

# San Leandro Structures/Entities Named After Notable People

## **LAND SITES**

### **Tony Lema Golf Course**

Anthony David Lema was born February 25, 1934 in Oakland, California and moved with his family to San Francisco when he was 3 years old. At the age of 12, he worked at Lake Chabot's public golf course as a caddie. Lema turned pro golfer in 1957 when he was 34 years old. He was known as "Champagne Tony" for his habit of uncorking a bottle of champagne after every win. Mr. Lema was also famous for his "fluid swing" and in his short career won ten titles in his nine years on the PGA tour. Eleven times he finished second. He won the 1964 British Open by five strokes over Jack Nicklaus. In 1965, he was No. 2 behind winner on the money list with \$101,816 – a considerable sum of money for the sixties.

He was inducted into the Bay Area Sports and California halls of fame and in June of 1983, the 18-hole golf course was dedicated to Mr. Lema.

### **C. Burrell Field (SLUSD)**

Clarence Burrell was born in Santa Clara and began his collegiate career at San Jose State University, where he was captain of the basketball team. His professional career began in Los Gatos, where he was an elementary school teacher. He then served as a school principal, then later as elementary and high school superintendent at Arroyo Grande (southern California). In 1948, Burrell moved to San Mateo as assistant superintendent of the high school district. Two years later, he was appointed superintendent of San Mateo's high school district. In 1950, he was appointed superintendent of the Petaluma city schools.

In 1952, he was offered an important new assignment, and became the first superintendent of the newly unified San Leandro elementary, junior high and high school system. As far as can be determined, he held this position from 1952 to 1967.

Burrell, fondly known as "C.B.," also found time to become a director of the San Leandro Chamber of Commerce and the Broadmoor's Men's Club and has held offices in other local organizations and charitable campaigns. He was also an active member of the legislative committee for the California Association of School Administrators.

### **Luster Knight Memorial (At Marina Park)**

Luster Knight was loved by all and an inspiration to everyone who knew him. He was an Alameda County Firefighter and a well-known advocate who worked tirelessly and enthusiastically for the betterment of the San Leandro community.

As an African American child growing up in the South, Luster had personal experience of being prohibited from using a drinking fountain in a neighborhood park due to his skin color. That experience was the beginning of his belief that parks and their amenities should be available and accessible to all. This fire engine red drinking fountain represents Luster's passion for inclusivity, accessibility and being a Firefighter. Marina Park was his favorite park. It is hoped that this Memorial, and Luster Knight's years of service will be an inspiration for

others to work tirelessly and enthusiastically for the betterment of their community. The memorial made possible by: San Leandro City Council and the Recreation and Parks Commission; Alameda County Fire, Local 55; Davis Street Family Resource Center and Leadership San Leandro.

## **BODIES OF WATER**

### **Jack D. Maltester Channel (San Leandro Marina)**

In 1992, the channel leading into the San Leandro Marina was named the "Jack D. Maltester Channel". Mr. Maltester's bio is below.

## **STREETS, BRIDGES AND OVERPASSES**

### **Dan Niemi Way**

San Leandro Police Officer Nels "Dan" Niemi was a San Leandro Police officer who was shot and killed in an ambush attack. On July 25, 2005 while in the line of duty. The killer, 23-year Irving "Gotti" Ramirez, was apprehended was given the death penalty in 2007. Niemi was born in Guam in 1962 and grew up in the East Bay. He graduated from Sacramento State College with a degree in Arts and Communications. He joined the police force just 3 years before his death, and was survived by his wife and two children.

A portion of Hays Street running close to San Leandro Creek and Root Park was re-named Dan Niemi Way on July 25, 2015.

### **Jack D. Maltester – Mario Polvorosa Overpass**

Mario Polvorosa was known as a "San Leandro legend," Polvorosa was best known for his philanthropic promotions and getting difficult tasks completed on behalf of the San Leandro community. Mr. Polvorosa became politically active when he replaced Louis Borre on the city council on Nov. 1, 1965. He served on the council until he was elected Vice-Mayor on May 5, 1975.

Jack D. Maltester replaced Helen Lawrence as councilmember when she resigned in January 1948. He served a few short months before he began his own campaign for City Council in April 1948. He was elected to the City Council in 1956 and then became Mayor in 1958.

In 1962, Maltester became the first mayor elected directly by the residents of San Leandro rather than by the city councilmembers. He was subsequently re-elected in 1966, 1970 and 1974. Mr. Maltester was forced to leave office after serving twenty consecutive years due to the implementation of term limits for councilmembers. One of the more significant aspects during Maltester's service as Mayor included proposing a Committee on Human Rights and Responsibilities in 1963 in response to the Civil Rights Movement. The City Council rebuffed his initiative 3 times. On May 6 1967, he testified on housing discrimination at a hearing of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights when the 1970 U.S. Census showed San Leandro to be 99% white.

While he was Mayor, he served as President of the U.S. Conference of Mayors from 1969 to 1970 and introduced a resolution at the 1971 annual conference calling for the U.S. to withdraw from the Vietnam War.

In 1973, he ran for California State Assembly against San Leandro School Board Member Bill Lockyer but lost to Lockyer. Maltester remained active in San Leandro affairs, founding the Sentinels, a group of local businessmen that provided campaign contributions to local candidates and ballot measures. He also served as President of the San Leandro Chamber of Commerce and the President of the California League of Cities.

The naming of this overpass was made through a California Senate Concurrent Resolution which passed in 1978.

A plaque for the overpass was once mounted on the overpass that read "The construction of the railroad grade separation was made possible through the dedication and tireless efforts of Mayor Jack D. Maltester and Vice-Mayor Mario Polvorosa."

### **Bill Lockyer Bridge**

Bill Lockyer is a former state legislator who carried the 1987 bill to create the trail around the Bay shoreline. Bill Lockyer was born in Oakland on May 8, 1941. He received a B.A. in Political Science from UC Berkeley and a J.D. from the University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law and a teaching certificate from California State University Hayward.

His political career is outlined below:

- Treasurer, State of California, 2006-2015
- Attorney General, State of California, 1998-2006
- Senator, California State Senate, 1982-1998
- President Pro Tempore, California State Senate, 1994-1998
- Assembly Member, California State Assembly, 1973-1982
- Member, San Leandro School Board, 1968-1973

## **PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND ROOMS**

### **Surlene Grant (City Hall South Offices Community Room)**

Surlene Grant was appointed to a position on the San Leandro City Council to fill a vacancy in the District 2 seat in 1998. She was subsequently elected by the voters to serve two full 4-year terms in 2000 and 2004. In doing so, Ms. Grant became the first African-American and the first person of non-European descent to be appointed or elected to the City Council in San Leandro, after more than a century of governance as an incorporated city. A key component of Ms. Grant's tenure on the City Council was a determined effort to ensure that the City's leadership better reflect the growing diversity of the community's population. The success of these efforts is demonstrated by the increased diversity in recent years of both the City Council and staff. In 2012, the City

hired its first Latino City Manager and, more recently, the City for the first time had a City Council comprised of a majority of people of color.

Other significant accomplishments achieved during Ms. Grant's tenure on the City Council included passage of an inclusionary housing ordinance, a local purchasing policy, founding of the African American Business Council, and approval of the South Area Development Plan.

Subsequent to her service on the City Council, Ms. Grant has remained deeply involved in San Leandro in a volunteer capacity. Highlights of this work include serving as chairperson of a working group that produced the 2013 Local Inclusion Policy, actively participating in the Unity in the Community effort, assisting with the public outreach component of the City's most recent General Plan update, serving on the Board of Directors of the San Leandro Chamber of Commerce, serving as a community representative on various recruitment panels, serving on the City's Redevelopment Successor Agency Oversight Board and most recently bringing the Ohio State's University's *Divided Community Project* to San Leandro, a simulation exercise that prepares community leaders for managing situations of civil unrest.

On February 5, 2018, the City Council voted unanimously to name City Hall South Offices Community Room at 999 East 14<sup>th</sup> Street (the former California Conservatory Theater) after Surlene Grant.

### **Helen Lawrence South Office**

Helen Lawrence was born in Horta, Fayal in the Azores Island, Portugal. As an infant, she immigrated with her family to the city of Oakland in 1894. She graduated from Oakland's Fremont High School and later graduated from San Jose State Teacher's College. She later taught in San Leandro for six years before marrying Jorge Lawrence, Supreme Director of the Portuguese Fraternal Society, U.P.E.C.

During her years as a San Leandro resident, Mrs. Lawrence volunteered for several agencies. In 1935, when Councilmember George Weldon resigned, several councilmembers asked Lawrence to fill the vacancy and she accepted. On May 21, 1941, Mayor Mark DuTiel resigned. After his resignation Mrs. Lawrence's colleagues nominated her Mayor, the first woman in San Leandro's history to serve this position as well as the first person of Portuguese descent to serve as mayor in the United States. She served 3 years as Mayor. She was also voted President of the Council.

### **Dave Karp Senior Facility**

Dave S. Karp served as San Leandro's mayor for seven years. He served as a Councilmember for District 1 for four year and was elected mayor on April 8, 1986. He was born on April 5, 1935 and was a resident of San Leandro for many years. He was married to Marcia Karp, who served as a board member for the Friends of the San Leandro Library for many years until she died in 2012. He served on several city advisory commissions, including the Board of Zoning Adjustments and the Site Development Commission. He was Vice Chairman of both the Executive Committee and the Charter Revision Committee for San Leandro's Future. He also served on the Alameda County Parks and Recreation Commission and was a director of the San Leandro Chamber of Commerce.

He was very active in the U.S. Conference of Mayors, focusing on transportation issues. He also lobbied Washington, D.C. seeking federal support of local projects. In fact, he helped secure millions of dollars for projects ranging from sound walls on Interstate 880 to a BART parking garage in Dublin. His expertise in transportation earned him an appointment as one of eight mayors chosen for President Clinton's Transition Team Committee to work on problems of U.S. cities.

In July 1989, Mayor Karp signed a proclamation marking Dec. 4-10 Senior Citizens Week in San Leandro.

### **Estudillo Room (Main Library)**

José Joaquin Estudillo was the first Spanish settler to reside in San Leandro and thus considered the founder of San Leandro. He was born May 5, 1800 at the Presidio of Monterey. His father, Lt. José Maria Estudillo, had been stationed at Monterey in 1799. As a teenager, José Joaquin entered into military service at the Monterey Presidio. Estudillo applied for a grant to Governor Nicholas Guterrez for the old El Rodeo de Arroyo de San Leandro. Anticipating the receipt of this grant for his 17 years of military service, Estudillo moved his wife and family to the property and built an adobe home near the south bank of San Leandro Creek. It was near the present junction of Brookside and Donovan Drives. Estudillo filed another request for approximately 7,000 acres and included all the land between San Leandro Creek and San Lorenzo Creek from the hills to the Bay, except the lands occupied and cultivated by the Ohlones. He called it Rancho de Arroyo de San Leandro, popularly known as "Rancho San Leandro."

José Joaquin Estudillo built a "fine framework house" for his family at 1291 Carpentier Street (off W. Estudillo). It was a two-story house and included 14 bedrooms, a wine cellar and servants' quarters. It had a balcony on two sides. St. Leander's Church acquired the home in 1894. Recognizing the historic value of the home, Leslie J. Freeman, who was a member of San Leandro's Chamber of Commerce, sought to have it registered as a historical landmark. This was done on January 8, 1938 when the Estudillo home was designated as California Historical Landmark No. 279.

### **Mary Brown Room (Main Library)**

Mary Brown was the first librarian of San Leandro. The Library Board of Trustees appointed Miss Mary Brown as the first official librarian for the City of San Leandro on January 31, 1906. According to one source, her starting salary was \$12.50 per month. She completed one course of study for library science at UC Berkeley.

In May of 1909, the City's new Carnegie Library was dedicated and opened to the public. Miss Brown lived only a short distance from the library at 425 Estudillo Avenue. She was highly respected by the entire community and was known to be very well informed and knew her job well. She served as the city's librarian until she retired in November of 1938.

### **Fred T. Korematsu Campus (SLUSD)**

Fred Korematsu was awarded the Medal of Freedom for fighting against the injustice of Japanese-American internment during WW II. Refusing to comply with an order for all Japanese Americans to be interned, Mr. Korematsu was arrested and jailed in San Leandro

in 1942. He was then sent to the Topaz Internment Camp in Utah. He then spent 40 years appealing this violation of his constitutional rights.

On November 10, 1983, Judge Marilyn Hall Patel of U.S. District Court in San Francisco formally vacated the conviction. Korematsu testified before Judge Patel, "I would like to see the government admit that they were wrong and do something about it so this will never happen again to any American citizen of any race, creed, or color." He also said, "If anyone should do any pardoning, I should be the one pardoning the government for what they did to the Japanese-American people." Peter Irons described Korematsu's ending statement during the case as the most powerful statement he'd ever heard from anyone. He found the statement as empowering as Martin Luther King, Jr.'s famous "I Have a Dream" speech.<sup>[33]</sup> Judge Patel's ruling cleared Korematsu's name, but was incapable of overturning the Supreme Court's decision.

President Bill Clinton awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in the United States, to Korematsu in 1998, saying, "In the long history of our country's constant search for justice, some names of ordinary citizens stand for millions of souls: Plessy, Brown, Parks ... to that distinguished list, today we add the name of Fred Korematsu." That year, Korematsu served as the Grand Marshal of San Francisco's annual Cherry Blossom Festival parade.

Korematsu spoke out after September 11, 2001, on how the United States government should not let the same thing happen to people of Middle-Eastern descent as what happened to Japanese Americans. When prisoners were detained at Guantanamo Bay for too long a period, in Korematsu's opinion, he filed two *amicus curiae* briefs with the Supreme Court and warned them not to repeat the mistakes of the Japanese internment.