

MOUNTAIN REVIEW

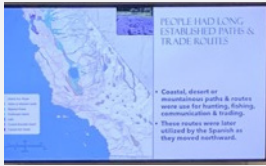
OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE

MOUNTAIN VIEW HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Volume XIV

Issue IV

Winter 2025



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History and
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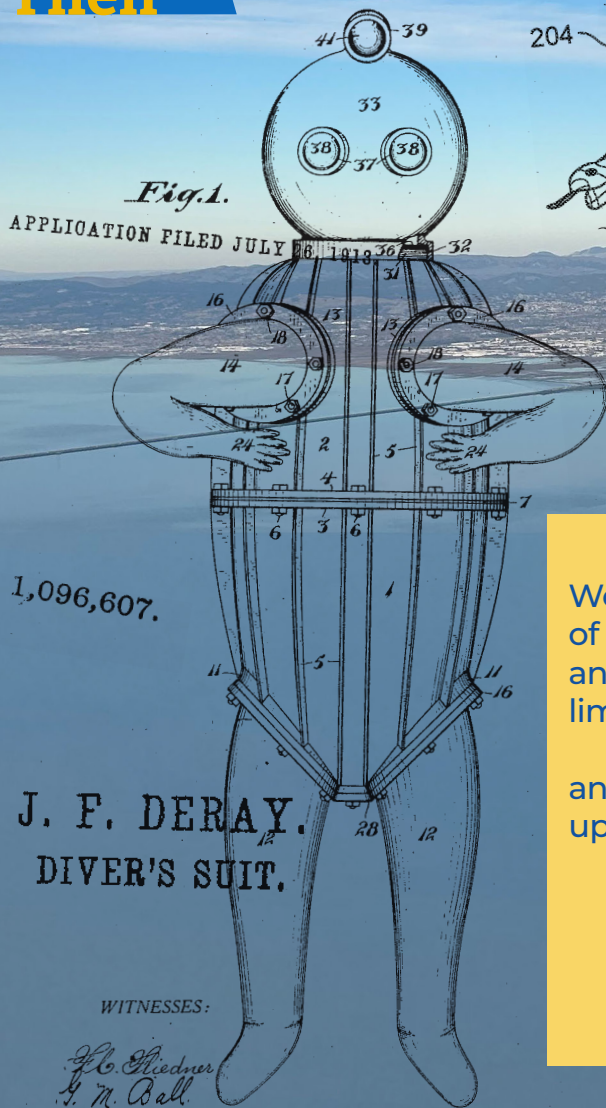


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“Curious”
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**Diving Suit
1914**

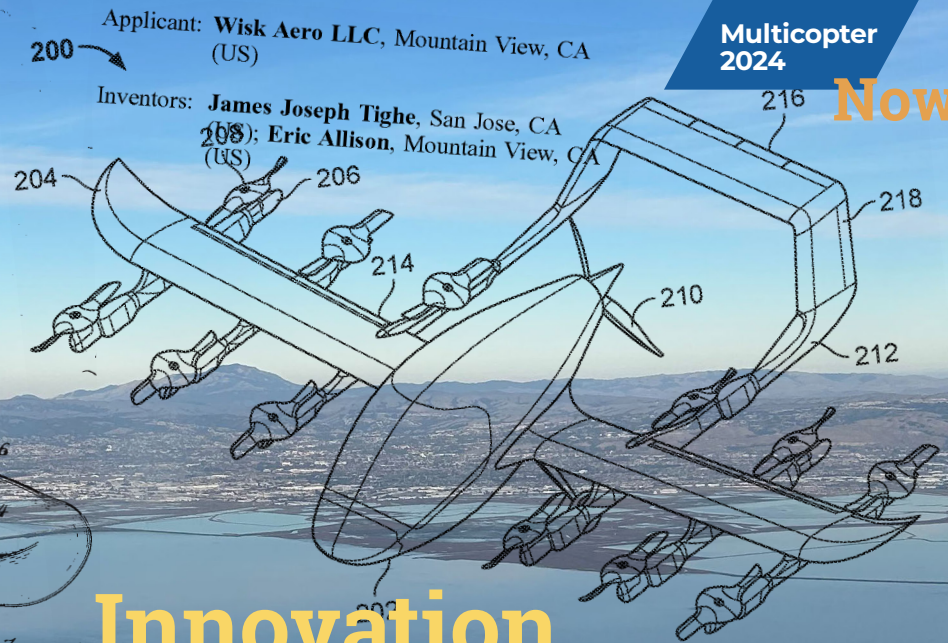
Patented May 12, 1914.
2 SHEETS—SHEET 1.

Then



**Multicopter
2024**

Now



Innovation

“Innovation”—another name for Mountain View? We all know that innovation has been the hallmark of Silicon Valley and Mountain View. But innovation, and the patents that are created as a result, are not limited to the last 50 years.

Join us **Sunday February 2** as we uncover innovators and patent holders from the early days of Mountain View up to the recent past and the present.

The Historic Adobe Building
157 Moffett Boulevard, Mountain View
February 2, 2:00–3:30 p.m.

Winter 2025

Sunday, February 2, 2025 2:00 p.m.

REGISTER ONLINE: <http://mvhistory.eventbrite.com>

News & Notes



This newsletter is published four times a year by the
MOUNTAIN VIEW HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
P.O. Box 252, Mountain View, CA 94042
www.mountainviewhistorical.org

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For a video preview
of the Downtown
Walking Tour with
Pamela Baird, visit:

[https://www.youtube.com/
watch?v=XriZywV7dJA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XriZywV7dJA)



Pamela Baird

President's Message

By Pamela Baird
MVHA President

*Innovations that
improve our lives*

This issue and the upcoming February 2 History Event meeting will cover innovators and patent holders of Mountain View. The area in which we live has seen innovations, starting shortly after its founding, to today's advancements in transit, connections and productivity.

Innovation can be life-changing or just a small increment of change. My mother grew up on a farm in rural southwest Iowa. Although nearly 90 percent of urban households had electricity by the 1930s, only 10 percent of rural households had access. Homes were lit with kerosene lamps, water was hand pumped, and cows milked by hand. There were no radios, water heaters, or small electric appliances like irons or toasters.

The cost of bringing power lines to remote farm homes was too expensive for private utility companies. The federal government created the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) in 1935. This program helped finance the creation of local cooperatives, which built small power plants to provide electricity.

As my mother recounted the tale of my grandfather—he was instrumental in organizing the local electricity co-op. He drove from farm to farm to speak with the men about the advantages of joining the co-op to have electricity brought to their farms. Many farmers didn't want to spend the money to join or felt it wasn't necessary.

Frustrated with the lack of foresight, he started speaking to the farm wives about how much easier their lives and those of their families would be if they had electricity. Only when women were consulted, was he able to convince people to join. And life was soon immeasurably better. My mother told me that studying with electric light was much better than with a kerosene lamp, not to mention indoor plumbing, refrigeration and electrically heated water.

Another innovation that my grandfather pursued was a different way of plowing the fields. The terrain of Southwest Iowa is low rolling hills. The standard method of plowing was up and down the fields in a straight line. This sometimes caused flooding or washing away of recently planted seeds. My grandfather read journals and magazines about better plowing methods. After doing research he



Roy Fehr
Innovative Iowa Farmer

Continued on next page

President's Message Continued from Page 2

decided to make changes to the way his fields were plowed. He was one of the first farmers in the area to use contour plowing and terraces in the 1960s. As the story was related by my mother—he was greeted with a great deal of skepticism by other farmers about the changes he implemented on his farms. But the new methods brought about better yields and within several years other farmers adopted these methods on their own farms.

He was featured in an issue of **Successful Farming** magazine. We all were immensely proud of a man who had to quit school at age 15 to take over his family's farm after the death of his father.

How I wish that our family had more information about his accomplishments. As I have noted before in this column—write down the stories of your families!

Financial Report

By Melissa Rusch *MVHA Treasurer*

Checking Account Balance as of 12/31/24: \$16,850.84

Certificates of Deposit: \$62,077.59

Membership Report

By Lisa Garcia *MVHA Membership Chair*

Happy New Year! It's membership renewal time. Thank you to those of you who have already renewed!!

You can mail in your form (see page 9) with a check or go online at:

www.mountainviewhistorical.org/memberships/

Please consider becoming a lifetime member.

It's easy to do and you won't have to remember to send your dues each year!

Membership dues help with our ongoing expenses—hosting meetings, newsletter production, mailing costs and insurance.

Community Outreach

On October 3, third graders at Landels School on Dana Street, learned the history of Mountain View and Miss Edith Landels, the namesake



of their elementary school. Pamela Baird, president of the Mountain View Historical Association presented an informative talk with photos and images illustrating local history. The event was organized by Marissa Hamaguchi, a teacher at Landels.

When Pamela shared a 1924 photo of Miss Landels' class, she pointed out that all thirteen girls had their hair shaped in a "bob" cut. Even in a small town, women and girls were interested in following the latest fashion trends. The children wanted to know if the boys were following style trends! After the event, students mailed "thank you" notes and sent emails with more questions.

El Camino at the Library

The MVHA has started a collaboration with the MV Library and the MV Friends of the Library to deliver historical lectures.

The first presentation was held on December 12.

Board members IdaRose Sylvester and Pamela Baird presented a three part program. Pamela spoke about California before outsiders arrived and the Spanish and Mexican history of the roadway from San Diego to San Francisco. She then focused on the story of El Camino on the peninsula.

IdaRose detailed the early and later landmarks in Mountain View. Location photos included before & after images and stories, like the Gemello winery, beloved restaurants, and former popular entertainment venues, like the Monte Vista Drive-In theater and El Camino Bowl. She also had the audience question what we value today, and how we envision El Camino evolving to meet our needs in the future.



Presenting the history of El Camino Real, Pamela Baird, MVHA President

The third portion covered the Mission Bells, initially installed to mark the 500 mile route of El Camino, an effort led by Mrs. A.S.C. Forbes, reporter, photographer and community activist. She started a foundry (the first one in the state to be owned by a woman) to produce the historic bells. The program was held in person and on Zoom. Watch for future MVHA presentations in March and May of 2025.



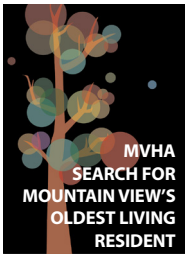
IdaRose Sylvester, MVHA Board Member, presenting the complex history of El Camino Real



Downtown Walking Tours

Eleven people participated in the December 22, 2024 Downtown Walking tour event. The tour, held on the fourth Sunday of most months, starts at Centennial Plaza and ends near the corner of Castro and Church Streets. Stories of the early residents, the success of agriculture and the transformation of Castro Street from a car-oriented roadway to a pedestrian-friendly center are included.

Upcoming Walking tour of downtown Mountain View
January 26, 2025
Register on EventBrite
<https://bit.ly/3VTdQa5>



Mountain View Historical Association bestows 'Oldest Living Resident' honor to WWII veteran

104-year old credits long life to survival genes, mixed in with a bit of luck

Article by Emily Margaretten, Mountain View Voice Staff Reporter

It has become something of a yearly tradition for Suzanne Epstein to modify her father's birthday banner ahead of their family celebrations. "After 100, it becomes really hard to find banners," Epstein laughed, showing her handiwork of taping over the last digit to reflect her father's true age.

On Tuesday, Oct. 15, Lloyd Lettis turned 104 years old in the Mountain View home that he bought for just under \$13,000 in 1952. Lettis still jokes that he thinks he paid too much for it. Lettis also holds the honor of winning the Mountain View Historical Association's "oldest living resident" competition. The competition received entries from a few other centenarians, but Lettis was the oldest, according to Carol Donahue, a historical association board member. Still, Lettis is quick to point out that he probably should be considered as a runner-up to the oldest living resident in Mountain View. His good friend, Elzene Yancey, likely holds this distinction since she is nine months older than him but did not enter the competition.

Born in 1920, Lettis attributes his long life to a combination of luck and perseverance, something he says he inherited from his parents who immigrated to the U.S. from Croatia around the turn of the century. "I think we have what they call 'survival genes,' so we just survived," Lettis said. Lettis' father and mother met in Watsonville, an agricultural town that had a large Croatian population. Both came to the U.S. under fairly modest circumstances but managed to gain a foothold in the apple orchards.

Lettis' father worked his way up from an apple packer to a landowner, acquiring multiple orchards of his own, Epstein said. As a young child, Lettis worked hard in the orchards helping his father and brothers. They were comparatively well-off — at that time, people looking for work would

come to their house, asking for jobs in the orchard fields. Even if there was nothing available, his mother would always give the person a cup of coffee, Epstein said.

The family's fortunes changed a few years into the Great Depression. Lettis' father had taken out loans, expecting to pay them back after the apple harvest. But then a shipyard strike prevented the apples from making it to market. Creditors called in their loans and the orchards fell like dominos, Lettis said, referring to the foreclosures. They were left with just one orchard, a 52-acre plot of land that is still in the family today.

World War II

Lettis put in long hours working in the orchards, but he was also a good student. Lettis attended U.C. Berkeley with aspirations to become a lawyer. His plans changed however when the U.S. entered World War II. Lettis enlisted in the

"I think we have what they call 'survival genes,' so we just survived," Lettis said.

U.S. Army Air Forces his senior year and was called up for training about a year later. It was also at U.C. Berkeley where Lettis met his wife, Myrtle. He saw her at a college dance and cut in as a partner, only to admit that he didn't like dancing and asked if she would be willing to see a movie instead. Myrtle wanted to see "Gone with the Wind," which cost 40 cents a ticket. But Lettis only had 50 cents in his pocket, so they each paid their own way and had nickel Cokes afterwards. "The first date was such a fiasco. I thought I'd never see her again," Lettis said. That was not the case, and they married exactly two years

later on Feb. 2, 1943. A few days later, Lettis received a telegram from the U.S. Army Air Forces ordering him to report to basic training in Florida. The army told Lettis that it would provide for all his needs; however, it did not give him the fare to get to Florida. So, with a bit of luck and a lot of determination, Lettis boarded several trains using his telegram as a ticket while also relying on the goodwill of porters who hid him in the bathrooms, he said.

After Florida, the army sent Lettis to Yale University and then Harvard University to take courses in radar technology. The training eventually led to his career as an engineer, far from his initial aspirations to become a lawyer.

Living in Mountain View

When World War II ended, Lettis returned to Watsonville for a few years to work in the apple orchards while also raising a young family with his wife. He resigned his commission from the U.S. Army Air Forces during the Korean War, not wanting to leave his family. As part of the deal though, Lettis agreed to take a defense job in the Bay Area. His family ended up settling in Mountain View in 1952, in a home that Lettis negotiated down from \$13,000. At the time, it was surrounded by apricot orchards, and Lettis quickly distinguished himself as one of the fastest apricot pickers in the neighborhood, filling two buckets to everyone else's one, he said. Lettis and his wife were embraced by the Mountain View community and in turn, they took a very active part in civic life. Lettis was a Boy Scout leader and also involved in the Parent Teacher Association as well. When his father died in 1968, Lettis took over the apple orchard in Watsonville, commuting long hours and working in the fields to keep it going. His active lifestyle continues to this day, as Lettis still tends to a vegetable garden in his backyard.

— Continued on Page 6

Finding Your Family History

by Robert Cox

Connecting with Distant Relatives on Ancestry

Much genealogical research involves searching through historical records to find connections between the relatives in your family tree. Uncovering the stories of these relatives makes for a richer understanding of our family history. After you have interviewed all of your known relatives and researched written records, you may be able to extend your family history by contacting more distant relatives who have stories to share.

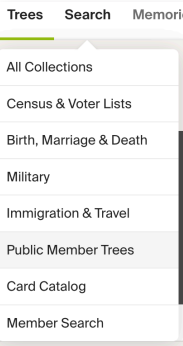
A good place to start looking for distant relatives is through the Ancestry member data base. Many Ancestry members provide one or more public family trees of their relatives. You can search these trees by selecting "Public Member Trees" under the Search tab. This will bring up a template in which you can enter a name of an ancestor, together with vital statistics like birth, death, and marriage and the father, mother, and spouse of that ancestor. On completion, the search will bring up a link with the number of family trees that contain your ancestor and the owners of each family tree. You can then send a message to each tree owner who interests you. I recommend sending short messages to many members.

Introduce yourself, explain what your connection is to them, and ask them to reply to the message if they are interested in connecting or collaborating with you on your research. Note that people on Ancestry are there for a variety of reasons, and not all are interested in connecting with other members, even if they are relatives. So, don't expect everyone to whom you write to respond. You can get

an idea of how interested members are in genealogy by checking the size of the family tree or trees they have contributed, seeing whether they describe themselves as Beginner, Intermediate, or Advanced, and seeing whether in their profile they describe themselves as "Willing To Help". Ancestry also provides an indication of how long it has been since they have signed into Ancestry.

If you have taken an Ancestry DNA test, you can also make connections with distant relatives using the Ancestry DNA "shared matches" feature. Let's say you know one Ancestry member who is a second cousin, George. It means that you and George share a pair of great-grandparents. By looking through the DNA matches you share with George, you can find other members who share the same DNA sequences that you and George share. If they also have public family trees, you may be able to find the exact connection. If you are really ambitious, you can even try to build a family tree for those that do not have one, to see if you can find the connection yourself.

Mountain View Family History Spotlight



Isadore Bresinsky



Lenny at home with Isadore's copper pot.

by Robert Cox, MVHA Vice President

Former Mayor Lenny Siegel's family has a long history of activism in civil rights and equity for working people.

The family of Lenny's paternal grandfather, Simon Siegel, were Jews from Lithuania and Latvia who left the Russian Empire in the 1890s in search of a better life. Simon first went to Brazil to join a utopian community, but eventually made his way to Baltimore, Maryland, where he was a garment worker. Hours were long and wages were low. Simon was arrested in a successful strike by the Amalgamated Clothing Workers. Lenny's father Henry was Simon's seventh son.

A cousin of Lenny's father, Simon Sobeloff, was the US Solicitor General under President Dwight Eisenhower. Sobeloff presented the government's arguments on the



Simon Sobeloff

implementation of the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*, which outlawed segregation in public schools. Lenny's maternal grandfather, Isadore Bresinsky, was a coppersmith. Lenny notes that Isadore invented a rotary clothes dryer which was exhibited at the World's Fair in Cleveland, Ohio in 1936.

Lenny grew up in Culver City, Los Angeles County, California. He was

born in 1948, the year Israel became a country. Lenny's family was active in their local Reform synagogue, collecting dimes to plant trees in Israel. But during the 1967 war, they became concerned that Israel was becoming an aggressor. Lenny continues to hope that eventually both Jews and Palestinians will be able to live together in peace.

Lenny attended Stanford University during the Vietnam War, where he was a leader in the movement to sever Stanford's connection with the US Defense Department's electronic warfare programs. This is where he met his future wife, Jan Rivers, who was also active in political causes.

Jan grew up in Mountain View, so after college Lenny and Jan came here to start a family. Lenny got involved with local politics, serving on the Planning Commission, and advocating



Lenny's wife Jan and Lenny as high school seniors

for rent relief. Lenny was instrumental in getting Mountain View to limit the number of apartments which could be converted to condos. Decades later, Lenny supported activists who put together the ballot initiative for Mountain View's rent control charter amendment. Lenny's advice to young activists is "Be persistent!"



Jan and Lenny at the 100th Anniversary of Loreto Street in 2024

Lettis only recently stopped playing tennis and driving at the age of 102, although his license is still valid, according to Epstein. He plays bridge twice a week and enjoys attending speaker series. He also is remarkably healthy, Epstein said, noting that her father's medication list is quite short – he takes one aspirin daily. Lettis says the hardest part of getting old is outliving his wife and friends. Still, he is surrounded by a big family that consists of four children, 11 grandchildren and 22 great grandchildren.

When asked how he felt about turning 104 years old, Lettis smiled and then added, "I don't have any feeling about it... I just keep living."

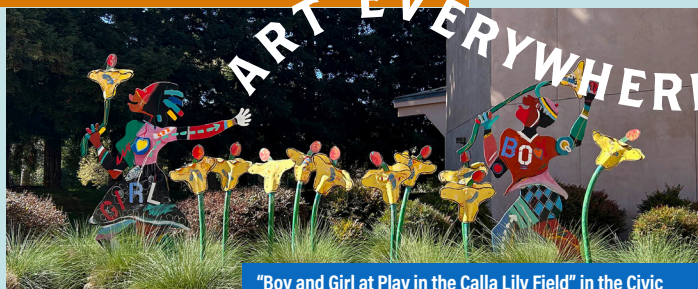
The Mountain View Historical Association extends many thanks to the Mountain View Voice for granting permission to reprint the above article by staff reporter Emily Margaretten, originally published on October 15, 2024. Read the story and view photographs by Anna Hoch-Kenney at <https://tinyurl.com/MVoldest-resident>



Left to right: Suzanne Epstein, Loyd's daughter, Loyd Lettis, Pamela Baird, MVHA President, Carol Donohue, MVHA Board Member, who organized the project to find Mountain View's Oldest Resident

Fall Event Recap

THE HISTORY OF PUBLIC ART IN MOUNTAIN VIEW



"Boy and Girl at Play in the Calla Lily Field" in the Civic Center Plaza is viewed by hundreds of people each day.

The new Google Gradient building provided a great backdrop for the fall History Event. The exciting design of the building and the artwork outside provided a good preview of the information to be featured by the speakers.

To start the meeting, Pamela Baird, board president, gave a brief overview of the types of *Public Art*. According to Wikipedia "Public Art is art in any medium whose form, function and meaning are created for the general public through a public process, and is visually and physically accessible to the public." *Private but public artwork* is defined by Unesco as "art that is located on privately owned property but designated for public use — open, accessible and enjoyed by all citizens for free."

Jonathan Clark, an early member of the Visual Arts Committee, gave an interesting background about the start of the organization, originally called "The Visual Arts Jury." He served on what became the Mountain View Visual Arts Committee from its founding in 1989 through 1995.

The Committee initially started as five (later seven) appointed community members to select art for purchase and placement in public spaces. Funding was provided through a city requirement that 1% of the budget of major public works projects be set aside for art. Initially, the group engaged the public through a display of large sculptures placed in Pioneer Park and the City Hall Plaza. From public feedback four sculptures were selected for purchase, including the "Boy and Girl at Play in the Calla Lily Field" in front of the Performing Arts Center.

A year later a temporary International Quilt Exhibit was hosted on the unfinished fourth floor of the newly completed City Hall building. In 1993 the group worked with MVHA and the American Legion to install a War Memorial in the

City Hall Plaza. The next year the VAC sponsored four major exhibitions, selected art for the new Whisman Sports Center and sponsored several shows in the PAC.

By 1995 Mountain View's innovative and engaging public art program became the envy of other communities. Jonathan thinks this success was due to the involvement of the community at large in the evaluation and selection of the art. He feels fortunate and grateful that he had the opportunity to be a part of "the golden age of community art" in Mountain View.

Kirstin Hinds, from city staff, explained more history of the Visual Arts committee, how funding is created, how the committee has evolved and the strategy for the organization going forward. In 2022 the percentage of the project cost dedicated to art increased to two percent. Over 40 pieces of publicly owned art and over 60 pieces of privately owned, but publicly viewable art, have been installed in the city since 1987.

Current Visual Arts Committee member, Cliff Bryant, gave an enthusiastic account of his time as a member. He especially enjoys the discussions the group has regarding the artwork to be selected.

Lastly, the two artists who created the sculpture "Curious" outside the Google Gradient building, spoke about the collaboration with the Google team selecting the art for the new facility. Lisa and Robert Ferguson (<https://www.mr-and-mrs-ferguson.com>) initially became acquainted with the team through their artwork created for the Burning Man Festival. They described the complicated method of producing the large sculpture (a welded steel frame covered by hand carved polystyrene with over 160,000 pennies inserted into the surface). After the meeting, the pair took interested participants outside to further explain the artwork and how it was installed.

The large crowd appreciated learning about the art around us. We are fortunate to have so many pieces around our city available for viewing and enjoyment.



Lisa and Robert Ferguson with "Curious" outside the Google Gradient building



Cliff Bryant, artist and Visual Arts Committee member, relays the benefits of public art.

The Innovators & patent holders of MV

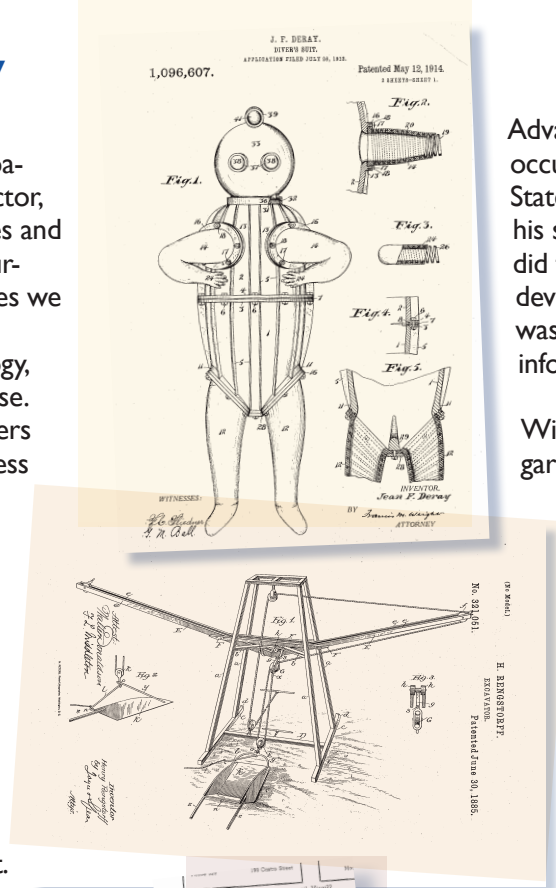
When we think of “innovation” in Mountain View, we often think of companies like Shockley, Fairchild Semiconductor, Intel and others, who created processes and products that launched, enhanced or furthered the various technology industries we know today.

But prior to the change to technology, this area was an agricultural powerhouse. Many early innovators and patent holders created processes and devices to address the needs of agriculture. Some of them were well-known residents, while for others, few records remain of their accomplishments. For example, only the record of the patent approval may be the most we know about their efforts.

In 1885 Henry Rengstorff, prosperous business and property owner, patented an excavator device that made digging ditches much easier. Much of Mountain View at the time of his invention was planted in hay and wheat. His device enabled a farmer to create irrigation ditches.

According to the patent application description “My invention is designed and used for hoisting and removing the earth from the bed of dry creeks. It is applicable to the work of forming ditches and drains or excavating of any sort.”

It’s no surprise that some of the patents holders and innovators worked in or owned machine shops. Jean F. Deray, a machinist by trade who lived on Latham Street, patented a diving suit in 1914.



Advancement in diving technology was occurring in Europe and the United States during the early 1900s. Although his suit looks rather cumbersome, he did form a company to manufacture the device. It’s not known how much success was achieved, as we can’t find any information about the company.

A prolific local inventor was William E. Formway, who owned a garage and machine shop. His primary and most successful invention was a walnut huller, which he patented in 1939. His device made it easier to process walnuts by removing the outer covering of the walnut, a messy and laborious process when done by hand. He also invented a pecan cracker, a paper-box folder and several hoists for roofing work.

Other inventors that lived in Mountain View created a fire escape, a screen door latch, a barbecue rotisserie and a screw type can opener, all patented inventions. It’s been a fun search for participating board members to find patents granted to local residents.

At our February 2 event we will learn about the patent process, cover the stories of other local inventors, and learn about what can be viewed at the Computer History Museum. We hope to have a local company talk about their patent granted in 2024. Please register to attend.

— by Pamela Baird

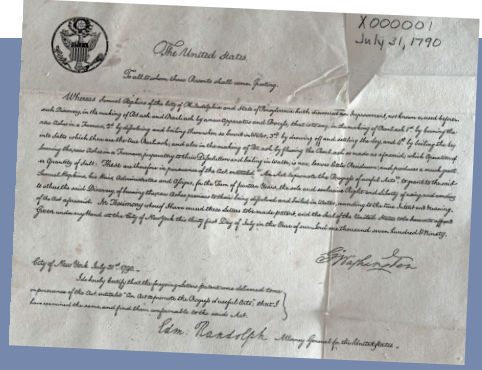
What is a patent?

by Sundai Lott, Attorney of Law

A patent is a right given to an inventor to protect their intellectual property. There are multiple types of intellectual property such as patents, trademarks, copyrights, and trade secrets. A United States patent gives the inventor the right to “exclude others from making, using, offering for sale, or selling” an invention or importing it into the United States.

This language is unique – a United States patent does not give the inventor an affirmative right to make, use, offer for sale, sell, or import the invention. Instead, it is a negative right which allows the inventor to stop others from doing so. If someone infringes your patent, you can initiate legal action. U.S. patent rights are territorial, meaning they are effective only within the U.S. and its territories and possessions.

There are three types of patents: utility, design, and plant patents. Utility patents are granted for inventing a new or improved and useful process, machine, article of manufacture, or composition of matter. Design patents are granted for inventing a new, original, and ornamental design for an article of manufacture.



Patent rights have their origin in the United States Constitution and George Washington was the first patent examiner. The first patent in the United States was granted to Samuel Hopkins on July 31, 1790 for a process to make potash, an important ingredient in fertilizer.

Continued on Page 9

When Electric Streetlights came to Mountain View

— by Pamela Baird

Imagine living in a small town with no streetlights, pitch black streets with perhaps the only light coming from a kerosene lamp shining in a window. A person would carry a portable kerosene lantern when walking around town after dark. This was small town life before the introduction of one of the greatest innovations developed by mankind—electricity.



Photo: Jeran Renz via Wikimedia
Arc lamps at the Maison de la Science, Liège, Belgium

Big cities like San Francisco, New York, Chicago and New Orleans began installing electric arc street lighting in the 1880s and 1890s. This replaced gas lighting, which was much less effective. According to the San Jose Mercury newspaper, electricity was first introduced in Mountain View on December 19, 1901. A few businesses along Castro Street gained electricity for lighting. The newspaper recounts that the two story Olympic Hall (today the site of the Olympus Café) and the Foresters’ Hall were connected to new lights that “were strong and gave satisfaction.” Most likely these were fixtures that used filament type light bulbs. A short time later, a total of five new electric arc lamp street lighting fixtures (or electroliers as they were called) were hung across the center of street crossings on Castro Street. The arc lamp technology provided one of the first commercial uses for electricity. Though the lamps flickered and hissed, they produced a harsh and brilliant light that was most suitable for public areas. After improvements were made in arc lamp technology, in 1906 the city replaced at least two electroliers with ones that performed better.

1915 marked another great advancement in street lighting in Mountain View. A new electric lighting system was initiated on July 31 of that year. According to the Mountain View Register-Leader newspaper the “new lights are far superior to the old arcs and there are a great many more of them.” Not only was Castro Street illuminated, but also California and Villa streets. Residents were “delighted by their steady brilliance.” The town made further investments in public lighting in 1922 with fifteen more incandescent streetlights installed in residential



▲ The ‘streetlight’ suspended over Castro Street is called an electrolier, and again, looking down Castro with the electrolier as the lone source of light, 1910 ▼



areas. An article in the Register-Leader boasted “Mountain View will have a wonderfully well lighted residence district, perhaps better than that of any other town in the county.” To meet the added expense of the lighting, the city raised property taxes by a small amount. Most residents felt that the small levy was justified.

Additional lighting and new pole mounted streetlamps were introduced in the late 1920s and 1930s. But none were as exciting for the residents as those early installations, which really changed people’s ability to travel around after the sun went down.

Research: Pamela Baird & James Thajudeen, Librarian

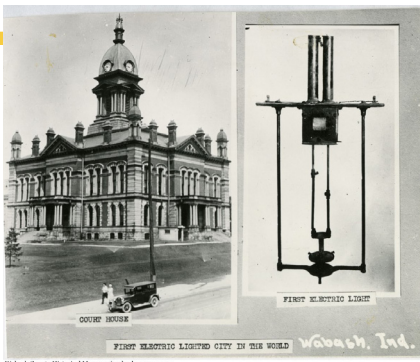


Image Courtesy: Shane L. Waters, Black Label Podcasting
Wabash County Historical Museum / wabashhistorical.org

“The first electrically lighted city in the world”

On March 31, 1880, officials of Wabash, Indiana began experimenting with Charles F. Brush’s carbon-arc lights. Four 3,000 candlepower lamps were placed atop the Wabash County Courthouse and used to illuminate the town until September, 1888.

What is a patent?

Continued from Page 7

Plant patents are granted for inventing or discovering and asexually reproducing any distinct and new variety of plant. The type of patent determines how long the patent right lasts. Utility and plant patents have a term for up to 20 years from the date the patent was filed while design patents are granted for a term of 15 years from the date the patent is granted.

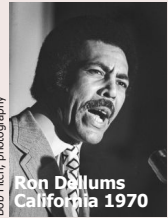
Unlike other types of intellectual property, where rights attach upon creation and/or use, patent rights only occur after an inventor

has filed a patent and the patent has been granted by the United States Patent and Trademark Office. For a patent to be issued, the invention must meet four requirements:

(1) it must be able to be used (the invention must work and cannot be just a theory), (2) the inventor must provide a clear description of how to make and use the invention, (3) the invention must be new or novel (something that has not been done before), and (4) the invention must not be obvious.

Mountain View Oral History Project

by Robert Cox



Bob Frich, photography

Last year, Andrei Genzel, a local Mountain View high school student, came across an oral history of Oakland mayor Ron Dellums. Andrei was fascinated by how raw and unfiltered the report was. It inspired him to collect info for an oral history of Mountain View in honor of the 170th anniversary of the naming of Mountain View.

Andrei's goal was to interview a diverse group of people representative of our community, each of whom had lived at least twenty years in Mountain View. The interviewees would share their perspectives on how Mountain View had evolved during their time here. Each interview would take about 90 minutes and would be recorded either at Andrei's home or the home of the interviewee.

Andrei is a native of Mountain View. When he started his oral history project, he thought, "Surely there can't be too much going on here!" But once he started the interviews, he discovered a real

Mountain View community, where residents found various ways to get involved. He noted that while the city's infrastructure grew one building at a time, it was much easier for people to look back and evaluate what had happened in retrospect, than it was to see what Mountain View would become. He also saw that those interviewed had differing perspectives on what changes were good and bad. For example, some embraced the vibrancy and density, while others bemoaned the crowding and traffic congestion.

At first, Andrei's interview questions were spontaneous and off-the-cuff. But over time, he developed a formal list of questions, reasoning that this would make it easier for people listening to the interviews to compare and contrast the interviewee's experiences.

Andrei concluded the interview process at the end of 2024. He will make the recorded interviews available to the Mountain View Historical Association. He plans to enroll as a college history major in the fall.

We thank Andrei for his efforts to record Mountain View's history and wish him luck in his future endeavors!

Join us! MEMBERSHIP FORM

The MVHA welcomes new members! You can also join/renew online at www.mountainviewhistorical.org.

The MVHA is a tax-exempt organization under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3), Tax ID 94-6115407.

Membership is tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

New Membership

Name(s) _____

Membership Renewal

City _____

Household Annual Membership
\$30/year

State _____ Zip Code _____

Individual Lifetime Membership
\$300

Phone _____

Email _____

I'm interested in volunteer opportunities

I'd like a **Full-Color** print-edition subscription of the newsletter.
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Please make checks payable to:
Mountain View Historical Association

Mail this form to:
Mountain View Historical Association
c/o Lisa Garcia
P.O. Box 252, Mountain View, CA 94042

Thank you!



January 26

Downtown Walking tour 2 pm
 Centennial Plaza
 Register Online:
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/january-26-walking-tour-of-historic-downtown-mountain-view-registration-1122677551779>

February 2

MVHA History Event 2 pm
 INNOVATORS
 Historic Adobe Building
 Register Online:
<http://mvhistory.eventbrite.com>

March 3 & May 5

MVHA Board meeting
 Virtual 6–8pm

March 13

Library Lecture 6:30-8:00
 Library Community Room

March 23

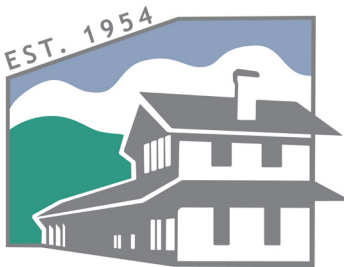
Downtown Walking tour
 2 pm at Centennial Plaza

May 4

MVHA History Event 2 pm
 Historic Adobe Building

LOOKING BACK: IMAGES FROM THE ARCHIVES

An innovation used by the Mountain View Police Department in the late 1980s and early 1990s was “Officer PAL”, shown here with its handler Officer Bill Crawford. Built by a company in Georgia, the duties of “officer PAL” were public affairs and safety presentations. According to an old MVPD newsletter, Officer PAL liked to show off its “electronic skills”, which included full color video and movie capacity, 8 track stereo and even sirens. The electronic device stood at 5'11" tall and weighed 190 pounds. Officer Crawford enjoyed taking Officer PAL to schools and community events. Doug Johnson of the MVPD provided information about Officer PAL. The photo is currently on display in the History Center at the MV Public Library.



MOUNTAIN
REVIEW
 MOUNTAIN VIEW
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