MENLO PARK HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
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THE GATE POST

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ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Summer is almost here and you know what that means…..

The Clarence Kavanaugh Ice Cream Social

Our informal social is a wonderful event for members and friends to meet, relaxed, and share favorite stories about Menlo Park. That is how history comes alive. On that note, preparations are underway for the annual Ice Cream Social. So, mark your calendars for Sunday, June 26 at 2:00 p.m. to meet under the beautiful oak trees near the Library. Yearly the Kavanaugh family from young to old graciously hosts the Social with an array of ice cream and toppings to delight everyone.

What makes this day so special is that the atmosphere is relaxed and comfortable lending for a day of reminiscing. And what a great way to kick off the summer!!

Remember, the date is June 26, 2011, at 2:00 p.m; invite your friends, and let's have a good turnout. Will see you under the oak trees.

It is always good to look back at a period of time when life was just a bit different than today whether it was in our lovely City of Menlo Park, or just a time long forgotten. This is one of those wonderful memories…

A BIT OF AMERICANA

By Lydia Dioli Cooper

DROVE TOO LONG
DRIVER SNOOZING
WHAT HAPPENED NEXTIS NOT
AMUSING.

Highways today have billboards shouting at you for one thing or another---buy this electronic gadget, visit this or that casino, eat at this or that restaurant, or how about "Got Milk."

Then there is the new "billboard" of the 21st century, big digital screen trying to capture your attention while driving 75 miles an hour. Ah, we think we have come so far.

But in the 1920's, rural America had something more interesting to draw your attention… those funny, little red and white signs many thought of as "the verse by the side of the road."[1]

Having heard of a brushless shaving cream (Lloyd's Euxesis) used in England, Clinton Odell, owner of the Burma-Vita company, along with Carl Noren, a chemist, came up with a product closely resembling Lloyd's Euxesis and named it Burma-Shave. It was not easy to market this new product since "shavers" at that time used a jar, soap, and a brush. Clinton Odell's son Allan came up with an idea that would eventually hook the driver and passenger's attention until the last line—The Burma-Shave sign. There were usually five or six small, wooden roadside signs, spaced at equal intervals with the last sign reading Burma Shave.

YOUR SHAVING BRUSH
HAS HAD ITS DAY
SO WHY NOT
SHAVE THE MODERN WAY
Burma-Shave

Sales soared, and why not. They were humorous and folksy offering safety tips to good old-fashioned down home wisdom. It had become one of the most memorable advertising campaigns. At one point there were over 7,000 of these signs found all over America many of which in the Midwest. By the 1960's, this wonderful bit of Americana was lost as highways became superhighways. But let's "drive" down memory lane now and try to imagine what it would have been like on a Sunday afternoon as father took the family on a drive.

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[1] Rowsome, Jr, Frank, The Verse By the Side of the Road

THE ANSWER TO
A MAIDEN'S
PRAYER
IS NOT A CHIN
OF STUBBY HAIR
Burma-Shave

BENEATH THIS STONE
LIES ELMER GUSH
TICKLED TO DEATH
BY HIS
SHAVING BRUSH
Burma-Shave

HE HAD THE RING
HE HAD THE FLAT
BUT SHE FELT HIS CHIN
AND THAT
WAS THAT
Burma-Shave

DON'T TAKE
A CURVE
AT 60 PER
WE HATE TO LOSE
A CUSTOMER
Burma-Shave

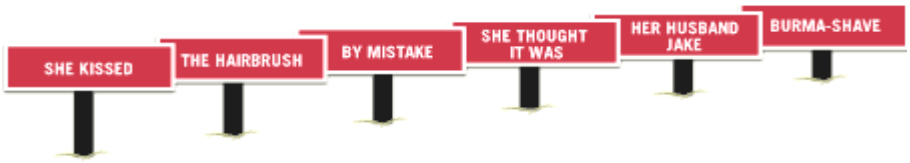
DON'T STICK
YOUR ELBOW
OUT SO FAR
IT MIGHT GO HOME
IN ANOTHER CAR
Burma-Shave

WITHIN THIS VALE
OF TOIL
AND SIN
YOUR HEAD GROWS BALD
BUT NOT YOUR CHIN
Burma-Shave

A set of signs was donated to the Smithsonian Institution to preserve this part of Americana. One of which reads,

SHAVING BRUSHES
YOU'LL SOON SEE 'EM
ON A SHELF
IN SOME MUSEUM
Burma-Shave

If you are interested in learning more about this wonderful tradition, there is a book written by Frank Rowsome, Jr. entitled *The Verse By the Side of the Road*.



She Kissed
The Hairbrush
By Mistake
She Thought It Was
Her Husband Jake
Burma-Shave

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ICE CREAM SOCIAL, JUNE 26, 2011 2:00 p.m.

4TH OF JULY CELEBRATION, BURGESS PARK

TO CONTACT THE MPHA

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