



UTILITAS • FIRMITAS • VENUSTAS

Northern California Chapter
Society of Architectural Historians

The Newsletter

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Back by Popular Demand: Tour the San Francisco Peninsula Train Stations with NCCSAH on Saturday October 22

Join us on Saturday, October 22, for a tour of historic railroad stations on the San Francisco Peninsula, via Caltrain, that the NCCSAH first offered more than six years ago. The price of the tour includes a box lunch on the train.

At each stop, the different historical societies associated with the station will conduct a tour. Our day will begin promptly at 9:45 AM, at the Millbrae station, adjacent to the joint Caltrain/BART station. Then we will board the train bound for Burlingame, whose station is considered to be one of the first Mission Revival Style buildings in California. Today it houses an exhibit on the history of Burlingame/Hillsborough. Our next stop will be the Palo Alto station, an unusual Streamline Moderne Style design, followed by the Santa Clara station, built in 1863, and the oldest station extant in the state. It houses the Edwin Peterman Railroad Museum.



Interior Palo Alto Station. Mural by artist John McQuarrie

The tour will conclude with San Jose's Cahill (Diridon) Station, a magnificent Spanish Colonial Revival Style building, and one of only four major historic urban train stations surviving in California. Rod Diridon will lead the tour of the San Jose station. Mr. Diridon, considered the father of modern transit service in Silicon Valley, has been the director of the Mineta Transportation Institute at San Jose State University since 1991. He is past chairman of the California High Speed Rail Authority.

Turn to page 2 for a brief historical profile of the Peninsula route and depots.

Riding the Rails: Historic Peninsula Line and its Depots

The current Caltrain line, the second railroad constructed in California, was built during the Civil War years of 1861-1864, as the San Francisco and San Jose Railroad. The county governments of San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara financed the railroad, with assistance from Santa Clara College (later University) and local industry, with the intention of promoting agricultural and residential development and enhancing land value along the San Francisco Peninsula. The original plans called for construction of depots in San Francisco and San Jose, two "way depots" and eight "way stations." Regular train service began in early 1864.

The existence of this railroad line rapidly became the main factor in the development of the San Francisco peninsula. Both businesses and residences gravitated to areas around the new stations, and new, small town "crossroad communities" were born. The original railroad line continued from San Bruno to Daly City and Colma, then through San Francisco's Mission District. The Central Pacific (predecessor of the Southern Pacific) Railroad purchased the San Francisco to San Jose route in the late 1860s.

Southern Pacific double-tracked the peninsula route in 1904 and three years later opened the Bayshore Cutoff, reducing running time on the line. Diesel engines replaced the last steam locomotives in the late 1950s. Claiming steadily declining revenues, the SP petitioned state and federal agencies to abandon the peninsula service in 1977. After an intense struggle to preserve the commuter service, Caltrans entered into contract with the railroad to operate the line supported by subsidies from the state and the counties of San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara. The Pen-

insula Corridor Joint Powers Board, formed by the three counties in 1987, purchased the right-of-way from SP in 1991 and contracted with Amtrak to operate the service. Recently, the JPB signed a five-year contract with a new operator, the Missouri-based company, TransitAmerica, which is expected to assume operations early next year.



Millbrae Railroad Station Tour by Vern Bruce, Millbrae Historical Society. Photo courtesy of the society.

Constructed in 1907, the Colonial Revival Style Millbrae train depot replaced an earlier 1890 station. The San Francisco - San Jose Railroad purchased the land for the depot and right-of-way from Darius Ogden Mills, the namesake for Millbrae, in 1863. The original 1864 Millbrae depot, which burned in 1890, included the town's first post office. The present depot is a typical design the Southern Pacific Railroad used for small towns. In the late 1970s, to accommodate the widening of Millbrae Avenue, it was moved some 200 feet. The station entered the National Register in 1977. The station now houses the Millbrae Train Museum, which includes a 1941 Pullman car, *The Civic Center*, from the premium streamliner known as *The City of San Francisco*.



Burlingame Railroad Station Tour and presentation by Russ Cohen, Hillsborough-Burlingame Historical Society. Photo courtesy of the Society.

The Burlingame station originally served members of the Burlingame Country Club (now in Hillsborough) visiting from San Francisco. Architect George Howard, a founding member of the country club, designed it with Joachim Mathison. The Burlingame Railroad Depot is an early example of the Mission Revival, a signature style for turn of the century railroad depots. Mathison had designed a Mission Revival California Building at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago, but he lost the design competition in 1892 to A. Page Brown, his former employer. The

Burlingame Depot, one of the most significant architectural landmarks on the San Francisco Peninsula, is a variation on Mathison's earlier design and Brown's California Building. Howard and Mathison had a short-lived partnership with Bernard Maybeck (who had also worked for A. Page Brown), in 1892. Mathison died in 1896. George Howard designed several buildings in partnership with Maybeck and John White in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.



Palo Alto Railroad Station
Tour will be led by Steve Steiger, Historian, Palo Alto Historical Society

Architect J. H. Christie, chief of the Southern Pacific design office, designed the Palo Alto Station, built in 1940-1941. The third railroad station on this site, this depot is a rare California example of a Streamline Moderne station. Its lean and horizontal brick-and-stucco profile and extensive reeded-glass block are a treat, as is the Art Deco signage. Inside is a mural by John McQuarrie that depicts Leland Stanford's dream of a university, in addition to events in the development of California related to transportation.

Santa Clara Railroad Station Tour by the South Bay Historical Railroad Society. Photo courtesy of the society



The Santa Clara passenger depot, built by the San Francisco and San Jose Railroad Company in late 1863, was the oldest continuously operating railroad depot in California until the ticket office was closed in May 1997. The station was moved in 1877 from directly opposite its current location. It was one of two "way depots" built between San Francisco and San Jose. A decisive factor in having this "way depot" built just three miles from the terminus in San Jose was the political influence wielded by members of the Santa Clara College board of trustees who were stock holders of the railroad. The first regular through passenger

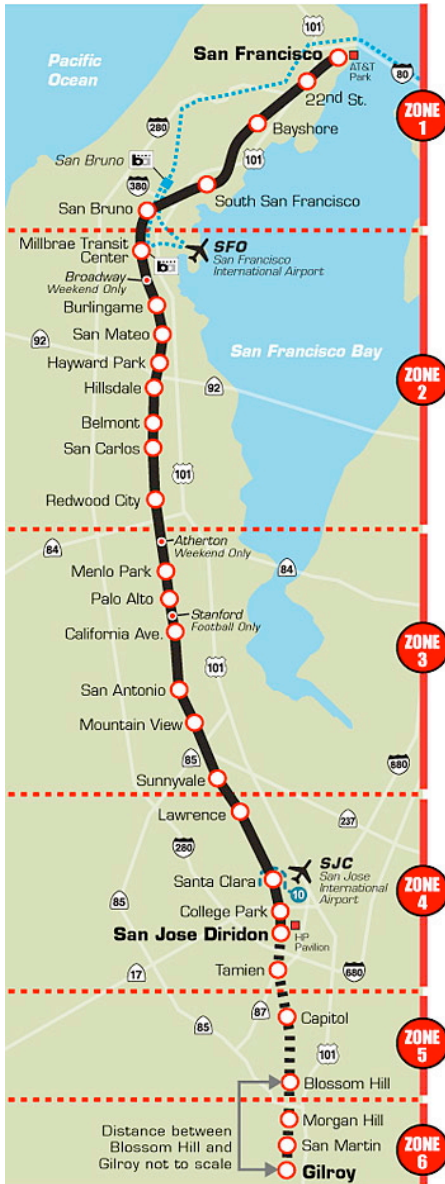
service to San Francisco started on January 17, 1864. In November 1985, the South Bay Historical Railroad Society (SBHRS) entered into a lease agreement with Caltrans to occupy the property and to renovate and preserve it in lieu of rent. Exterior renovation was completed in 1990. More information on the South Bay Historical Railroad Society can be found at <http://www.sbhhs.org>.



San Jose Cahill/Diridon Station Tour by Ron Diridon, Director, Mineta Transportation Institute, San Jose State University

The construction of the Southern Pacific depot in 1935 at 65 Cahill Street in San Jose was the culmination of a 30-year effort to relocate 4.5 miles of the coast line of the Southern Pacific Railroad away from the heavy traffic of the downtown area around the Market Street Depot--terminus of the Peninsula rail line since 1864--to the west side of the city, an industrial area in the nineteenth century and the location of the freight depot of the Western Pacific Railroad. The first major railroading change in San Jose in nearly three quarters of a century, relocating the SP depot involved the construction of a complex system of grade separations, heralded at the time as models of safe design, at a number of streets. A commemorative train left the old Market Street depot, traveling a loop through San Jose to the new Cahill Station on December 30, 1935. Regular passenger service (including regular service to Los Angeles) began on January 1, 1936.

The new \$100,000 building, part of a \$3,250,000 project, replaced the Market Street station built in 1872. Southern Pacific architect John H. Christie designed the depot on Cahill Street. He had worked on the remodeling of Southern Pacific's 1915 Fresno depot, and later, in 1939, he worked on the Los Angeles Union Passenger Ter-



minal. Builder of the San Jose station was C.N. Swenson Construction Company. Today the neighborhood is still semi-industrial, as it has been for nearly a hundred years. However, as a result of recent redevelopment, the San Jose Arena now sits across The Alameda from the depot.

Contemporary literature of the 1930s described the Southern Pacific depot in San Jose as Italian Renaissance Revival style, though in retrospect it can be interpreted as an eclectic design combining the historicist elements with contemporary Streamline Moderne features. The application of the cantilevered marquee, for

TOUR ITINERARY

9:45 AM Meet at the Millbrae Historic Railroad Station and Train Museum, California Drive and Murchison Avenue in Millbrae, California, for coffee, tea and treats. www.millbraehs.org/Millbrae_Train_Museum.html

Directions to the Millbrae Railroad Station:

BART to Millbrae Station. By car, take Highway 101 to the Millbrae Avenue exit. Continue west on Millbrae Avenue to El Camino Real (the Millbrae Caltrain/BART is under the overpass over the Caltrain tracks). At El Camino Real turn left, continue south to Murchison Avenue and turn left. Continue down Murchison Avenue one block to California Drive. Limited Caltrain parking (\$4 daily fee) is adjacent to the Historic Millbrae Railroad Station. The Millbrae BART station also has a large multi-level parking garage (\$2 daily fee).

10:39 AM Depart Millbrae for Burlingame Railroad Station

11:45 AM Depart Burlingame for Palo Alto Railroad Station

1:17 PM Depart Palo Alto for Santa Clara Railroad Station

2:43 PM Depart Santa Clara for San Jose Diridon Station

4:00 PM Depart San Jose for Millbrae

5:08 PM Arrive Millbrae Caltrain Station

The tour will end about 5 pm back at the Millbrae Station, and those who wish can walk two short blocks to the Hong King Flower Lounge Restaurant for a banquet dinner. The HKFL, at 51 Millbrae Ave, is well known for its fine Hong Kong style seafood. Please let us know if you would like to join us for dinner.

The tour is \$25 for NCCSAH members, \$35 for non-members, which includes lunch. Also include \$20 for your 2012 dues. Everyone will need to buy their own Caltrain Day Pass (at the station) because we will be getting on and off the train.

Advanced registration is necessary, and space is limited, so do not procrastinate. For more information contact Ward Hill at whill@pacbell.net

Please use form on page 5 to sign up for the tour and the form on the last page for membership dues.



San Jose Cahill/Diridon Station, Caltrain photo

example, injected a contemporary element, emphasizing the passage of crowds and suggesting the grand movie houses of the period. The depot included significant works of public art, including the waiting room mural, an interior detail suited to the historicist motifs of the building, but common to Moderne design as well. The artist was John MacQuarrie, who was responsible for murals in the SP depots in Palo Alto and Sacramento, and the statue commemorating the Donner Party in Truckee.

The Southern Pacific depot in San Jose is one of only four transportation facilities in California--and the only one on the Peninsula line--in the Italian Renaissance Revival style. By far the largest surviving depot on that line, the well-proportioned and gracefully detailed building was the last depot constructed in the grand-scale in northern California and serves to represent the architectural and corporate ambitions of its time. It is one of six large-scale, extant passenger terminals in California. The Los Angeles Union Passenger Terminal is the only other large depot built in the 1930's. The other large scale stations in the state, located in Stockton, Sacramento, Oakland, and San Diego all date from the 1910s and 1920s. San Jose's Cahill Station (now Diridon Station) continues to be the city's central passenger rail facility, served by Amtrak, Caltrain and the Valley Transportation Agency (VTA) light rail service.

Cahill Station and its related contributing features were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in March, 1993.

Other Events of Interest

California Design, 1930-1965:

"Living in a Modern Way" Resnick Pavilion, LACMA October 1, 2011-March 25, 2012

Billed as the first major study of California mid-century modern design, this exhibition will feature more than three hundred objects, including examples of furniture, ceramics, metalwork, fashion and textiles, and industrial and graphic design that illustrate the state's role in shaping the material culture of the entire country. For more information:

www.lacma.org/art/ExhibCalDesign.aspx

S.F. Heritage Lectures

October 13 Chris VerPlanck
40 Years of Heritage

November 17 Alan Hess
San Francisco Modernism

For more information:

http://www.sfheritage.org/upcoming_events/lecture-series/

Registration for Caltrain Stations Tour

[please print]

Name _____

Affiliation _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email address _____

Registration: \$25 members/ \$35 nonmembers

Total Enclosed _____

Please make checks payable to NCCSAH and mail to:

Ward Hill
NCCSAH CaltrainTour
3124 Octavia Street, #102
San Francisco, CA 94123

For more information please contact Ward Hill at whill@pacbell.net.

Please note that price of the tour does not include train fare. You must buy a day pass at the station.



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The mission of the NCCSAH is to further the objectives of the Society of Architectural Historians of which the Northern California Chapter is an official affiliate; promote the study and discussion of our region's architectural history and its related fields; visit significant works of architecture; and increase public awareness and appreciation of our architectural heritage. Membership is open to anyone interested in architectural history and its related fields who agrees to pay the annual dues and subscribe to the by-laws of the organization.

NCCCSAH Officers

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Remember you do not have to be a member of the National SAH to become a member of NCCSAH

Join or Renew Now!!

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Please send your ideas or comments concerning The Newsletter to:

Don Andreini
NCCSAH Newsletter Editor
dandreini@sbcglobal.net

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or to renew your dues return this form
and your dues check for \$20 made out to NCCSAH
to

Ian Berke, NCCSAH
Ian Berke Real Estate
2824 Clay Street
San Francisco, CA 94115

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