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## Blast from the Past: The Squire

By Cathy Tyson



The copy of The Squire featured in this issue was provided by Steven Thaw of Moraga

coffee for \$1.37), Petar's, El Charro, Blodgett's, McCaoulous and Orchard Nursery.

Alas no longer in business are some names familiar to long term residents - Tailoring by George, The Shoe Stable, Sports Unlimited Orinda, The Rheem Bowl and Piccadilly Circus.

"Most around Lafayette loved the Squire," said Lynn Hiden, "It was a wonderful help to Avon Wilson and me when we were doing the bike lane and the Lafayette Moraga Trail."

Despite attempts to locate him, Publisher John Mustard remains a mystery. Lafayette Historical Society documents noted he joined the Tri-Valley News, which later became the Tri-Valley Herald - now part of the Bay Area News group.

Former Sports Editor Clay Kallam worked at the paper during his summer break prior to graduation from UC Santa Barbara in 1970. He recognized the similarity, "There are echoes of The Squire in The Lamorinda Weekly."

"John Mustard had a unique editorial voice," said Kallam. "(Dean) Leshner could just come in and crush independents. Things haven't really changed all that much," Kallam added. Leshner owned the Contra Costa Times, his heirs sold it to Knight-Ridder in 1995.

At one point in his career, Kallam interviewed Mike Miller - a standout basketball player at Campolindo. Miller graduated and played college basketball at UC Berkeley. Miller eventually landed a job as the Girls Varsity Tennis Coach at Campo. Kallam ultimately took the position - where he remains to this day. In addition to his coaching duties, he does sports-related freelancing for ESPN.com, SI.com (Sports Illustrated) and Scout with FoxSports.com. He's also author of "Girls Basketball: Building a Winning Program."

Lamorinda residents who have more information on The Squire should contact Cathy Tyson for a potential follow up story: cathy@lamorindaweekly.com or (925) 286-9295.

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More than forty years ago, in 1968, coincidentally the year Lafayette incorporated, when Nixon was President, and when the Park Theater was still open - there was a man with a publishing vision who started a local newspaper in Lamorinda that was an alternative to the larger regional paper. Sounds similar to locally owned, independent Lamorinda Weekly.

Publisher of The Squire, John Mustard, provided a voice for our little tri-town hamlet from an office on Golden Gate Way. "At one time in the community we had an excellent newspaper called The Squire from 1968-1974," said Joan Merryman in a 1976 interview. "Unfortunately, it went belly up."

The free weekly newspaper, circulation about 20,000 included: local news, a community calendar, sports, occasional columnists, lots of local ads, and of course a crime log. By the looks of it, there were just as many crimes in Lamorinda then as there are now.

Like The Lamorinda Weekly, advertisements covered the cost of publication. Some long-term merchants that advertised then have stood the test of time - Campana music, Diablo Foods (selling orange juice .19/can of concentrate) the Cake Box, Safeway (2 pounds of