

The **ALAMEDA ARCHITECTURAL** Preservation Society

NOVEMBER, 2004

EDITOR: *Ruth Tillman*

“Color My World”

John Dilks, 19th Century Architecture and Furniture Specialist

Sunday, November 7, 2004 ~ 7:00 pm

First Presbyterian Church at the corner of Santa Clara Ave and Chestnut St.

Free for members or Alameda Legacy Home Tour voucher holders

\$5.00 for non-members

Don't miss this dynamic presentation on the art of finding original color and varnishes commonly used and applied during the 19th Century and how it's possible to recreate original paint and finishes today. This exciting presentation will feature:

Historic color analysis, focusing on the correct methods of sampling to locate a significant historic layer of paint, and how to respect its precious fabric—including practical encapsulation and reversible encapsulation techniques.

Paints-- the chemical content, the different types of binders and pigments commonly used and graining, japanning, ebonizing, gilding, bronzing, pin striping, stenciling, polychrome, marbleizing techniques commonly used.

- a) On-site serratation study and correct sampling tools*
- b) Solvent testing and chemical debonding*
- c) Laboratory analysis, standard and computerized matching systems*
- d) Chromo chronology charts*
- e) Modern materials that assist in recreating historical paint schemes*

Varnishing and the different types of varnishes that were commonly made, how they were used, applied and how these materials age.

ORIGINAL COLORS AND FINISHES CAN BE FOUND AND REPLICATED

ABOUT OUR PRESENTER: *John Dilks began his career at the age of 12, working for Mike Kane who was a sign maker and avid collector of Renaissance revival furniture. There he learned basic woodworking skills including both machine and hand tool use. He spent countless hours carving, sandblasting, oil gilding, and finishing red-wood signs for doctor's offices, restaurants and other commercial properties.*

His apprenticeship continued with Craig Janakos, the owner of Janakos and Co. Antiques, in Burlingame and at Heritage Repair, an “antique restoration” shop. This work, combined with studying “The Cabinet Makers Assistant”, published in 1861 (and hundreds of other used books collected and read) provided much detail on historic finish materials and applications

continued on page 2

John has studied organic chemistry to help identify chemicals and understand the workings of the many materials used in 19th Century paints, varnishes and related finishes. Post-college, John purchased Heritage Repair, and operated it until two years ago, when he joined the team at Antiques/Auctions by the Bay to run and operate their restoration shop in Alameda.

John has restored pieces originally belonging to John D. Rockefeller, A.T. Stewart, and the Vanderbilt family. John is currently working on the interior restoration of the Leland Stanford Mansion in Sacramento. There, his team is conserving the original finish on the architectural woodwork and conducting historic color analysis to locate the 1871 color scheme and re-create it in several rooms—which he'll feature in his presentation.

Preservation Action Committee

A Tale of Two Houses

*By Birgitt Evans
with assistance from Christopher Buckley
and Charles Millar*

What if a Piedmont resident came into Alameda, bought a 1923 cottage, submitted a misleading set of building plans, proceeded to demolish almost the entire structure in violation of the approved plans, got caught and then applied, after the fact, to Alameda's Historical Advisory Board (HAB) for a Certificate of Approval for Unauthorized Demolition? This is exactly what happened with 1104 Oak Street. The owner, Helena Liang, in complete disregard of her own approved building plans, tore down almost the entire cottage, while the plan approved by the City's Planning and Building Department called for raising it up and building another story beneath it.

Alameda has approximately 10,000 buildings constructed before 1942. Demolition of more than 30% of the value of one of these buildings, must be approved by the HAB.

Most of us who live in Alameda do so in part because we love the character and charm our historical homes bring to our community. But Alameda is situated in a very desirable location and housing here is expensive.

Many people, especially speculators, may find it more convenient to buy a small home here, enlarge it and either move in or sell it for a significant profit.

And, while Ms. Liang was chipping away at our supply

of historical housing, contractor David Lekashman was carrying out demolition on his home at 1025 Fair Oaks Avenue far in excess of that called for by his approved building plans because he discovered dry rot.

In both of these cases, there appears to have been both confusion with the City's design review process and a failure by Planning and Building staff to adequately review the plans that were submitted. In the case of Ms. Liang, there may have also been an intent by the project sponsor to deceive.

One source of confusion was in the requirement that demolition of more than 30% of the value of a pre-1942 building be approved by the HAB. As City Planner and HAB Secretary Judith Altschuler remarked at the September 9th HAB meeting, 30% of value can be difficult to define. Also unclear, in the case of Mr. Lekashman, was the requirement to stop demolition when it exceeded the scope approved in the building plans.



1104 Oak Street before (to the right)



1104 Oak Street after

With regard to 1104 Oak Street, the demolition box on the Design Review application form had not been checked and the Demolition Plan only shows the existing porch and stairs to be removed. In fact, the application form called for the original single story house to be raised and a new first floor to be built underneath. However, the plans themselves were vague and did not clearly show this. In addition, both the upper and lower floors were to be added onto in the back.

One of the first questions City staff should have asked when reviewing the plans was, "Can this be built?" A quick assessment yields the answer; no! The existing house measured 24'-6" across the back. The second story (obtained by raising the original house) is dimensioned at 27'-6". Additionally, according to the plans, approximately three feet is supposed to be added to the length of the building. A quick glance at the plans reveals the existing house to be approximately 48 feet in length. The plans show the new building to be 57'-6".

One reason these and other items may have gotten past the staff is that there were no dimensions on the Demolition Plan drawing submitted by Ms. Liang, despite the fact that all plans are required to be fully dimensioned.

When Charles Millar asked about this in a meeting on October 28th, both Dave Valeska, Planner III and Jerry Cormack, Development Review Manager, responded that Staff should have reviewed the plans a little more closely.

The Planning Department has hired Alameda historian Woody Minor to prepare a Historic Building Report to evaluate the historical architectural significance of 1104 Oak Street and see if it should be added to the Historic Building Study List. This would determine whether the HAB could impose a five year moratorium on construction at the site.

The report will be presented at a special HAB meeting on October 28, starting at 5:30 pm.

In the meantime, on October 14th, members of AAPS's Preservation Action Committee (PAC) and others met with Greg Fuz, Director of Planning and Building and Greg McFann, Building Official, to discuss ways to improve the process and prevent this from happening again.

At the meeting, they reviewed the plans for both 1104 Oak Street and 1025 Fair Oaks Avenue and discussed ways to improve the planning process and prevent future unauthorized demolition. Planning staff has already revised the Planning Permit application form and



1025 Fair Oaks Avenue

submittal requirements to require a demolition plan and a statement of the scope of demolition. The form also requires drawings of both the existing and proposed elevations and floor plans to make it easier for staff and the public to identify significant changes.

To clear up present confusion, staff is considering changing the 30% of value rule to 30% of exterior walls, which would give everyone a clearer number to work with. Staff may also conspicuously stamp all approved building plans with a statement that demolition in excess of that shown on the plans must be approved by the City.

Also discussed was the possibility of adding additional inspections to the permit process, including an inspection prior to the issuance of permits to verify the accuracy of existing conditions on the plans, a progress inspection by Planning staff to ensure construction is proceeding as authorized and an additional inspection if it becomes clear that demolition will need to exceed that approved in the plans, such as in the case of dry rot.

Time will tell whether Helena Liang is assessed significant penalties for her destruction of 1140 Oak Street. However, these two cases have galvanized the public and focused attention on Alameda's permit review process. Hopefully, improvements will be made to the process that will prevent future unauthorized demolitions.

AAPS appreciates the efforts of Planning and Building staff to implement these improvements and to consider AAPS suggestions.

The Preservation Action Committee meets at 7:00 pm on the first Monday of each month to address issues important to the architectural preservation of the City of Alameda. Committee meetings are open to all AAPS members. If you would like to attend a meeting or would like more information please call Chris Buckley at 510-523-0411. We are making an impact within the community. It's fun and informative. We encourage all members to GET INVOLVED!

Victoria in Excelsis, Again

Encaustic tile was reinvented in the 19th century and became a favorite of Victorian designers. Now, genuine and reproduction encaustics, as well as geometrics, are available once more. By David Malkin

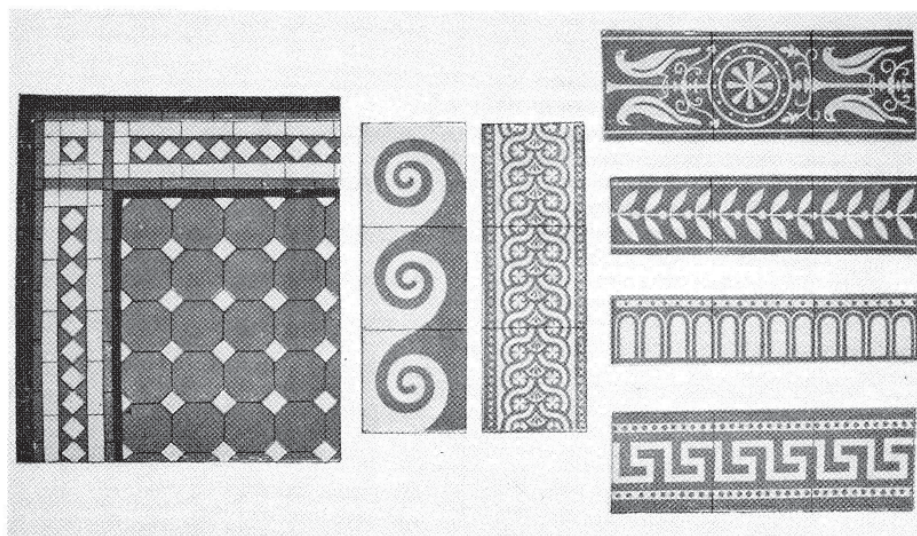
In his book *Hints on Household Taste*, published for the first time in 1872, Charles L. Eastlake says, "There is little doubt that the best mode of treating a hall floor, whether in town or country, is to pave it with encaustic tiles."

It was Herbert Minton whose enterprise reintroduced encaustic tile to an appreciative market in the 1840s, after years of experiment. The original encaustics were made by English monks in their monasteries between the 13th and 15th centuries, but this craft all but died out after their dissolution by Henry VIII.

Encaustic tile has an inlaid pattern of design, which makes it very hard wearing. Many tile manufacturers started making it in England in the mid-19th century to take advantage of the enormous interest in this revived craft. These included Maw & Company of Ironbridge in Shropshire, Campbell, Malkin Edge and T&R Boote, all of Stoke on Trent in Staffordshire, the home of the British ceramic industry. By the 1890s, Maw had become the largest tile maker in the world.

Encaustic Revival

It was style setters like Eastlake who encouraged the use of tile not only in homes, but also in public buildings. Eastlake illustrated Maw's tile in his book, saying "But for rich variety of pattern and for the skill with which the best types of ornament have been adapted for enameled ware, plain tile pavements, mosaic and mural decorations, Messrs Maw & Co of Salop [Shropshire] stand almost unrivalled." Maw & Company, after a hundred or more years of varying fortunes, was reestablished in 2001, in Stoke on Trent, as an independent manufacturer, having been part of the Johnson Tile group for 25 years. The new Maw & Company is now probably the only tile maker producing encaustic tile on a commercial basis. Geometric tile, which is also produced, is now made to precision standards. Some of the company's current ranges are reproduced from 19th-century designs.



This encaustic tile was selected by Charles L. Eastlake from the Maw & Company catalog.

The beauty of this is that today, many 19th-century floors, whoever the maker might have been, can be restored or replaced. The current interest in restoration and renovation makes this revival of a craft industry

very opportune. In the last 25 years, many of the great floors laid in the United States in the 19th century have been restored or completely replaced. My own company, Tile Source Inc., of Roswell, GA, was set up in 1997 for the main purpose of advising on the most economical way to restore or replace a tile floor. We have worked on the U.S. Capitol, Tweed Court House in New York City and other buildings.

Delightful Reproductions

Of course, to make tile exactly as it was produced in the 19th century is not an inexpensive process. An enterprising English tile maker, Original Style of Exeter in Devon, has produced a reproduction encaustic tile where the designs are silk-screened onto a traditional floor tile. These are hard wearing and are suitable for any home or installation requiring a Victorian look. Geometric tile with a slight cushion edge is also available. It has the added advantage that it is much less expensive than the genuine tile. However, these cannot be used for matching genuine 19th-century square-edge tile. A delightful range of 19th-century-style wall tile is available as well. Copies of tile designed by Alphonse Mucha, William de Morgan and Sir Alma Tadema are lavishly illustrated in *Original Styles'* literature, which also includes a multitude of traditional 19th-century tile designs. These companies make it possible to create a Victorian look even in the most modern or restored home.

The easy availability of this tile makes it a simple process to update and refurbish almost any building previously tiled with encaustic or geometric tile. Within a period of about 150 years, history and design trends are repeating themselves. Modern patio and hallway floors tiled with faux or genuine encaustics and geometrics can now have the same aesthetic appeal of former years. ■

David Malkin is a partner with Tile Source Inc.

Traditional Building and Period Homes: This article is a featured article from the publications *Clem Labine's Traditional Building and Period Homes*. For more information on these magazines please call 718-636-0750 or visit their web sites at www.traditionalbuilding.com or www.period-homes.com.

The article featured in this newsletter is from *Period Homes*, Autumn 2002, Vol. 5 / No. 3

Museum Lecture

The Alameda Museum is proud to announce lectures by prominent Bay Area authors and historians March through September, 2005 at the Museum, 2324 Alameda Avenue near Park Street. Admission is free for members of the Museum; \$5 for others. For information, leave a message at 510.748.0796 or check alamedamusuem.org.

Thursday, March 31, 2005, 7 pm: "The East Bay Then and New" based on a new book of photographs compiled by Eric Kos of the Alameda Sun and Dennis Evanosky, whose slide show Cryptic Crypts fascinated lecture goers in 2004. Many before-after pictures of the Island will be shown. Underwritten by Janelle Spatz, board member of the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society (AAPS).

Thursday, April 28, 2005, 7 pm: "Nineteenth Century California Interiors" by architect and historian Hank Dunlop, whose slide show on Fernside wowed audiences during our 2003 lecture series. In the gallery, see the eighth annual "Kids & Queen Victoria," a show by elementary students studying Alameda history and architecture.

Thursday, May 26, 2005, 7 pm: "Topic to be Announced," by raconteur, author, and local historian Woody Minor.

Thursday, June 30, 2005, 7 pm: "Preservation Power: Tales of the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society and its bulldog Preservation Action Committee," presented by Christopher Buckley and Company.

Thursday, July 28, 2005, 7 pm: "What of Paris During the Victorian Era?" by art historian and author, the aptly named Collete Colleter, board member of the Maybeck Foundation. And yes, there is an Alameda connection.

Thursday, August 25, 2005, 7 pm: "Pattiani Powerpoint" by Paul Roberts, former president of the Alameda Victorian Preservation Society (the forerunner of AAPS). Paul will show an expanded version of his "Passion for Pattiani" presentation in conjunction with his new book about that prolific Alameda architect.

Thursday, September 29, 2005, 7 pm: "Trains, Ferries, and Trolleys: How Transportation Shaped Alameda" by Western Railroad Museum volunteer trolley operator Bruce Singer and photo archivist and ferry buff Grant Ute.



Free trees and shrubs in one to fifteen gallon containers are available, including deodora cedars, lindens, maples, oaks, redwoods, viburnums and more. Call Chris Buckley at 523-0411.



Save the Date!

**2004 Annual Holiday Party
Sunday, December 5th. 2004**

6:30 to 8:30

at The Garrett Mansion.

2005 Board Election



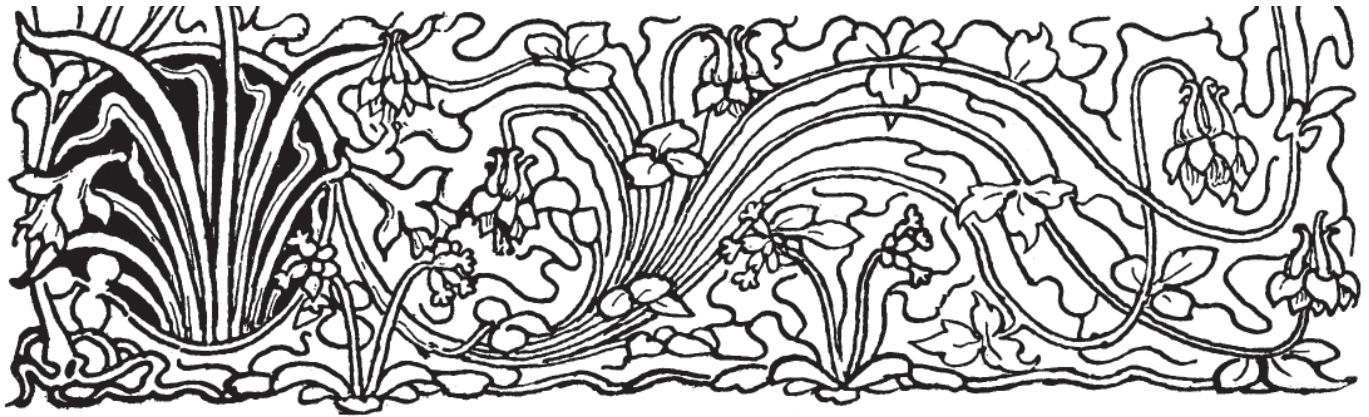
***Please look for your ballot card
attached to the newsletter.***

2005 Board Election Line-Up:

Denise Brady	- President
Chris Buckley	- 1st Vice Pres
Jeannie Graham	- 2nd Vice Pres
David Baker	- Treasurer
Woody Minor	- Corresponding Sec.
Tracy Cote	- Recording Sec.
Nancy Hird	- Member at large

Current President Janelle Spatz will return on the Board pursuant to AAPS By Laws in the seat designated as Advisor to the Board.

We have many opportunities and tasks that you can help with. These include, Preservation Action Committee, Alameda Legacy Home Tour Committee, Preservation Awards Committee, writer for the AAPS Alameda Sun Articles, Alameda Walking Tour Map Committee, Publicity Committee, and more. Please call Chris Buckley at 510-523-0411 if you are interested in helping us out.



Alameda Legacy Home Tour

The Classic Craftsman Tour: *Visit Homes of Natural Charm*

*A special thanks to **PERFORCE SOFTWARE** for sponsoring us!*

Thank you to the Homeowners for the use of your beautiful homes.

Thank you to all who were involved on this year's committee and to the docents.

Thank you to all who attended and made this event such a success.



If you are interested in becoming a part of the Home Tour Team
please contact Ruth Tillman at 510-337-1405 or ruthtillman@alamedanet.net

Alameda Architectural Preservation Society *Membership Coupon*

If you would like to join the AAPS or renew your membership, please send this portion back with your payment. Membership Chairperson - Nancy Hird @ (510) 523-0825

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Phone#: _____ e-mail: _____

Check your membership category.

☐ renewal ☐ new member

☐ Family \$25 ☐ Single \$20

☐ Seniors \$10 each ☐ Student \$5 each

I would like to make an additional donation of \$_____ to AAPS.

Alameda Architectural Preservation Society
P.O. Box 1677 ~ Alameda ~ CA ~ 94501
510-986-9232 ~ www.alameda-preservation.org

AAPS General Membership Meeting Schedule

January 23, 2005 at 7 pm: "First Presbyterian Church Windows" by Joan DiStefano. Joan will be giving us an in-depth look on how she beautifully restored the windows at First Presbyterian Church. The lecture will be held in the Sanctuary of the Church.

March 13, 2005 at 7 pm: "Julia Morgan", by Betty Marvin.

May 15, 2005 at 7 pm: Annual Preservation Awards

AAPS Board Members 2004

President: *Janelle Spatz-521-4045*
First VP: *Jean Graham-Gilliat-769-9286*
Second VP: *Christopher Buckley-523-0411*
Treasurer: *David Baker*
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Member at Large: *Denise Brady-523-8886*
Newsletter Editor: *Ruth Tillman-337-1405*
ruthtillman@alamedanet.net



The ALAMEDA ARCHITECTURAL
Preservation Society
P.O. Box 1677
Alameda, CA 94501

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AAPS Calendar

Sunday, November 7, 2004 at 7 pm: General Membership Meeting,
Color My World, John Dilks

Monday, November 1, 2004 at 7 pm: Preservation Action Committee

Wednesday, November 16, 2004 at 7:30 pm: AAPS Board Meeting

Sunday, December 5, 2004 at 6:30-8:30 pm: Annual Holiday Party

Monday, December 6, 2004 at 7 pm: Preservation Action Committee

Wednesday, December 15, 2004 at 7:30 pm: AAPS Board Meeting