



# The Cupola

The Newsletter  
of the  
Pardee Home Museum

Fall / Winter 2011

Oakland City Landmark  
1975

National Register of Historical Places  
1976

Alameda County Historical Society Landmark  
1985

California Historic Landmark  
1998

## 112 Years of the Pardee Women

By Ron Bachman

In October we celebrated the 100th year anniversary (October 11, 1911) of the passage of women's right to vote in the State of California. It was not until enough states approved that women were given the right to vote nationally by the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment of the US Constitution on August 18, 1920. At our recent celebration (see Parlor & Politics Event article) we recounted the accomplishments of three generations of the Pardee Women who lived in the Pardee Home from 1869 to 1981.

**Mary Elizabeth Pardee** (1830-1870) was the wife of Dr. Enoch Pardee who built the Oakland Pardee Home. Although not formally educated, she was a student of American history and Shakespeare and well versed in politics. According to a son of John Brown (noted abolitionist), his father admired Mary who supported the antislavery movement ("underground railway")

**Helen Newhall Penniman** (1857-1947) was the wife of Dr. George Pardee. Like George, she received her high school education from Oakland High School then went on to the California Normal School (a teacher's college later to become San Jose State). There is currently a Helen Newhall Pardee Endowed Scholarship at San Jose State for undergraduates with a preference in pursuing a career in education. With her husband, she established the Regent and Enoch Pardee Trust Fund at the University of California at Berkeley (UCB) which was one of the earliest endowments at UCB. The fund has grown to the point that it has endowed Chairs in Computer Sciences, Economics, and Arts. As with her husband we are not

sure how she felt about the Suffrage Movement, but she was a member of the Adrian Ebell Society (formally the International Academy for the Advancement of Women).

Helen and George had four daughters: Florence, Madeline, Carol, and Helen.

**Florence Mary Pardee** (1888-1910) was a senior at UCB when she was killed in an auto accident in Marin County.

**Madeline Anna Pardee** (1889-1980) began her education at Mills College, but did not graduate. She was a member of an organization that supported the World War II effort by sewing for the Red Cross (Reserve Officers Association). She and her sister Helen were donors to the Morrison Library (UCB) Graphic Arts Loan Program that provided (on loan) for students and faculty fine art from both renowned and emerging artists.

**Carol Marietta Pardee** (1891-1920) attended the California College of Arts and Crafts in the East Bay. Unfortunately she died during the world flu epidemic (1918-1920) in 1920.

**Helen Penniman Pardee** (1895-1981) attended Mills' College but transferred and graduated from UCB in Botany. For a brief period of time she was a public school teacher in Oakland. She supported the ERA Movement and the Save the Bay Movement. As a volunteer during WWII she observed for enemy aircraft from the Cupola of the Pardee Home.

Yes, the Pardee Women were actively involved in charitable and educational endeavors and were ahead of other women in their time.



## Parlors & Politics Event

In conjunction with the commemoration of the October 11, 1911 California passing of the suffrage vote, three historic homes in Oakland jointly opened their doors for tours and a progressive tea on October 1.

The Camron-Stanford, Cohen-Bray and Pardee Home Museum cooperated in presenting this event. Guests were given mini-tours at each home focusing on the roles of women who had lived in the home. A delectable tea was also served at each house.

At the Pardee Home Museum docents Ron Bachman and Ron Nielson gave the tours. The tea committee headed by Dawn Muller and Molly Kenny presented delicious and beautiful tea items to guests served from the carriage house. The new tables and chairs, donated by Paul Silberstein, were decorated and set up in the garden to make an inviting atmosphere for everyone. Adding to the festivities were the guests who came in early 1900's attire.

This event was followed by the Centennial Suffrage Parade in Oakland on October 2 celebrating California women gaining the right to vote.



**Mary Dial behind our Tea Table at the Parlors & Politics Event**

### Meet The Tea Ladies: Dawn Muller and Molly Kenney

For the past two years, Dawn Muller and Molly Kenney, co-chairs of the Tea Committee, have ably steered a small group of dedicated volunteers through planning, preparing and serving guests at tea in the dining room of the Pardee Home. Comments range from “better than the Ritz-Carlton” to “the best tea I’ve ever attended”.

**Dawn Muller’s** association with Pardee actually dates back much farther than two years. After retiring from the Department of Social Services in 1992, she began searching for meaningful volunteer opportunities. Her first foray into volunteerism was as head of the Share Food Program at the Oakland Senior Center, followed by participation in the Oakland Walking Tours. The Oakland Museum was her next calling: making cookies for the restaurant and preparing desserts for a monthly Senior Tea as well as volunteering in the restaurant. Eventually she became involved in the White Elephant Sale and continues working in the electrical department. She also was involved with a group that did lunches once or twice a year to raise money. Somewhere along the path of volunteering, she met David Nicolai, former Director at the Pardee Home, and became involved with food preparation for the 4th of July and Halloween events. Her enthusiasm is contagious as she tackles new recipes and perfects old ones. She is well known for her lemon tarts, a sweet that is served at every tea.



Dawn was born in Queens, NY, and attended Hunter College in Manhattan where she studied sociology while simultaneously working for the New York state YMCA and Camp Dudley Boys Camp. On a whim, she traveled to California with a friend, who then returned, but Dawn stayed. She first worked as Secretary to the President of the Cliff House and Playland, but then took a position with the Department of Social Services, interrupting her career to obtain a MS at the University of Washington. Returning to Oakland upon completion of her degree, she again worked for the Department of Social Services in child welfare until her retirement. Besides her volunteer activities, she enjoys baseball and is an avid A’s fan, and attends performances at Berkeley Rep and the Zellerbach Dance Series.

**Molly Kenney** is the oldest of five children born into a military family. Her father was a Marine stationed in San Diego when he met her mother. The family moved often, living in China in Molly’s earliest years. She attended high school in Virginia and New Orleans, then majored in Psychology / Sociology at LSU, now the University of New Orleans, eventually obtaining a Masters Degree in Physiological Psychology. Upon completion of her degree, she states she was “seriously broke” and returned to her parents’ Seattle home. She did animal research at the University of Washington for two years. A career change took her back to Louisiana for a 4 month stint in the Primate Center, which then moved to Davis, CA where she continued to work for ten years.



She met her husband, Richard in Louisiana, and after graduate school he secured employment in Oakland where they settled. They have two grown children, Phoebe and Michael.

Her interest in cooking stems from her Mother’s influence. As the wife of a military man, she did lots of entertaining and was “a really good cook”. Her involvement with food took a step up when she began cooking for her children’s activities, preparing dinners for the high school football team and volunteering whenever food was involved. Molly loves to bake and is known for her baby cakes which she often serves at tea, particularly if it is for someone’s birthday. Her laboratory experience has led to much experimenting in the kitchen, the results of which are delicious. She doesn’t spend all her time in the kitchen, however. In addition to her culinary talents, she plays Canasta with a group of friends, Bingo with a neighborhood group that has been going for about 40 years, and bowls weekly with St. Theresa’s Associated Bowling League. She also volunteers at Children’s Hospital, enjoys travel, and for a period spanning ten years created collectible art dolls with a friend.

The Pardee Home is fortunate to have these two culinary artists at the helm. Other valued members of the tea committee are Elizabeth Arezone, Ann Brown, Mary Dial, Patti Garrett, Ruth Gorevin, Diane Levy, Bunnie Quint, and Helen Steers.

### GHOST INVESTIGATIONS CONTINUE AT PARDEE

Pardee’s first ghost investigation last spring sparked additional interest. Two private investigations and an additional evening this fall found guests quietly looking and listening for ghostly energy within Pardee’s walls. As with the first evening, participants were oriented to the house and given some instruction on use of various types of ghost-hunting equipment. Refreshments were served half way through the evening.

If you missed these events - stay tuned, we will have more!



## The Pardee Home's elegant dining room is available for "Tea Time"



Please call 510-444-2187 to reserve a "Tea Time" spot in our elegant dining room at the Pardee Home Museum for a private tour followed by our special Tea (available for 4 to 12 persons).

Tour with light tea is \$15.00 per person and tour with high tea is \$25.00.

These special teas may be scheduled any day.



"All nine of us (retired Oakland teachers) agreed that high tea at the Pardee House outshines the Palace Hotel & the Ritz Carlton. The fact that all the recipes are made at home made the savories & tartlets all the more delicious. Bunnie, Molly, Elizabeth & Dawn were so charming & attentive."

- Jane Sandstrom



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