

# Kentfield Greenbrae Historical Society Historian

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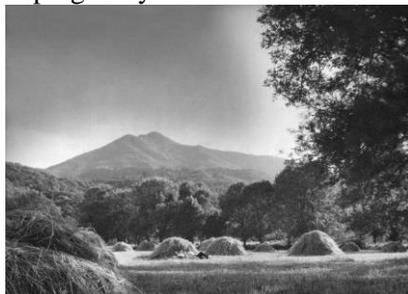
## President's Message

One minute, Mount Tamalpais is covered in clouds and heavy mist; the next time I look up from my work, there is brilliant sunshine and an even more spectacular rainbow!

It's a reminder that our impressions of Mount Tam can change in a moment and that there are many faces to our Sleeping Lady.



Mt. Tamalpais from Greenbrae 1940's  
(Courtesy of Bob Hough)



Kentfield  
(Anne T. Kent California Room MCFL)

On March 19, the KGHS is highlighting artistic interpretations of the mountain since 1850 at a Community Event, *Mount Tam through the Eyes of Artists*. Roy Farrington Jones will present images of artists' rendering of our southern Marin landmark.

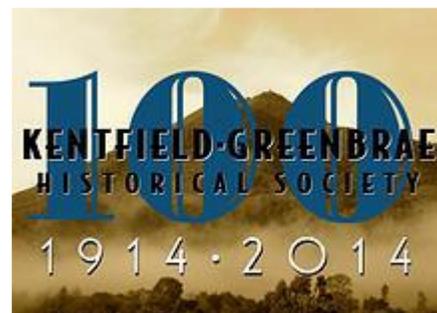
Plans are coming together for a KGHS-sponsored May 2 Community Picnic at Kent Middle School. There was such a sense of reconnected community at last year's Centennial that we wanted to give Kentfield and Greenbrae natives and current residents the chance to strengthen old ties and solidify new-found friendships! The scope of this year's event will be smaller, but we're hoping that the spirit and sense of community will be just as strong. Watch our Facebook page and local media for details.

I hope you can join us as we explore both yesterdays and tomorrows,  
Susan Morrow  
KGHS President, 2014-2015

## Roy Farrington Jones

Humanities Advisor Roy Farrington Jones is a collector and art historian who, with his late wife Nan, as a labor of love, privately collected over 20,000 slides of historic California and western genre paintings, pertinent to the study of California nineteenth-century artists. Roy Farrington Jones spent two decades photographing early Western paintings at dealers, auctions, and in private collections. He carefully indexed and organized the resulting slides. He and his wife donated the Nan & Roy Farrington Jones Collection to the Jones Archive of Early California and Western Art, at the California State Museum Resource Center in Sacramento. The collection also includes manuscripts and publications. Mr. Jones is a Marin County native whose ancestors were pioneers in the county.

-[Marinmindscapes.com](http://Marinmindscapes.com)



**KGHS Special Event:  
Thursday, March 19, 6pm**

## Painters of Mt. Tamalpais

Please join the members of the Kentfield-Greenbrae Historical Society for this special event narrated by Roy Farrington Jones and Richard Torney. This slide presentation is just part of an historical collection chronicling artists who were captured by the majestic beauty of Mt. Tamapais and West Coast Scenes.

**When: Thursday, March 19 at 6 pm**

**Where: The Community Room at  
Jason's  
300 Drake's Landing  
Greenbrae**



Richard de Treville *Mt. Tamalpais*  
(RFJ Collection)



Joseph Lee *A Town in Marin County,*  
(Kentfield) circa 1870 (RFJ Collection)

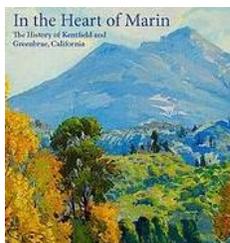
## Majestic Mount Tamalpais

Mt. Tamalpais dominates Marin County, the highest peak in the Marin hills reaching an elevation of 2,574 feet. The lower slopes were once inhabited by the Miwok Indians, from which she gets her name, *támal pájis*, literally "west hill." One Anglo-based myth claims that the name is the Coast Miwok word for "sleeping maiden" but there is no evidence of this. The cities, towns and communities grew up at its feet. Ross Landing, later to be known as Kentfield, was one of those places.

Deep in the Kent family lore is the story of their matriarch's first view of what would become their longtime home. As the story goes, Mrs. Albert E. Kent took a buggy ride from her rented home in San Rafael over the south ridge and, as the Ross Valley vista unfolded below with Mt. Tamalpais as a backdrop, she proclaimed what she saw to be a "vision of paradise" or some such words of delight.

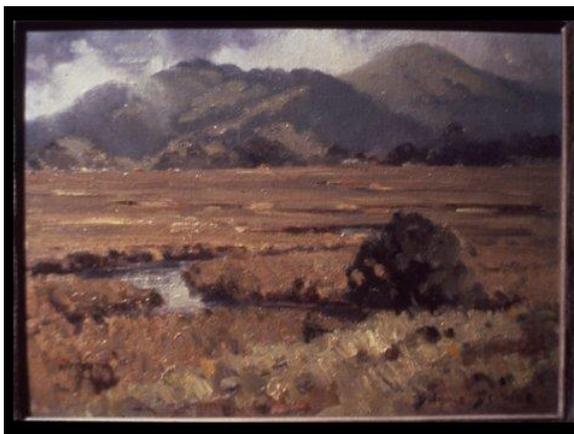
What Adaline Kent saw that spring day in 1872 was a bowl-shaped valley, often shaded by the distinctive and pleasantly shaped east peak of Mt. Tamalpais.

-*In the Heart of Marin: A History of Kentfield and Greenbrae*  
by Dewey Livingston



Mount Tamalpais has been a very popular subject in California landscape painting. One internationally prominent artist, George Demont Otis, settled in Kentfield. His painting of "Tamalpais- Kent Estate" graces the cover of our book *In the Heart of Marin* and is currently displayed in the Kentfield Fire Department.

Roy Farrington Jones and his late wife Nan have documented many of these painters who have made Tamalpais the subject of one or more paintings. This slide collection is housed at the Crocker Museum in Sacramento and will be shared with members and friends of the Kentfield-Greenbrae Historical Society on March 19.



Belmore Brown *Mt. Tamalpais from Bon Air Hill* (RFJ Collection)

## KGHS Memberships and Renewals

Thank you to all members who have renewed their membership! Many of you who joined in time for our Centennial last May will be getting a renewal notice in the coming months. We hope that you will remember the Kentfield-Greenbrae Historical Society by renewing your membership at a level that is comfortable for you. Even though the last few years were focused on the book publication and Centennial, we still have a lot of plans for the future and need your continued support. We are currently developing curriculum for the K-4 students, planning an annual May Day on May 2, organizing programs such as the Mt. Tamalpais Painters presentation and creating activities, lectures and walks in the community. Please pass this newsletter on to your friends and encourage them to join the KGHS. Your support will allow us to continue to enrich the lives of students and the community. This all can be done on our website [www.kghs.org](http://www.kghs.org).

## SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, May 2 for a May Day Community Picnic!

The Centennial Celebrations seem so far away now, but there is still a great deal of enthusiasm to make it an annual event, on a much smaller scale. And that is just what we are planning!

**Please save Saturday May 2** for a community picnic with Maypole dancing, games, music and reunions. If you are interested in volunteering for a May Day 2015 Planning Committee, please contact [marileerogers@hotmail.com](mailto:marileerogers@hotmail.com)



## Hiking out of Kentfield ... Dewey Livingston

Mt. Tamalpais has attracted hikers since the days it was first seen by visitors and settlers. From its three peaks could be seen a panorama of Northern California and the San Francisco Bay Area, including practically all of Marin County. Explorers, mapmakers, landowners and speculators, loggers and miners would make practical use of the mountain, but its fame came from hikers: the scenic mountain with its fine trees, hidden grassy glades, singing creeks and stunning views proved to be irresistible. By the time Marin County became easily accessible by ferry and train in 1875, city people began to travel north for a day or weekend of "tramping" the mountain.

Few trails greeted the arriving hiker at first. Old trails to the coast led over the mountain on its south side, and loggers had opened up trails and roads on the north side into the Lagunitas country. The only previously existing trail in the Kentfield area documented at this time was the "wood road" through the Ross/Walker/Kent property that that allowed access from Ross Landing to the redwoods and hardwoods in Bill Williams Gulch, immediately west of the Kent estate. Albert Kent opened the first hiking trail to lead out of Ross Landing, from its terminus at the aptly named Tamalpais depot on the North Pacific Coast Railroad.

The exact location of Kent's trail is not known, but it can be safely assumed that it passed the Kent house and traversed the estate to its boundary on Windy Ridge above Phoenix Lake. It's likely that the old "wood road" served the purpose, with the trail then following the ridgeline to the summit of East Peak...

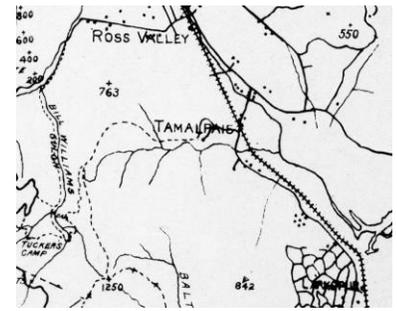
The first hiking map of Mt. Tamalpais was published in 1898. Based on the recently released U. S. Geological Survey map of the Tamalpais quadrangle, A. H. Sanborn's "Tourists' Map of Mt. Tamalpais and Vicinity" depicted (but did not name) the old "wood road" seen in earlier maps as an established hiking trail leading from near the Kent house. Reaching Windy Ridge overlooking Bill Williams Gulch, the trail continued up the ridge-the old wagon road branch down into the gulch was also marked-and to a connection with the upper part of Eldridge Grade. This route remains a popular route today, at least from the end of Crown Road as the Indian Fire Trail.

It may well have been the publication of Sanborn's map that led to the closure of the Kent property and the name change of the depot from Tamalpais to Kent and finally Kentfield. Within five years of its publication, the depot name was changed, but not until the 1930s was the route eliminated from popular maps...

Today, hundreds of hikers, bicyclists and dog walkers use the six or so trails out of Kent Woodlands. Many are Kentfield residents, enjoying their back yard wilderness. These trails are not well publicized, but still parking can be at a premium at the trailheads.

-An excerpt from Dewey Livingston's:

*In the Heart of Marin: A History of Kentfield and Greenbrae*  
pages 234-235.



First commercial hiking map of Mt. Tamalpais published in 1898 showed trail through Kent Estate.

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