley in 1889. The engineer on the first run described the route as having, "no houses, no roads, no men, no women." Shortly after, a siding was installed at what is now Presidio Avenue to serve the Dollar Lumber Company, (now, Mill Valley Commercial). It was one of the earliest commercial establishments in Mill Valley. One of the storage sheds was originally the stable for their draft horses.

The pivotal year in the growth of the city was 1890. In March of that year the first passenger train rolled into town on the railroad spur and in May, it carried the crowd of hikers for the Tamalpais Land and Water Company picnic and auction of lots held in Old Mill Park. The first lot sold faced Miller Avenue on the corner of Bernard and Throckmorton Avenues, (now O'Leary's Pub). By 1892, the corner was occupied by a two story victorian building with a tower housing the Wheeler Martin Grocery. As land along Miller was undeveloped and heavily wooded, the lots were relatively inexpensive so that purchasers tended to buy large parcels which were developed as estates over the next decade.

The Hertha A. Meyers family owned a property on the wooded hillside where Cascade Creek crosses Miller Avenue. They built a cabin with a rustic fence and a bridge over the creek with a wagon trail up the steep incline to Ethel Avenue. During the summer months living was outdoors under the trees, sleeping in tents and eating in a shaded dining area.

The grocer, Wheeler Martin, who owned several businesses in San Francisco, bought the large piece of property at 279 Miller for an informal summer retreat. Residents called the area "Millwood" and the name was adopted in naming the tract. The Martins called their cottage "The Antler" for the deer antlers that were hung over the entrance. It was important to identify homes with a distinctive name in the era before street numbers were assigned. The Martin property was large enough to accommodate an orchard and a garden that grew 35 varieties of roses started from cuttings from their San Francisco home. At the 1890 auction, James and Emile Mackie bought the property that included the end of what is now Park Avenue and the land to the north on which they built the handsome victorian cottage and three smaller dwellings beyond. The substantial victorian home at 234 Miller Avenue was built by George Lingard Payne, as a summer home. He planted a row of magnolia trees along the front of the property for his bride, Barbara Marie Frey, a southern belle, and the house was named "The Magnolias," Payne, who operated a boat works in San Francisco, commuted to the city. To accommodate the horses and carriages he needed, he built a large carriage house to the rear of the property. A garden was laid out that climbed the hill toward Ethel Avenue.

The William Terry property that included 36 acres extended over several lots and had 200 feet of frontage on Miller, originally lined with poplar trees. The Terrys built a large two story house with verandas on each floor and wide bay windows on the side. They called the house "Poplar Brea" in honor of the trees and their Scottish ancestry.

The house at 247 Miller Avenue, was built by Harvey Kyce as one of his model homes, for a Mr. Poole who named it "Homecroft," after his family home in England. Miller Avenue at that time was unpaved and Mrs. Pooley gives us a vivid picture of it as, "the best flower garden with over 3 dozen varieties of flowers."

"Gardner Villa," the late-victorian style house at 239 Miller, was built by Casper Gardner, nephew of Jacob Gardner, the Major-Domo for Throckmorton's ranch. Although it was planned as a hotel it was never used as such.

The house at 247 Miller Avenue, was built by Harvey Kyce as one of his model homes, for a Mr. Poole who named it "Homecroft," after his family home in England. Miller Avenue at that time was unpaved and Mrs. Pooley gives us a vivid picture of it as, "the best flower garden with over 3 dozen varieties of flowers."

"Gardner Villa," the late-victorian style house at 239 Miller, was built by Casper Gardner, nephew of Jacob Gardner, the Major-Domo for Throckmorton's ranch. Although it was planned as a hotel it was never used as such.

The house at 247 Miller Avenue, was built by Harvey Kyce as one of his model homes, for a Mr. Poole who named it "Homecroft," after his family home in England. Miller Avenue at that time was unpaved and Mrs. Pooley gives us a vivid picture of it as, "the best flower garden with over 3 dozen varieties of flowers."

"Gardner Villa," the late-victorian style house at 239 Miller, was built by Casper Gardner, nephew of Jacob Gardner, the Major-Domo for Throckmorton's ranch. Although it was planned as a hotel it was never used as such.
In addition to these restrictions, the Sequoia "Saloon" (now Wells Fargo Bank), served men only and probably provided them with pool tables and refreshments.

Next door was Landgraf's Mill Valley Tavern, (now daAngelo's), which boasted a dancing platform, picnic grounds and refreshments. It was the only public house that served women and children.

Across a driveway and on the site of the Mill Creek Plaza, was a two story clapboard building known as the Mill Valley House. It had a dance pavilion and showed silent movies in a hall built with a plank floor. After the movies, the local children would fish for any coins that might have slipped between the boards.
1900-1930

Around the turn of the century the materials and style of architecture changed and the decorative, flamboyant “Victorian” was replaced by the more simple, utilitarian structure using brown shingles as siding as well as roofing.

The house at 12 Sunnyvale was built in this style by the Buetti family. In 1905 it became the family home of Thomas Henry Bagshaw. Mr. Bagshaw, a stonemason by trade, became a grocer and managed the Sunset Grocery for owner Wheeler Martin. One son, Thomas Frederick (Fred) Bagshaw and his wife, began married life in this home. Fred, active in town politics, became a city councilman and mayor of Mill Valley as well as chairman of the Marin County Board of Supervisors.

Next to the Mill Creek Plaza is a brown shingle house built by George Paul O'Brien, a civil engineer. He named it “Ravenscourt” in appreciation of the ravens that nested in the area.

The house and property at 149 Miller, built for W.M. Steele, was purchased by John Finn for his wife, Eva, and their 11 children. During the earthquake of 1906 the house slipped down the hill and was destroyed. The Finns replaced it with a 3½ story house which they named “Wildwood.” To counter the slope of the hill it was built on a 30’ foundation with 12x12 beams. The thirteen rooms totalled 9000 square feet and boasted a basement large enough to house a golf driving range.

The brown shingle house at 189 Miller was built by Mill Valley contractor, Harvey Kyce, for the McCann family. It still retains a forest setting of oak and redwood trees and looks very much as it did in 1904. Although built in 1902, for the Lenhart family, the house at 240 Miller is in the classic Victorian style. One daughter, Jessie, taught primary grades in Mill Valley’s first school from 1900 to 1906. Among her pupils were: Irene Coffin, UC Berkeley’s oldest living alumna and daughter of Alonzo Coffin, Mill Valley’s third mayor, and Elmer Burr, granddaughter of pioneer settler, Jacob Gardner.

Another “second generation” house was the home built for the O’Brien family, as a summer home at 254 Miller, the site of a previous dwelling. Mr. O’Brien was the proprietor of the bar at the San Francisco Opera House. The O’Brien’s and their children so enjoyed their vacation house that they later became permanent residents. Three houses were eventually built to house the O’Brien children and relatives.

Avenue to the creek at 257 Miller, there was already a small cottage on the property. This existing structure was incorporated into the large brown shingle house in the kitchen. The house has nine foot ceilings with redwood paneling in the living and dining rooms. A small cottage was built behind the main house and finished just in time to shelter the family while they repaired damage to the main house after the 1906 earthquake. Five generations of the O’Brien family have lived continuously in this house. Robert Jr., third generation descendant, aided by his son and his wife, now heads the electrical contracting firm started by his father.

By 1903 the spur of the North Shore Railroad running into Mill Valley had been converted to standard gauge and electrified with a third rail as power. This necessitated the installation of a running fence along Miller to prevent accidental electrocutions of trespassers.

There were no through streets crossing Miller and the current access to Sunnyvale at that time was blocked by a fence with a stile providing for foot traffic.

Two spur tracks took off from the main track. One brought fuel to a sawmill area behind Landgraft’s, where it was distributed to keep Mill Valley homes warm in winter. The other brought fuel for the railroad to storage sheds where Bell Savings is now located.

The beautiful gardens of Captain and Mrs. Bingham at 303 Miller Avenue, circa 1899. Although the residence is only a memory now, the fountain remains intact.
Along Miller there were three railroad stations. One, between Park and Locust was originally to be called Finn, after the prominent resident of that area. After he refused the honor, it was named “Willow” for the many willow trees on the creek banks. Subsequently the name was changed to “Millwood,” then moved to the center of Miller Avenue at Locust and renamed “Locust.” It was the drop-off point for mail for the LaVerne post office that served Homestead Valley. The mailbags were picked up by Postmistress Florence Ezekiel, and carried, on foot, to Cooper’s Grocery on Linden Lane for distribution.

Another station, located at Park and Miller was called “Park.” After Tamalpais High School was built in 1908, (the first high school in Southern Marin), a train stop was provided at the east entrance to the gymnasium. For many years Miller Avenue ran on the west side of the gym and divided the campus in two.

The Locust area began to develop commercial enterprises. By 1910, there was a blacksmith’s shop at 349 Miller, (now 7-Eleven), operated by a Mr. Domigas.

A charming house at 15 Sunnyside, with a Victorian turret and brown shingle construction, was built in 1910 for San Francisco fireman, Charles Thoney, his wife and their nine children. A flourishing garden was watered by any one of his three wells. The Thoney boys fished the Corte Madera del Presidio Creek bordering their yard. Some became engineers, conductors or brakemen on the Mount Tamalpais Scenic Railroad. One son, Emmanuel met his wife on the Lee Street Local that serviced Beldedale Canyon where he was a conductor.

Among the commercial developments on Locust were two structures built by Emmanuel Thoney for the Gardner family after the closing of the railroad in 1930. Another entrepreneur, Louis Ferrera, built the structure on Locust that houses The Brothers bar on the site of the former Locust Restaurant.

In the early 20’s, Dr. George Landrock operated a maternity clinic in the former McCann house. It offered a transitional service between the hospital births of earlier days and the current hospital births.

As the automobile began to replace the horse in the 20’s, the livery stables were converted into garages. The blacksmith shop at Locust and Miller became a service station. By 1925, Frank Christ erected the first building that was designed as a garage at 332 Miller. It was called the Sequoia Garage for many years, and still exists today under another name.

The tennis court constructed on the Finn property for use by the children and their guests, was originally surfaced with crushed shell material from the nearby Indian mounds. The game was so popular that the enthusiasts organized the Mill Valley Tennis Club in 1925. The “valley” had its share of disasters. Besides the destruction of the Steele house in the 1906 earthquake, a devastating flood swept away the office of the Mill Valley Lumber Company in 1920. It was replaced by a small building moved from another part of the yard. In 1927 massive mudslides from Ethel Avenue threatened the Finn House and damaged other homes along Miller as well.
Hundreds of hikers each week and roam the picturesque hills and woods surrounding Mill Valley, Calif. A tennis court constructed on the property for use by the children and guests, was originally surfaced with shell material from the Indian mounds. The game was so successful that the enthusiasts organized Mill Valley Tennis Club in 1928.

"Valley" had its share of disasters. The destruction of the Steele in the 1906 earthquake, a debris flow swept away the office of the Valley Lumber Company in 1920, replaced by a small building from another part of the yard. In 1927 massive mudslides from Ethel threatened the Fin House and other homes along Miller as

The map by Thomas Bros. shows the streets, parks, and landmarks of Mill Valley, Marin County.
1930-On...

The 1930's saw drastic changes in the area. Better roads marked the end of the Mountain Railroad and the tracks were removed. The Mill Valley House was demolished and replaced by Brown's Furniture store. The large Victorian building at the corner of Throckmorton was torn down and replaced by the two-story Albert's Department Store. The Costa Creamery (Sunnyside at E. Blithedale) became a Safeway market.

At 106-114 Miller, two sets of garages mark the entrance to a group of six detached houses built for rental by the Pohli family, one of the first such developments in town. A son, Ramon Pohli, is also remembered as the coordinator of the first mountain play.

After the death of Mr. Finn in 1934, the property was gradually sold off and developed; first by Tony Varney and later by Kal Lines.

The apartments to the south of Una Way were built on the site of the Turpin family home. The street was named after the Wise family's daughter, Una. Children called the Turpin property "a secret garden" as it was enclosed by a high wall and gate and hidden from the street.

The "2 AM Club" was established in 1940 when Mountford was the city limit. As no drinks could be sold in Mill Valley after midnight per state restrictions, the club was started just beyond the limits and could serve alcohol until 2 AM.

The "Food Mart" and "El Marin Florists" were located in the Miller Avenue Gardner's building, built by Emmanuel Thoney. Mr. Thoney also built the Locust Avenue Gardner Building and the Russell & Gooch Mortuary. Mr. Russell, a San Francisco mortician, was hastily summoned to Mill Valley in 1932 when the town's only mortician left unexpectedly. The funeral parlor operated at Madrona and Lovell until the new building was completed.

When the railroad tracks were laid along Miller, a freight shed was located in the wide part of the street next to the Mill Creek Plaza, and the street curved around it. The shed was demolished in 1955 when all the railroad tracks were removed. When the area was paved, the entire space behind the depot became a parking area. Now it is still a dead-end by a fence and that corner developed. It was bought from Mr. White and became a Safeway.

The gradual development of this off the plaza has brought a small shopping area. The small shops. The quaint ambience of this area is still intact.
El Marin. He Miller Avenue, built by Emman- also built the Building and Miller. Mr. mortician, was Miller Avenue its only mortician funeral parlor. Old Lovell until completed. bricks were laid was located street next to the street curved demolished in 1941. As was paved, the depot became a parking area. Sunnyvale Avenue was still a dead-end street cut off from Miller by a fence and a large palm tree. As that corner developed into a shopping mall it became necessary to grant access to it from Miller Avenue. For a very modest price, the right-of-way was purchased from Mrs. Ralston White, widow of the former president of the Tamalpais Land and Water Company. In recognition of this offer, the redwood grove in the plaza was dedicated to Ralston White and affixed with a bronze plaque.

The gradual conversion of Miller Avenue from residential to commercial has brought about many changes in the ambience of the area. Old Brown's Store was changed into a mini mall of small shops. The house at 200 Miller that the Finns had built for son Bob Finn and his family became the John Korty Film Company. The Lyman Emerson family subdivided "The Magnolias" and constructed 18 townhouses in the garden area. John Finn III bought the Lenhunt house (340 Miller), and added a front office wing and two apartments to the building. The doctors' offices (Drs. Lee, Werschly and Harper), were added to the Wheeler Martin property at 279 Miller. The land in front of the old victorian at 316 Miller stood empty for many years due to a freak air current creating whirlwinds. In 1961, an office building with a half timbered and a half used brick facade was built there by Loyal Davis. The Mackie house became medical offices. The bay tree behind the house, reputed to be the largest in southern Marin, was retained.

Kal Linn built the modern apartments below "Wildwood" as well as the duplex at 130 Miller.

The almond trees, planted by John Reed in Loma, serve to remind us that it was here that Mill Valley was born. As the trees respond to the changing seasons so does the city change and respond to the social and economic forces of the times. Happily Mill Valley retains much of its original feeling, look and charm.

The photos on these two pages document the Locust and Miller intersection between the early 1930's and 1945. The flood photo was taken in 1945. The Locust Restaurant in the top photo on this page is now the Brother's Bar.
The Maiden Unveiled

By Fred Sandrock

Yes, Virginia, there really is a Sleeping Maiden on Tamalpais, our Enchanted Mountain. Her name is famous in the folklore and allure of the ridge's three peaks.

She has been lying there long before you, back in 1897, asked if there were references and tributes to this sleeping beauty. This year, The Mountain Play Association celebrates its diamond jubilee. In 1913 a group of men envisioned the potential that could be realized on the western slope of Mount Tamalpais an amphitheater which would be the highest outdoor stage in the world. Among these early dramatic pioneers were John C. Carlin, Garnet Holme, Augur C. Keane, Richard Fesler "Dad" O'Brien, and Austin Raimon Pohl. From their efforts evolved the association which, for seventy-five years, has presented a varied repertoire ranging from that first morality play, "Abraham and Isaac," to the present-day musicals. One play, however, has become part of Marin County's folklore. It is the story of an Indian brave and a witch's lovely daughter, Tamalpa. THE MOUNTAIN PLAY, a booklet published by the association, concluded its summary of the first (1921) production of Dan Totheroh's "Tamalpa" as follows:

This was the first use of Pohl's book for a dramatic entrance. Silhouetted against the sky, the Great White Spirit spoke the closing lines as Tamalpa's body was borne to her final resting place: "Throw over her the purple cloak that she will always wear— a shroud of amethyst from tip of toe to crown of hair."


Dan Totheroh is a name that has been synonymous with the early years of the Mountain Play. He was actor, playwright, novelist, and screenwriter, with a career stretching from early performances on the stage in San Francisco before 1906, to Broadway hits, and then to major screenplays in Hollywood's early "talkie" days. His association with the Mountain Play began in 1915 with an acting role in "Rip Van Winkle." After fighting in Europe during World War I, Totheroh returned to the Mountain and had roles in "Tilly-Ho" in 1919, and "As You Like It" in 1920. Now the plot begins to thicken.

During rehearsal in 1920, Garnet Holme asked Totheroh to write an original play. He suggested a legend of Tamalpais, built around the profile of the Mountain. The minutes of the Mountain Play Association for October 4, 1920, contained a motion "that Mr. Totheroh be requested to write a Mountain Play for the 1921 production, carried." The minutes for the February 28, 1921, officers' meeting included a motion "that the date of production be May 22, 1921, and that TAMALPA (spelling changed to "Tamalpa" in 1923) by Dan Totheroh be the play, carried." The play was a success. Those who attended assumed that they had seen the legacy of a genuine legend. The bestowal of the honor was significant. In the June 28, 1921, meeting of The Mountain Play Association, a motion was made and carried "that a royalty of $50 be paid to author of play 'Tamalpa.'"

In addition to "Tamalpa," Totheroh wrote "Rough and Ready" and "Flamenca" for the Mountain Play. He died in Oakland at age 83. His obituary in the Independent Journal, December 4-5, 1976, stated: "Mr. Totheroh was the first American to write a play for the Mountain Play."

Fortunately, in 1970, Ruth and Joe Wilson of the Oral History Committee, Mill Valley Public Library, conducted an interview with Dan Totheroh. The transcripts are on file in Mill Valley and the Kent California Room of the county library. Here are some excerpts from the interview:

MR. WILSON: I'm sure most people in Mill Valley will want to hear about your long association with the Mountain Play.

MR. TOTHEROH: Well, you probably know the story about my inventing a legend.

Garnet Holme, who was the first well-known director of the Mountain Play, came to me and said, "We've been talking about doing a play on the legend of Mr. Tamalpais. Why don't you look into it and see if you can find anything definite and write a play for us about the mountain?"

I went to the University of California and every place I could think of, doing research. I couldn't find anything... except one thing about the fear that the Indians had for the top of the mountain. It was very mysterious to them. You know how the fog sweeps in, and that sort of thing. It was a terrifying place to most of them.

Anyway, that was the only thing I found. So I went to Garnet and said, "I can't find out anything. What shall we do?" "Make it up," he said. So I did; I wrote "Tamalpa."

MR. WILSON: ... In almost everything I've read about the Marin Indians, it's generally accepted that Mr. Tamalpais was considered sacred — as so many mountains are, by the people who live around them.

MR. TOTHEROH: Yes, that part of the legend is true, and that's basically the only thing we know for sure about the Marin County Indians. I think I found this fact in the Bancroft Library on the Berkeley campus.

I coined the word Tamalpa, and I coined several other Indian-sounding names that have been given to trails on the mountain — like Hoo-Koo-E-Koo. I gave the name Hoo-Koo-E-Koo (pronounced with the accent on the third syllable) to the tribe at the base of the mountain. When I first wrote the play I spelled it Tambla. Then I resigned on that. The next time we did it, a couple of years later, I changed it to Tamalpa — it looked better.

I think the whole thing is a mystery. People come to me now, say, "Oh, Dan Totheroh! You wrote the legend of the mountain, didn't you?"

It's interesting what has happened. Last year Harvard University asked to send them copies of the play, and several other large universities asked to have it included in their libraries. The Mill Valley Library has a copy of it, of course.

I had an odd time casting this year, for some reason. I tried a little girl who played Tamalpa (P. Chambers) was quite good. She is from the College of Marin. They made Dramatics Department the place to go.

For our readers, members of the Mill Valley Historical Society, the Mt. Tamalpais History Project, and other historical groups, we present some of the fascinating case of "The Legend of the Sleeping Maiden." Use your deductive reasoning in the manner of the immortal sleuth, Sherlock Holmes.

Watercolor of Tamalpais with Wilson, by Jacob Men, Librarian. Drawing-off.
Oakland at age 83. His obituary in the Independent Journal, December 4-5, 1976, stated: "He also did the screenplays for "The Virginian" and "The Devil and Daniel Webster," often writing for Clara Bow, Gary Cooper, and Ronald Coleman."

Fortunately, in 1970, Ruth and Joe Wilson of the Oral History Committee, Mill Valley Public Library, conducted an interview with Dan Totheroh. The transcripts are on file in Mill Valley and the Kent California Room of the county library.

Here are some excerpts from the interview:

Mr. Wilson: I'm sure most people in Mill Valley will want to hear about your long association with the Mountain Play.

Mr. Totheroh: Well, you probably know the story about my inventing a legend.

Garret Holme, who was the first well-known director of the Mountain Play, came to me and said, "We've been talking about doing a play on the legend of Mr. Tamalpais. Why don't you look into it and see if you can find anything definitive and write a play for us about the mountain?"

I went to the University of California and every place I could think of, doing research. I couldn't find anything. Except one thing about the fact that the Indians had for the top of the mountain, it was very mysterious to them. You know how the fogs sweep in, and that sort of thing. It was a terrifying place to most of them.

Anyway, that was the only thing I found. So I went to Garret and said, "I can't find out anything. What shall we do?" "Make it up," he said. So I did; I wrote "Tamalpa."

Mr. Wilson: ... In almost everything I've read about the Marin Indians, it's generally accepted that Mr. Tamalpais was considered sacred — as so many mountains are, by the people who live around them.

Mr. Totheroh: Yes, that part of the legend is true, and that's basically the only thing we know for sure about the Marin County Indians. I think I found this fact in the Bancroft Library on the Berkeley campus.

I coined the word Tamalpa, and I coined several other Indian-sounding names that have been given to trails on the mountain — like Hoo-Koo-E-Koo. I gave the name Hoo-Koo-E-Koo (pronounced with the accent on the third syllable) to the tribe at the base of the mountain. When I first wrote the play I spelled it Tamalpa. Then I remedied that. The next time we did it, a couple of years later, I changed it to Tamalpa. It looked better.

I think the whole thing is awfully funny. People I meet now say, "Oh, you're Dan Totheroh? You wrote the legend of the mountain, didn't you?"

It's interesting what has happened. Last year Harvard University asked me to send them copies of the play. Yale and several other large universities have asked to have it included in their libraries. The Mill Valley Library has a copy of it, of course.

I had an awful time casting the play this year, for some reason. I thought the little girl who played Tamalpa (Petra Chambers) was quite good. She comes from the College of Marin. They have a good Dramatics Department there.

For our readers, members of the Mill Valley Historical Society, the Mr. Tamalpais History Project, and other historical groups, we present some clues on the fascinating case of "The Genesis of the Sleeping Maiden." Use your deductive reasoning in the manner of the immortal sleuth, Sherlock Holmes.

Tamalpais, Region of Evil Spirits

In 1835 William Antonia Richardson arrived in Yerba Buena and built the first private dwelling in San Francisco, a large tent made of a ship's sail. In 1838 Williams became "Guillermo" when the Mexican government granted him the "Sausalito Rancho" comprising 19,577 acres. Shortly after Richardson arrived, merchant Jacob P. Leese built the first substantial home, a wooden frame house which he completed on July 4, 1836. Leese also became a surveyor whose assistants, he claimed, were Chief Marin and followers. Leese needed to establish a initial survey point on the top of Mount Tamalpais. An interesting account or fable of how Leese induced the old chief to climb to the top of the Mountain "inhabited by evil spirits" is told on pp. 145-146 of the 1880 History of Marin County. Leese himself has sent the account to the publishers. In her Place Names of Marin, Louise Feather devotes much of her research to Chief Marin and cites one account giving his date of death as 1848. This would lend some credence to the Leese story.

The Devil on the Mountain, 1855

In 1854 a talented amateur water-colorist, James Madison Alden, was in the San Francisco Bay Area working as a topographer for the Pacific Coast Survey commanded by his uncle, Lt. James Alden. While here, he executed numerous watercolors including "Foot of Tamalpais (or Table Mountain) with Widow Reed's Ranch." The painting which measured around 9 x 12 inches, was done in 1855. Dr. Franz Stenfeld, in his biography James Madison Alden, quotes the artis: "This Mr. is said to be the Devil's abode! To give the Mountain a sinister look, the painter spattered a drop of ink in the sky across the top of the Mountain.

Slide Gulch is a prominent feature on the south slope of Tamalpais above Blithedale Canyon. At the turn of the century it was also referred to as The Devil's Slide.


December, 1909.
The Sleeping Beauty of Tamalpais, A Transformation

With the coming of the iron horse (to Ross Valley and Tomales by January 7, 1875, and Mill Valley, March 17, 1890), legions of hikers recognized that comparing Mount Tamalpais to an abode of the devil was most inappropriate. From faraway ferries and trains, riders fantasized that the Mountain skyline resembled the graceful configuration of a feminine form.

At first she was compared to the "Sleeping Beauty" by Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's Fairy Tales. This is understandable since many of the trampers spoke German. The March 1891 issue of Pacific Monthly carried an article by M.M. Mahoney, "The Sleeping Beauty of Tamalpais." Reference was made to a noted diplomat and journalist (editor of the Overland Monthly) who died in Peking, China in 1875. "The late Benjamin Parke Avery in his description of San Francisco scenery, dwells with affectionate lingering on the beauties of this mountain." He describes its outline, height, varying shades of color, and the graces of viewing a sunset from the summit.

Then in the words of author Mahoney:

No wonder either that even the ordinary day-walker at North Beach or on the heights overlooking Presidio and bay should turn with ever fresh feelings of pleasure to the fair panorama of which Tamalpais is the culminating glory, and should point out each separate charm to the visitor from eastern shore or midland prairie not failing to trace for them the reposing figure, formed by the outlines of Tamalpais and the ridge stretching westward, which is known as "The Sleeping Beauty."

The Sleeping Maiden, 1903!

In a small University of California monthly entitled The Occident, Katherine Forman Smith wrote a short piece, Tamalpais. She concluded with these words: "Against the sky they saw her, graven on the ridge of the mountain. And they called the place "The Sleeping Maiden."" The issue is dated July 5, 1903.

History of the Outdoor Art Club, Mill Valley, August 14, 1904

Toast to Tamalpais: "She sleeps unmoved in clearest grace." Mrs. J.B. McChesney.

The Legend of Tamalpais, 1911

The first book published in San Francisco after the earthquake and fire is reported to have been In Tamal Land by Helen Bingham. With a vivid text and 141 photographs, the author describes fully the wonders of Marin County in the early years of the 20th century.

Mount Tamalpais with its railroad and Redwood Canon (Muir Woods) is given ample coverage, but no mention is made of a feminine contour adorning the Mountain's crest. Tamalpais as "the Monarch of Marin" is the only figurative reference.

In Tamal Land, 1906

Helen Bingham:

Tale sketch from In Tamal Land with author's autograph. From the private collection of Fred Sandrock.

ALVINA BARTH
Class Representative, '96; Clerk, Secretary, Debating Society, '97; Riding Club, '98; '97 Women's Basketball. '99; '97, '98, '99. Editor, "Temelpa," '97; "Blond and L. Honor Society."

HARRIET PASMORE

In Tamal Land, 1910

Hoookeoko, 1910

Clinton Hart Merriam (1885-1942) was not only chief of the U.S. Biological Survey (1885-1910) but a naturalist, physician, and student of California Indians. In his The Dawn of the World—Wired Tales of the Mission Indians, 1910, he describes the myths of the Hoookeoko tribes in San Rafael, Nicasio, and Tomales Bay.

The Legend of Tamalpais, 1911

This poem by Nell Compton Wilson received the Yale University prize for 1911 for the best unpublished verse. His version of the legend appeared in Tamalpais - Enchanted Mountain, The Roxburghe Club of San Francisco, 1946, 200 copies. Nell Wilson also wrote a review of the first Mountain Play which appeared in the Examiner, May 5, 1913. The following year Wilson wrote, "Another year has the silhouetted figure that sleeps on the blue ridge of Tamalpais held a Mountain Play in the crook of her embrace."

The Sleeping Beauty (A Legend) 1911

This poem appeared in The Sunlight, Christmas 1911, published by the students of San Rafael High School. It was written by Will Duffy, 12, who was a brother of Clinton Duffy, warden of San Quentin Prison. Will Duffy and Dan Totheroth, 14, were classmates. Also Dan, whose first name was Webster, was an editor of The Sunlight. Could "Tamalpais" have been inspired by Duffy's epic which concludes: After death of good old Quentin Spirits came down from the heavens And at evening, while the thundered Took the gentle "We wish you Placed her high upon the mountain And in memory of her people Called the mountain Tamalpais."

The Maid of Temelpa, 1915

And the maid could serve the noble knight. Where the sadle on the graceful horse that bounds near the sacred mound of Temelpa. Our "piece de resistance" of the Senior Class of Lowell High School for 1915 was a dream written in 1893 by a junior at San Francisco High School. It was a highly talented young musical family, was Harriet Pasmore. Last year the Executive Director of the California Symphony was a member of her family. The lovely pasmore, her childhood, first Mount Rainier's youthful music, and her place in the Yosemite. Just sixteen days after her birthday and her wedding, she died at the age of thirty-five. And her work and her music and her life are still with us today.

Not only were classmates at Li high School, but they also shared in her career as a concert pianist and a lover of the Mountains. They graduated from Li high School in 1910, and from Lowell, with a B.A. in music. Today, thanks to the Executive Director of the California Symphony Association, we continue the music and much more. Dan Totheroth, friend of the family in Marin County, Ed.
Temalpais, 1914

"And the maiden! Alas! what mortal could survive the shock? Looking from the northward you can see the placid outline of her face, with hair streaming down to the bay of San Francisco, just where the saddernd Sun God laid her on the graceful mountain, Temalpais — Near the Sea." The preceding is from Memoirs of the Valleys by Dr. Platon M. G. Vallejo. It was published in a series of articles in the San Francisco Bulletin, January 27 February 14, 1914.

The Maid of Tamalpais, 1919
(The Fire Demons)

A book of verse written by George W. Caldwell and published in Legends of San Francisco.

Most, or possibly all, of the forgetting citations to the renowned "Legend of the Sleeping Maiden" are known to serious historians of the Mountain. For our "pied de résistance" we will turn back our chronology to a long-forgotten tale written in 1909. The author was a junior at San Francisco's Lowell High School. She was an honor student from a highly talented and professional, musical family. This Renaissance ''girl'' was Harriet Pasmore.

Last year the Mill Valley Historical Review carried an article entitled, "Pohli, Rock of Ages." It was the story of the first Mountain Play in 1913 and its youthful manager, Austin Hamilton Pohli. Just sixteen days after the play, Pohli lost his life in a climbing accident in Yosemite.

Not only were Romon and Harriet classmates at Lowell, but also at the University of California. Miss Pasmore graduated from high school in June, 1910, and from the University in June, 1914, with a B.A. "cum laude" in French. Thanks to Paul Lucey, Executive Director of the Lowell Alumni Association, we found graduation pictures for Pasmore and Barth and much, much more.

Harriet contributed generously to her high school publication, The Lowell. One poem dealt with her love for hiking and camping on Tamalpais. And lo and behold, the December 1909 issue included a long epic, "The Sleeping Maiden of Tamalpais." With numerous artistic references to the flora, fauna, and terrain of the Mountain, it took first prize in The Lowell yearbook poem contest. Miss Pasmore was awarded five dollars. Six months later her graduation yearbook placed her in the Hall of Fame and likened her to Shakespeare!

To devotees of the Mountain, the name of Prof. Emil Barth and his camp, Barth's Retreat, is well known. Barth was born in Langerland, Germany, and studied music at the Royal Conservatory of Leipzig. In 1882, Henry B. Pasmore, father of Harriet Pasmore, was also studying at the conservatory. Sharing a common interest but not a common language, the two became friends. Four years later, Barth was in San Francisco where he taught music until his death in 1926. Alvin, one of his two daughters, was a member of Harriet Pasmore's graduating class of June, 1910. These early associations with music and the out-of-doors were strong influences through Miss Pasmore's long and productive career as an international concert contralto and a college music educator. Who Is Who In Music, 1951, reported: "Professor Pasmore (she had changed her name to Radiana Pasmore in 1924) recreations include swimming and hiking."

Harriet concludes her "Sleeping Maiden of Tamalpais" with these lines: When we feel the earth to tremble "Nought can foe, we pale and shudder, Crying, "Ah, was it an earthquake?"

No, it was the Indian maiden Stirring in her deathless slumber, Moving gods in her slumber, Dreaming of her faultless lover, Ever waiting, trusting, hoping!

Yes Virginia, there really is a Sleeping Maiden on Tamalpais; she is immortal! An exceptional view of her profile may be seen from the summit of Contra Costa Country's "Mente del Diablo" where the evil spirits still dwell. Or, if you are in Anchorage, Alaska, and look west across Cook Inlet by the light of the aurora borealis, you will see their "Sleeping Lady" silhouetted against the sky.

Dan Toberoh from The Searchlight, June 1914. Courtesy California Room, Marin County Library. Right: After the play, 1919. Ted Warm Photo.
Mill Valley Travel

133 East Blithedale
383-5140
Instant Service • Instant Tickets
— Instant Satisfaction —
COMPLETE TRAVEL SERVICE
Tom McEachern, CTC — Manager

Mill Valley's own

PHOTO WORKS
One hour • custom quality prints

Personal service for professional results
Mill Creek Plaza 38 Miller Avenue Mill Valley, CA 94941
(415) 383-2932

Chinese Deli

401 B Miller Ave.
Mill Valley, CA
381-8933
FOOD TO GO • PARTY TRAYS
OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK — 11:30 AM to 9:00 PM

MALUGANI TIRE

388-1899
Serving Mill Valley Since 1948
BRAKES • FRONT END ALIGNMENT
SHOCKS • HIGH SPEED BALANCE
20 La Goma • Mill Valley

LINDA A. MOODY
ATTORNEY AT LAW

ONE WINWOOD PLACE
MILL VALLEY
388-4449

1400 ALCOA BUILDING
SAN FRANCISCO
997-4600 / 773-3450
— practice limited to —
ESTATE PLANNING / Probate
ELDER LAW / NONPROFIT CORPORATIONS