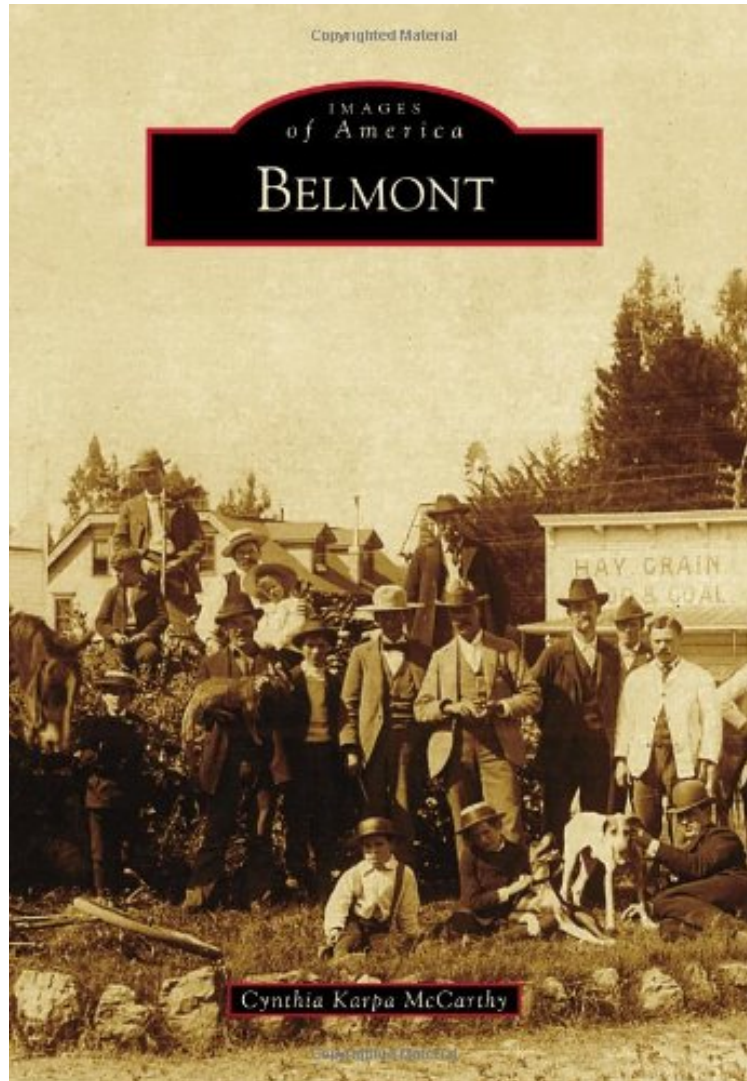


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Midway between San Francisco and San Jose, Belmont is where an Italian count reconstructed his villa transported from Italy, where a silver king created the White House of the West, and where the Warlocks, a fledgling 1960s rock band, honed the sound they would make famous under another name, the Grateful Dead. Spanish explorers called

Belmont's *vales la Caada del Diablo*, or the Devils Canyon, either after the locally famous winds or because the native Ohlone believed the canyon to be inhabited by spirits. Belmont's historic advantage of being on the bay side of the shortest route to the Pacific coast meant easier access to another type of spirits during Prohibition, fueling a minor red-light district across the tracks on Old County Road. A century or more ago, Belmont's wooded hills attracted sanitariums and prep schools. Today, its woods and trails draw residents from more developed neighboring towns.

About the Author A former newspaper reporter, Cynthia Karpa McCarthy is a librarian at the University of San Francisco. Married to a Belmonter who grew up in one of the town's historic houses, she teamed up with the Belmont Historical Society and several dedicated preservationists to corral images of their beloved Belmont in this book.