

Sheldon Breiner*

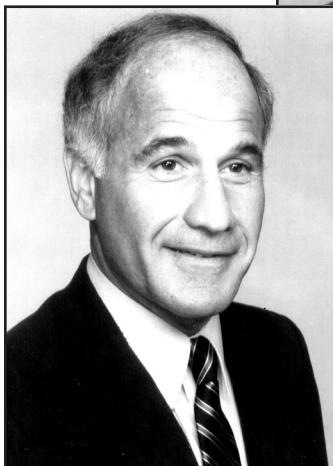
During his time at University City High School, Sheldon “Shelly” Breiner was an active member of the a capella choir and excelled as a varsity wrestler. The yearbook hailed him as “a natural leader who fearlessly embraced every endeavor.”

He attended Stanford University, earning bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees in earth sciences. There, he began work with magnetometers, instruments that detect hidden objects through magnetic waves.

Breiner's work in magnetometry included inventing magnetometer gradiometers. Initially designed for finding

minerals and hydrocarbons, his inventions were found effective on small magnetic objects. This led to the creation of security metal detectors worldwide. His magnetometers were placed in ski boots to aid avalanche recovery, used by the U.S. government to locate sunken submarines, predicted earthquakes through rock stress measurement and supported archaeological expeditions. Using this tech, ruins thought to be from Sybaris were discovered in southern Italy and Olmec artifacts (1200 BCE to 400 BCE) were discovered in southern Mexico. Breiner uncovered the buried axle of the “8th Wonder of the World” Ferris Wheel from the St. Louis 1893 and 1904 World's Fairs, concealed beneath Skinker and Forsyth Boulevards.

Breiner's commitment to innovation persisted throughout his life . He founded multiple tech companies, authored more than 30 technical papers and a key book on magnetic object detection. He also co-founded the Peninsula Open Space Trust, preserving more than 80,000 California acres for conservation.



**Sheldon
Breiner**

Class of 1955

*Posthumous