Eleanor Christenson de Guigné
A notable woman of special elegance

By Michael Svanevik & Shirley Burgett

In a town like Hillsborough that is noted for its elegant grande dames, it is hard to choose the grandest. And woe be it to the person who would try. On the shortlist, if not at the top but surely close to it, would have been Eleanor Christenson de Guigné.

More than a trendsetter, she was a lady of taste and charm while being a powerful figure in local culture. Madame de Guigné dominated social and intellectual circles of the Bay Area.

In 1982, Town & Country Magazine named her as one of the most powerful women in the world. Writers often mentioned Madame de Guigné along with fashion icons Christian Dior, Yves Saint Laurent, Madame Alix Grès, Coco Chanel, Hubert de Givenchy, Cristobal Balenciaga and Pierre Balmain.

Madame de Guigné made regular buying trips to the salons of Paris. Fashion arbiters Edward Lambert included her on his list of the world’s 10 best-dressed women. She is “stunning and perfect,” declared the most critical and often cynical society writers.

The museum director declared that clothing was given to The Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, an institution that recognized high fashion as a genuine art form. The museum director declared that her gowns and accouterments epitomized Madame de Guigné’s perfect mold to her patrician figure.

The Hillsborough Newsletter is published on a regular basis by the Town of Hillsborough to keep residents informed of local and Town news. Contact us at 650-574-6371.
Police Blotter

During the last quarter, investigators of the Hillsborough Police Department (HPD) attempted to locate two 18-year-old males who left home with no explanation and traveled north rather than finish the school year. Parents of one juvenile were contacted who said that their son may have been influenced by Jon Krakauer’s book, “Into the Wild,” about a young man who runs away to live in a bus in Alaska. Police were able to track the two boys via credit card spending. Parents were put in touch with their children who refused to come home until they had completed their travel.

Investigators also became involved with a possible IRS tax fraud case in which a victim received a tax bill for unreported wages totaling $116,355 on their 2006 tax return. The victim’s social security number had been fraudulently used to obtain employment in various places between New York and California. Suspect gave fictitious addresses and never filed a tax return on the wages. A suspect was identified and is scheduled to be interviewed in a home burglary case involving a resident who witnessed two men in her house. The suspect allegedly broke into the home earlier which resulted in a home safe being stolen. The suspect left the home with the safe and was arrested when he threw a rock through a window to attract police attention.

A report of a vehicle in a ravine over the side of the roadway at Crystal Springs and Cardona Trail. A Wells Fargo employee drove to a ravine to help a man who was lost. The man was not injured and refused help.

Reporting a credit card fraud where a resident on Via Playas reported losing a credit card to a father who was working in the United States. The card was tracked to a Ralphs store in San Jose where the man purchased a computer. The man was able to purchase the computer and was arrested.

A report of a two-year-old sleeping in a car seat. A resident contacted HPD to report a two-year-old sleeping in a car seat. The resident was able to get the child out of the car seat and the child was unharmed.

A report of a door where a door was kicked in and a woman was pulled off of the bed and her jewelry was taken. The suspect was identified and is scheduled to be interviewed.

A report of an elderly person in Jaguar driving through stop sign, burning rubber and speeding up West Santa Inez. Contact made with driver at her home who said she did so and did not burn rubber but that car has loud exhaust.

Dispatch received call with hysterical unintelligible screaming into phone. Proved to be two friends having verbal argument over use of phone.

Man on Darrell said just broke up with girlfriend and that girlfriend does not have permission to be on property and has no key and no personal belongings at the residence and does not live there.

Redington resident reports two large German Shepherds off-leash on front yard. Owner picked up dogs before police arrived. But resident wants police to contact owner and will call Peninsula Humane Society.

Subjects threw rocks through windows of home on Mountainwood. Man reports cab came to his home for pickup but he never requested cab. Had previous incident and had phone number disconnected. Disconnected number traced by police to PacBell building in San Francisco where juvenile said she did not make prank calls but maybe friends did. Asked not to repeat.

Call to report verbal argument between parents, but hangs up. On call back, says does not want to make report. Proved verbal argument over possible infidelity.

Police stop car with seven occupants. Driver has provisional restrictions on license. Alcohol and eggs found in car. Parents of all occupants contacted.

Gardeners using leaf blowers on Saturday. Job shut down.

Report of a vehicle in a ravine over the side of the roadway at Crystal Springs and Tartan Trail. Owner of the vehicle was able to get the vehicle out of the ravine and was not injured.

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Several reports of male subject seen sitting. Asked not to repeat.

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Business License

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In response to a rise in the number of elderly related crimes and incidents, the Hillsborough Police Department (HPD) is launching a new program called H.E.R.O., standing for Hillsborough Elderly Resident Outreach. The kick-off event will be a community meeting held at a yet-to-be-announced date in October.

A story on page 2 of the 2nd Quarter issue of the Hillsborough newsletter details the problems that police and families have encountered regarding the elderly. The purpose of the program is to give elderly residents and concerned family members a single point of contact at the HPD to discuss challenges that may be impacting their quality of life, including law enforcement, social services, or other involvement.

“We are putting together some meaningful delivery to both the residents themselves as well as the family who is supporting the resident,” said Sergeant Nelson Corteway, program coordinator.

The Citizens Advisory Communications Committee works hard to distribute information throughout the Town inquest. Yet all too often, residents state, “I never knew that,” or “I never heard about that.” Residents need to sign up for systems in order to remain informed. Take note!

SMCAlert – SMCAlert is an internet-based, wireless text notification service that will contact you, via cell phone, pager or email, to warn you of any emergency that affects the health, safety, or well-being of you or other family members. Only important messages, tailored to you and your area, will be sent. For instance, the system can alert you to crime in your area, an impending storm, or road blocks and traffic closures in your designated area(s) of interest. It will not forward any unimportant information – it is designed only to keep you informed. Depending on your preferences, average notification is three or four brief messages per month. This San Mateo County Community Alert program is funded by Homeland Security. To sign up, #92 residents of Hillsborough handset registered. Register today by going to www.SMCAlert.info.

E-Notify – Be informed. Find out what City Council and the Architecture Design Review Board (ADR) are talking about. Sign up with E-Notify on the Town’s website, www.hillsborough.net. You can request that City Council Agenda items be sent to you, or ADR agendas, or the minutes of meetings that cover the outcomes of discussions and public hearings. You can request exactly what you want and eliminate what you don’t want.

Sign up today! Resident feedback on these programs has been highly positive.

Vote – Tuesday, November 4, 2008

The upcoming election is a national election, don’t forget that there just may be a local election, too. Three seats on the Hillsborough City Council are up for E-Notify on the website, or via the mail. If you have any questions or concerns, you may contact Sergeant Corteway at 650-375-7552, or email ncorteway@hillsborough.net.

I NEVER HEARD ABOUT THAT!

“Buy a shredder,” Corteway insisted, “but only the confetti type, because strips can be put back together. You would only put the confetti in a bag, tie it up so it doesn’t blow away, and label it ‘paper’. Consider logging on to optoutprescreen.com, a website that allows you to opt out of about 80 percent of the credit card and insurance company applications that arrive in the mail. Optoutprescreen.com is the official site run by the credit consumer reporting industry. You can register online for a five-year opt-out, or you can download a form that allows you to opt out permanently.” Corteway also reminds residents not to put outgoing mail in their official postal service mailbox.

Taking cans and bottles from recycling bins has been going on for a long time, but has increased over time as the prices of glass and aluminum have increased. But taking paperwork is a fairly recent phenomenon in Hillsborough – the theft of tossed paperwork for illicit purposes. Therefore, it has become increasingly important to shred any papers containing personal information, according to the Hillsborough Police Department. “It makes sense. If I were a bad guy, I’d do it,” said Sgt. Nelson Corteway who explained that personal information on tossed bills, financial statements and even letters can easily be used for identity theft. “Information on bank statements, bills, credit card applications, and even sometimes as innocent as a high school reunion notice can provide a thief with names, addresses, phone numbers, account numbers, the name of your high school and graduation date,” Corteway said. Thieves use the information to build a profile which, when complete enough, can be used to steal an identity. Corteway said he arrested a man who would steal mail, keep a notebook with a full page for each address in an area and add information as he gathered it to each page to develop a complete picture of a person.
GREETINGS FROM THE ADOPTED 101st
Soldiers from Hillsborough’s adopted 101st Airborne Division, H&H Company, 1st Brigade Combat Team (Air Assault), also known as “The Warriors,” stand in front of the Planning Department at Town Hall. hillsborough.net, two weeks before the available on the Town’s website, www.hillsborough.net.

The Draft Housing Element will be to develop ways for the Town to meet the available for organized sports and when the weather was conducive to fast growth. Heavy usage of the playing field contributed to the need for closure and maintenance.

PARDON THE MESS
The Town would like to thank the residents of Hillsborough for their patience with the inconvenience generated recently by three large projects.

During a recent month, the Hillsborough School District started their large Measure B school construction project that is adding new structures to each of the four campuses. While Assistant Superintendent Larry Raffo said the bulk of the disruptive work took place over the summer, the project is anticipated to last 12 to 18 months.

The Hillsborough Police Department worked – and continues to work – with the different entities to maintain smooth traffic flow and minimize obstructions for residents.

TOWN BRIEFS
During the past quarter, City Council:

• Authorized the city manager to execute a contract to produce required documents needed to combine four existing lots into two parcels on Ralston Avenue where a property owner plans to tear down three homes and build a 13,403-square-foot home, a 4,422-square-foot guest house, a detached guest house, and a 1,996-square-foot tennis court pavilion and several ancillary buildings on 12 acres.
• Adopted a resolution appropriating $35,595 for the emergency repair of the drainage system on Arden Road. The entire system was compromised due to an underground utility repair was underway and an inlet structure collapsed into a trench and had to be replaced immediately.
• Approved a 3 percent increase in sewer service charges for 2008-09, beginning July 1, 2008. The rate will go from $1,517 to $1,563.
• Endorsed Measure Q on the June 3, 2008 ballot that would have raised the sales tax by 1/8th of a cent to support the parks and recreation activities of San Mateo County. The measure failed to pass by a three-thirds majority vote.
• Authorized the replacement of two Kawasaki police motorcycles with two 2009 Harley Davidson Road King motorcycles, fully outfitted, for $34,454. Authorized funding for the community center, the Skyline, Hayne and Black Mountain roads from San Mateo County. The annexation will give the Town jurisdiction over the intersections of Skyline Boulevard and Hayne Road. The Town and the Hillsborough Beautification Foundation have developed landscape plans and potential improvements for the intersection to improve aesthetics and traffic flow. The tax generates annual revenues of $2.2 million.
• Authorized contracts to California Trenchless, Inc. and Insutof orm Technologies, Inc. for the sanitary sewer rehabilitation project phase IV, for $281,856 and $658,688 respectively. The first company will install approximately 485 linear feet of new 10-inch sanitary sewer pipe along Hayne Road. The second company will rehabilitate approximately 7,380 linear feet of damaged sewer pipes found by the Town’s maintenance staff during the last cleaning and inspection.

• Authorized a new position of $14,890 plus a 10 percent contingency to replace worn chairs in Council Chambers.

• Captain Jack Lindecker received the Presidents Council of Lions Service Award this year for his work in organizing the Central County Fire Department’s Special Operations Urban Search and Rescue Unit. With 30 years of fire service experience in the community, Captain Lindecker continues to share his passion for the fire service with the Department’s youngest personnel. The nomination, appropriately, came from fellow firefighters. Congratulations to Captain Lindecker on his recognition.

• Finance Director Edna Masbad and her staff received two Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting Award from the Government Finance Officers Association – for the sixth time!
• Police Officer Steven Tharp was recognized Outstanding Fingerprint Evidence Collection Work by the San Mateo County Crime Lab. In 2006, Tharp was the evidence technician for a vehicle burglary, where he lifted and carefully catalogued fingerprints. As a result of his detailed work, the prints were matched to a man wanted for a breaking and entering in San Ramon. He was applauded for his “professional forensic skills.”

• Hillsborough students recently made a large donation of money and supplies to the Adopt-a-Troop unit. The student council of Crocker Middle School raised money and presented a check to the Town for $6,500. Young resident John Wick raised $1,800 and collected needed items for the soldiers from friends, family and members of his church as his Eagle Scout project. “Thanks to everyone for their outpouring of support for our 101st Airborne troopers. It really means the world to them,” said Captain Nick Gottuso.

• City Council presented a Certificate of Appreciation to Bruce Herman for his work on the Architecture Design Review Board.

• The Town of Hillsborough would like to thank the Hillsborough Beautification Foundation for generously funding the Town’s annual rodeo tree, which will be planted at the newly renovated El Arroyo Tank Site.

LANDSCAPE GETS GEARED DOWN ON IRRIGATION CONSERVATION
In a continuing effort to foster efficient watering practices in Hillsborough, the Town hosted a free irrigation conservation program on June 6, one of the earliest dates for landscape design and maintenance professionals and interested residents. Chris Willig, a state master landscape designer, led the workshop. More than 25 professionals and residents attended.

Willig taught attendees how to save their clients money on their water bills while keeping their landscape beautiful, how to sign up to receive a free landscape water use report each billing period to monitor progress, and how to get further information from existing and future Town programs and from various websites, such as the Irrigation Association, www.irrigation.org, or the Town’s website, www.hillsborough.net or www.hillsborough.net/ sustainable/hillsborough.asp. Willig also answered questions about irrigation system technology, best management practices and client relations concerning water conservation.

Fire blower
During a recent month, Central County Fire Department responded to 370 calls for service. Of these, 215 were EMS/rescue calls (58 percent of all calls). Of the remaining 155 calls, 13 were fire calls; 46 were for hazard conditions, such as wires or trees down or unidentified spills; 39 were calls for service, such as a faulty smoke detector, an unknown odor, or a leaking roof; 22 were “good intent” calls for things such as a report of smoke that turned out to be steam or a barbecue; and there were 35 false alarms.

PUBLIC MEETING – AFFORDABLE HOUSING
Do you want to have input on the Town’s plans for affordable housing? There will be a community-wide meeting on Thursday, October 16, 2008 at 6 p.m. at Town Hall to discuss the city’s Draft 2009 Housing Element. Call Town Hall, 650.375.7411, to confirm the meeting date.

The Steering Committee has been working during the past several months to develop ways to help the Town to meet the state-mandated goal of 84 affordable housing units while preserving the character of the community. The committee was charged with evaluating options that range from creating more second unit homes in Hillsborough and permitting housing on school or country club property to working with the countywide subregion created to help Peninsula cities meet housing needs.

The Draft Housing Element will be available on the Town’s website, www.hillsborough.net, two weeks before the meeting, and hard copies will be available at the Planning Department at Town Hall.

BURLINGAME FIREWORKS LEAD TO ENHANCED COMMUNICATION
On June 6 at approximately 10:10 p.m., all four 911 lines and six business lines in the Hillsborough Police Department (HPD) dispatch center lit up simultaneously with calls from understandably concerned and frightened residents who were hearing multiple loud explosions emanating from the area of San Francisco Airport. Patrol officers quickly determined that the explosions were the finale of a fireworks display for Burlingame’s 100-year anniversary celebration being held at the Hyatt hotel. However, getting the word out to residents at this stage of the situation was near impossible. For the next 90 minutes, more than 300 calls were received. An unknown number of callers were unable to get through to speak to anyone due to the extra burden on the telephone wires.

Officer Ken Bell, the Burlingame City Manager Jim Nantell issued an email apology for the lack of notification and explained that his city personnel did not realize the sound was coming from the Hyatt hotel.

The HPD has selected an information delivery system that combines a database with Geo-graphic Information System/GIS mapping technologies that officers feel will achieve the goal of fast, efficient and inexpensive notification for the entire Town. As of press time, RapidNotify is scheduled to go live sometime in August 2008. It will give the HPD the ability to disperse information, via the regular telephone system, to a single resident or many residents.

PARDON THE MESS
The Town would like to thank the residents of Hillsborough for their patience with the inconvenience generated recently by three large projects.

This summer, Vista Park playing field was fenced off to allow Town crews to aerate, fill and level divots and holes, re-seed and fertilize. The six-week period was the only window of opportunity to repair the field when it was not scheduled for organized sports and when the weather was conducive to fast growth. Heavy usage of the playing field contributed to the need for closure and maintenance.

Additionally, the Hillsborough School District had the Mess completed their new 10-inch sanitary sewer pipe along Hayne Road. The second company will rehabilitate approximately 7,380 linear feet of damaged sewer pipes found by the Town’s maintenance staff during the last cleaning and inspection.

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More than a trendsetter, she was a lady of taste and charm while being a powerful figure in local culture. Madame de Guigné dominated social and intellectual circles of the Bay Area.

In 1982, Town & Country Magazine listed her as one of the most powerful women in the world. Writers often mentioned Madame de Guigné along with fashion icons Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy and the Duchess of Windsor.

Society editors effervesced about her stunning gowns, noting that each was perfectly molded to her patrician figure. Her wardrobe always incorporated an array of Parisian haute couture, including gowns by Christian Dior, Yves Saint Laurent, Madame Alice Grès, Chanel, Hubert de Givenchy, Cristobal Balenciaga and Pierre Balmain.

Madame de Guigné made regular buying trips to the salons of Paris. Fashion arbiter Edward Lambert included her on his list of the world’s 10 best-dressed women. She is “stunning and perfect,” declared the most critical and often cynical society writers. The lady’s arrival at social and charity events was always much anticipated. She owned a vast collection of shoes, handcrafted especially for her to match each frock and gown. Exquisite jewelry was chosen to augment a particular costume and never failed to achieve a delightful effect.

To no other woman was Tiffany’s hand- somer young San Francisco manager more solicitous. He did all but somersaults catering to her whims and desires. Every wish was considered a command. So close did the pair become that, upon her passing, Madame de Guigné left him a bequest of $200,000.

Eleanor Christenson’s road to happily ever after began on the lawns of her mother’s Hillsborough residence on Summit Drive in July 1935 when she was wed to Christian de Guigné III. The bridegroom was the grandson of a French count who had married the eldest daughter of millionaire Gold Rush banker John Parrott.

Claiming to shun publicity, the couple withdrew to the isolated elegance of Guigné-cour, their regal hillock Mediterranean-style villa constructed by the bridegroom’s father in 1913. The grand residence was set amid 47 rustic acres south of Crystal Springs Road.

Upon Eleanor de Guigné’s death in 1983, her fabulous collection of designer clothing was given to the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, an institution that recognized high fashion as a genuine art form. The museum director declared that her gowns and accessories epitomized the woman of elegance during the generation from the end of World War II until the 1980s.