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## **Presentations on American History**

The following presentations have been developed and are being presented by Ray Cosyn. Ray holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Engineering from the University of Illinois and a Master of Arts in American History from San Jose State University. He can be reached at 408-741-1868 or [ray.cosyn@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ray.cosyn@sbcglobal.net)

### **Peninsular Interurban**

Take a trip back in time to understand what it was like to live without a car and get around on a fast, clean conveyance which transported a South Bay person from one town to another easily and efficiently. That time was the 1920s when electric interurbans ruled intercity transportation. The South Bay had its Peninsular Interurban (PI) fleet of electric railroad cars that interconnected the major cities of the South Bay. Ray Cosyn will take you back to that time not so long ago. You can experience what it was like to commute at that time on the big red cars that composed the fleet of the PI.

### **Lincoln Funeral Train**

In April of 1865 a two major events occurred in the United States which continue to resonate with us today. One was the ending of the Civil War, the other the assassination of our then president Abraham Lincoln. Within one week of Lee's surrender to Grant, our 16th president was gunned down in Washington, setting off an event that reached millions of Americans in that time of great stress. That event was the Lincoln Funeral Train. The train was intended to allow Lincoln's casket to be seen by as many as possible in the time available. The train followed a route that brought it to the major population centers of the East. It allowed thousands of townspeople, who waited through the night in the rain, to catch a glance of the moving funeral train. Ray Cosyn, a local historian will give us insight into the event and the impact that it had on the populace.

### **Prohibition**

There is only one amendment that has ever been repealed, and that was the Eighteenth Amendment which spawned the Volstead Act and brought the country thirteen years of prohibition. The 1920s became a period of hypocrisy and bedlam thanks to the passage of the Volstead Act. How did prohibition come about and how did it end? Who were the key figures of the time and what were their roles in stemming the manufacture, sale, and distribution of intoxicating beverages? How did the California wineries survive and why was the act repealed? All these and more questions will be answered in this fascinating presentation.

### **Flying Tigers**

In the early days of what was to become WWII in the Pacific, a small group of Americans began training for what was going to become one of the most heroic efforts of the war. The Chinese had been invaded and needed an air force to protect their supply lines and allow them to survive the unceasing onslaught of the Empire of Japan. This presentation covers the formation of the American Volunteer Group, the perils of Flying the Hump, and the Doolittle Raid on Tokyo. This was the American Air War in China that lasted for the time it took to defeat the Japanese. The foundations of the Sino-Japanese War will be presented along with the strategy that was put in place to allow the Chinese Nationalist Government to survive the war.

### **Saratoga a Lumber Town**

Today we view Saratoga as a well heeled suburb on the edge of Silicon Valley. Few know that at one time it was a lumber town with all that a town of its type had to offer. Big Basin Way was Lumber Street and it was lined with saloons

and hotels that catered to the needs of the lumbermen who frequented the town on the weekend. Eventually the townspeople had enough and transformed the town into the home of a dozen churches which set a tone that further transformed the town into a modern day suburb. Historian Ray Cosyn covers the transformation by showing then and now pictures portraying how the town has changed over the past hundred years.