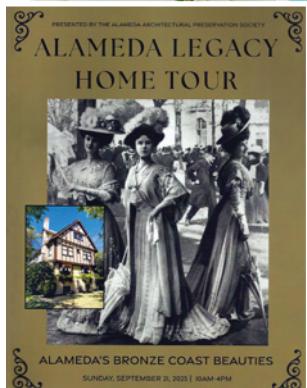


Alameda PRESERVATION Press

NEWSLETTER OF THE ALAMEDA
ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Alameda Legacy Home Tour Draws a Crowd



Guests lining up to enter 1724 Clinton Avenue.

2025 Tour Highlights the Bronze Coast *by Brenden Sullivan*

The Alameda Legacy Home Tour celebrated Alameda's Bronze Coast Beauties this past September on a glorious fall day continuing a tradition of tours that started 52 years ago. The tour is our primary fundraiser to accomplish our mission to increase public awareness and appreciation of historic architecture in Alameda. We had approximately 650 people in attendance including 140 docents and volunteers from all over the Bay Area!

At sunrise, the assembly of the Home Tour's iconic Victorian Archway, the gateway to the tour's activities for decades, took place at Franklin Park. Tables for tickets booths, the AAPS swag store, and the cafe, set up the eight-hour event. By 10 am, the park was in full swing as Victorian era music played. Attendees and volunteers enjoyed complementary croissants and coffee at the cafe, while perusing the guidebook before setting out on their architectural adventure. Vendors from the Cohen Bray House in Oakland, Artistic License, and painter extraordinaire Bob Buckter educated the crowds with details of their services.

This year's tour showcased seven amazing homes ranging in styles and eras as well as the beautifully landscaped gardens of the Meyers House – a hidden gem of the Bronze Coast neighborhood – all within walking distance from Franklin Park. Featured homes included a trio of early 1890s Queen Anne-style homes featuring towers and turrets from prolific architect and builder, Joseph A. Leonard, who built over 150 homes in Alameda. A fourth Queen Anne on the tour, designed and built by John J. Boyle, features a nearly intact original barn – a rare find in Alameda today.

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Alameda Legacy Home Tour...continued from page 1

The tour also included two Colonial Revival homes from two different builders: a 1904 from William Armitage, which has beautiful lagoon views reminding us that it once looked out over the bay; and a stately example from 1901 built by the Alameda Land Company.

A highlight of the tour was a 1910 Tudor Revival designed by famed architect Julia Morgan. Current owner, Elizabeth Hasychak, agreed to include it on the tour as a tribute to her late husband, Jerry Wagner, whose devotion to the house and period accuracy can be seen in every detail including furniture and memorabilia on display throughout.

In between home tours, guests could relax, drink lemonade and tour the grounds of the Meyers House, courtesy of the Alameda Museum which operates the estate as a house museum (open for tours from 1-4 pm on the fourth Saturday of the month; last tour at 3 pm).

The day ended with our appreciation gala held at the Veterans Memorial Building in the Main Ballroom. With its spectacular 30-foot ceilings and beautifully refinished floors, the venue was a perfect place to show our appreciation to all who participated. Everyone enjoyed tasty appetizers, desserts, and beverages to congratulate, complement, and thank each other on a job well done.

To the generous homeowners who graciously opened their beautiful homes to visitors, the 140 docents and volunteers who brought their energy and enthusiasm to teach and lead the tour, to our eager attendees who bought tickets and supported preservation in Alameda – thank you for all for making this a successful and fun day!



Chris Scott and Vickie Bell pose for a photo while serving the tour goers coffee and croissants in elegant period clothing.



Committee members Brenden Sullivan (left), Robert Farrar, and Erich Stiger arrive early to erect the iconic Home Tour Archway in Franklin Park.



Two attendees take time to peruse their guidebooks in the park before setting off on the home tour.



Woody Minor and Ross Dileo check out the architectural exhibits on display in the garage at the Meyers House garden.

Franklin Park bustling with activity.

Suffragette, Lisa Baker, proudly sporting her "Votes for Women" sash.



Alameda Legacy Home Tour...continued from page 2



Docents Chiara Stiger and Ella Stiger on the steps of 929 Lafayette Street.



Docent Judith Nychay and House Captain Janice Cantu posing together on the deck of 899 Union Street.

Guests arriving at 2008 Clinton Avenue.



Docent Karen Espinosa wearing one of the vintage-style outfits she designs and makes herself.



Home Tour volunteers and hosts enjoying the appreciation gala in the historic Veterans Memorial Building.



Veteran Home Tour Committee Members Denise and Scott Brady outside 1901 Central designed by famed architect, Julia Morgan.



Don't Miss Our Annual Holiday Party!

December 6th from 5:30 to 8:30 pm



Albert H. DeWitt Officers' Club Trident Room
641 West Redline Avenue Alameda, CA 94501

Check your email for your invitation and make sure to RSVP no later than November 24th!

Thank you to those who supplied images from the Alameda Legacy Home Tour: David and Michele Bock, Renata Frey, Denise Brady, Cindy Miner, and John Meng.

If you would like to join the Home Tour team in 2026 please contact Erich Stiger: estiger@Alameda-Preservation.org

TRAVELOGUE



An illustrated architectural travel story inspired by places visited and experiences encountered.

Io, Britannia!!

Text and images by Lisa Haderlie Baker

*T*his is a story about history – Roman history, British history, American history, really ancient fossil history, and even my own family's history. All are related to an amazing Oxford Scholars "Sennight" program for Cal Alumni that I attended in July.

I lived in England as a child, and my grandmother lived in Chichester in West Sussex. Her back garden literally abutted the huge partially excavated Fishbourne Roman Palace, dating from about 75 AD. Americans tend to think 200 years ago is ancient history, but the documented history in England is simply astounding, going back thousands of years. Fishbourne was built 30 years after the Roman conquest of Britain in 43 AD. The Romans stayed in Britain for almost 400 years after that, and I've been a Roman and British history nerd for almost as long.

My program was through UC Berkeley and the University of Oxford. When I heard one of the classes this summer was on Roman Britain, I knew it was meant for me. I wanted to go back to my beloved England, but also to spend time actually studying in Oxford, the oldest university in the English-speaking world. We were a small group of nine students, half of us studying Jane Austen, half studying Roman Britain. We had rooms, went to daily classes, and ate all of our meals together at Rewley House, academic housing for Oxford Continuing Education. Rewley House is modern by Oxford standards – dating from 1873, when it was a Gothic Revival girl's convent school.

Our daily classes at Rewley House were set up as Oxford undergraduate tutorial sessions are, where professors (tutors) hold sessions with a very small number of students. In our



Rewley House for visiting Oxford scholars, in the Jericho district.



University Church of St. Mary the Virgin and Brasenose college and chapel.

At the Bodleian Library.



Clarendon Quad and Bridge of Sighs.

case there were only four of us. Discussion was lively, and our tutor – the Oxford classicist Dr. Stephen Kershaw – was a marvelous teacher, bringing history alive with humor and drama. There was no homework, no final exams – just learning for the joy of it.

We had two hours of classes in the morning (and obligatory tea break at 10 in the common room), and then went on long walking excursions in the afternoon. The only downside was that it was very hot – 80-90 degrees, which is shocking in England.

Our first outing was a walking tour of central Oxford, passing many of the 39 separate colleges that make up the University. We could peer from the street into their beautiful quads, with immaculate lawns in the center, surrounded by the main buildings. Many date back to medieval times, some to the 16th century and later, and all are still active centers of learning. According to tradition, every college provides "a place to study, a place to eat, a place to sleep, a place to pray, and a place to drink"! Most have their own chapel and pub, as well as a dining hall, student rooms, and libraries as well as classrooms.

Our longest excursion was to Chedworth Roman Villa, in a beautiful Cotswold valley, stopping by the Corinium Museum in Cirencester, and the Roman amphitheater nearby. The museum director took our small group behind the scenes, to let us hold and examine genuine antiquities from the area, including oil lamps, individual mosaic tesserae (about the size of a marshmallow, in many different hues), and most touching to me – a roof tile with clear paw prints, left by a naughty dog when the clay was still wet in about 200 AD.

Continued on page 5...

TRAVELOGUE...continued from page 4

We drove along the ancient Roman road, the Fosse Way (now the modern A429), through rolling fields that still grow wheat and barley, as they did in Roman times. Pheasants ran into the golden fields as we passed (they were introduced into Britain by the Romans, by the way).

Chedworth Villa was inhabited for a very long time: built in stages over 200 years, starting in the late 2nd century AD, and it continued to be occupied for centuries after that. It eventually became one of the greatest country homes in Roman Britain, containing bath houses, reception rooms, spectacular mosaic floors, underfloor heating, and a beautiful spring-fed nymphaeum or water shrine, now populated by very happy newts. When the Roman Empire deteriorated in the 5th century, wealthy landowners continued their elite way of life for some time, and people may have used the site long after it was livable. Evidence points to decay in the 6th century. Fires were lit at some point on top of the exquisite mosaic floors in some long ago frigid British winter, and the site was eventually abandoned. The ruins were slowly repossessed by nature and forgotten until 1864, when a gamekeeper digging out rabbits discovered pieces of mosaic floor in the woods.

And speaking of digging, here's where ancient fossils and family history enter the story of my trip to Oxford!

My father was a U.S. Navy lieutenant based in Glasgow in 1943, being trained by the British Navy to deactivate German magnetic mines. In his limited free time, he studied the natural history of England, including pursuing a story he had read in *Scientific Monthly* about crinoid fossils in the British Midlands (crinoid descendants still live today, and are related to modern starfish). When these creatures died millions of years ago and sank into the depths of



At the Corinium Museum with dog paw prints on ancient roof tile.



Hypocaust central heating under the mosaic floor in the Chedworth Villa bathhouse.



The Washington Family Crest at Sudworth Manor with Star Stone Mullets. Star Stones (Fossil Bucket, UK)



Our whole group front of the Radcliffe Camera on our final night in Oxford.

what was then an ancient shallow sea, they left the tiny broken star-shaped fossilized segments of their stalks in the rich soil.

These small mysterious "star-stones" were found in Northamptonshire, where George Washington's family lived for generations. Because of the wonder with which the star-stones were regarded, they sometimes appeared on the coats of arms of important local families. Washington's forbearers were one of these families, and their coat of arms displays three of these star-shaped "mullets" above "two bars gules" (red stripes). It is thought that in the early days of American independence, the motifs for the American flag – stars and stripes – were partly inspired by George Washington's family crest, and that the Washington crest's stars are not actually stars from the heavens, but rather star-stones from an ancient sea, unearthed in their Northamptonshire fields!

Dad was so fascinated by this story that he took the train to what had been the Washington estate at Sulgrave Manor. A farmer loaned him a piece of window screen, and, to the farmer's astonishment, the American naval officer in full dress blues knelt on the ground to sift the soil! Dad did indeed find a handful of the little crinoid stars that day, and he put them carefully into a tiny glass vial to bring back with him.

Fast forward to my Oxford adventure: Our final excursion was to Sulgrave Manor, and I suddenly realized that this was where my Dad found his star-stones over 80 years ago! We toured the beautiful old Tudor farmhouse and gardens, and were informed that the crest above the door was possibly the inspiration for the American flag – but there was no mention of crinoid fossils or star-stones. I kept a discrete silence on the subject. Even know-it-all history nerds should know better than to interrupt a serious docent doing her job...

924 SANTA CLARA AVENUE

We Bought a Fixer-Upper Part III: Restoring a Victorian Home – Title 24, Structural Engineering, CHBC, and Hiring a Designer *by Robert Farrar*

Before diving into the latest progress on our Victorian restoration, I want to thank everyone who has reached out to help. The outpouring of support has been incredible. I've received old push-button light switches, brass switch plates, 1910s and 1920s ceiling fixtures, Eastlake doors that perfectly match our originals, and even extra molding from past renovation projects.

It's inspiring to see our community rally around this old house. Every piece donated adds to the authenticity and story of the home. Thank you all – and yes, please keep them coming!

Understanding Title 24

Since our last update, we've completed the Title 24 Energy Assessment – a key step for any renovation in California. Title 24 requires buildings to meet specific energy-efficiency standards, covering insulation, windows, and appliances.

For example, the code dictates minimum insulation ratings for walls, ceilings, and floors, and calls for double-pane UV-coated windows. However, because our home is designated as historic, some requirements are waived. You aren't required to replace original single-pane windows with dual-pane ones – a small mercy for those of us trying to preserve the character of these older homes.

When we did a Title 24 report three decades ago on our current house, it was just five pages long. Today, it's a dense 35-page document filled with complex calculations. Everything – gas versus electric appliances, the type of water heater, even the size and efficiency of the furnace – contributes to an overall energy "score." Meeting that number is essential for project approval.

Bringing in a Structural Engineer

While waiting for the Title 24 report, we also needed a structural assessment. Our plans involve moving a few interior walls upstairs,



Although neglected, the house retains many of its original exterior elements including the grand arch framing the front porch.

altering a load-bearing wall downstairs, and replacing the foundation entirely.

Some of the second-floor walls aren't load-bearing, so those adjustments were simple enough. But the first floor was more complex. The main load-bearing wall runs from the front entry all the way to the back of the house, splitting into two about fourteen feet before the rear door.

To create a larger, more functional kitchen, we decided to move one section of a wall about eight feet. This combines the original kitchen with the former maid's quarters, removes the old stove flue, and opens the space dramatically. Our structural engineer confirmed it could be done safely – with new support beams transferring the load from ceiling to foundation.

Pre-Planning and the Historical Code

Once preliminary drawings were complete, our architect submitted them for a pre-planning check. This step lets the city's planning department identify any potential red flags before the official submission.

Their main concern? The height of our front porch railing.

Our porch has a beautiful arched design, part of which blends seamlessly into the handrail. State of California Building code requires a 42-inch height, which would completely alter the appearance. Fortunately, the California Historical Building Code (CHBC) – part of the California Building Standards Code (Title 24, Part 8) – allows historic properties to retain their original architectural features.

Many Alameda homes built before 1942 are designated "Historical," making them eligible for CHBC provisions. After some discussion, the building department tentatively approved our porch as-is, pending final review once all plans are submitted.

The Review Process

With both the Title 24 and structural reports in hand, our architect submitted the complete renovation package for official city review. This process often takes several months, as multiple departments evaluate everything from safety to functionality.

While waiting, we turned our attention to another massive task: restoring all the interior woodwork.

The moldings around doors and windows and baseboards had endured decades of paint – multiple layers, drips, and even plaster

Continued on page 7...



A few molding pieces that have been stripped clean and are ready to be stained.

Fixer-Upper Part III...continued from page 6

overspray. We removed each piece, including the pocket doors, and spent months carefully stripping and cleaning the wood.

Our plan is to stain and seal the first-floor trim with spar urethane, restoring the rich wood tones typical of the era. The second-floor moldings, which suffered more damage, will be painted.

Designing the Heart of the Home

Even if you have a clear vision for your kitchen or bathrooms, the details can quickly become overwhelming – cabinet dimensions, lighting placement, flooring choices, paint colors, even the style of cabinet handles.

To help, I reached out to Amy West of Amy on Design. Amy and her team use 3D rendering software to create realistic layouts, allowing us to preview and adjust every aspect before committing.

Now is the time to order kitchen cabinets, bathroom vanities, specialty lighting, and plumbing fixtures. The designer also coordinates tile, colors, and finishes to ensure the rooms blend seamlessly with the home's vintage charm.

If you're not comfortable sourcing materials or overseeing installations, hire a Licensed general contractor. The AAPS website lists several trusted contractors under its "Resources" section.

Design Updates and Guiding Principles

Originally, the second floor had just one bathroom. With three bedrooms and an office, we decided to add a second bath and expand the closets.

Over the years, I've learned a simple truth: modernize the kitchen and bathrooms but



The last medallion to be taken down.

preserve everything else. The warmth of old wood, the craftsmanship of original trim – these are what make a historic home special. If you can, resist the urge to paint the woodwork!

Saving the Ceiling Medallions

Before removing the lath and plaster ceilings, we carefully detached each of the ornate plaster medallions. Most came off easily – except for one in the side parlor. It took five people on ladders, slowly sawing along the edges to free it without cracking.

Each large medallion is composed of five parts: a central piece surrounded by four outer sections. Some fell apart during removal, so we'll reassemble them on thin plywood backings and reinstall them using adhesive and hidden screws anchored into wood blocks before the drywall goes up.

In a future article, I'll share more about restoring and painting these medallions – a project in itself!

Looking Ahead

If all goes smoothly, our next installment will cover the city's final approval, the new foundation, and the installation of sewer lines.

As always, if you have questions or advice – or if you just love old houses – feel free to reach out at r.farrar@alameda-preservation.org.

Restoring a Victorian home is a challenge, but with the right team, a little patience, and a lot of community support, it's also an incredible journey.

RENEW TODAY!

**Is your Alameda
Architectural Preservation
Society membership
up-to-date?**

**You can renew for the
upcoming year
by visiting
alameda-preservation.org**

**Or mail the form
found on page 9.**



PAC

PRESERVATION ACTION COMMITTEE

GET INVOLVED & MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Together we can make a difference in Alameda's future. Share your ideas and participate! We maintain a Google Group list to advise AAPS members on ongoing issues that could affect historic properties.

For more information please contact

Dodi Kelleher at dodikelleher@comcast.net

2025 Preservation Award Plaques Around Town

Preservation Awards are conferred on restored properties in Alameda with historic or architectural significance. The Awards showcase projects that preserve, restore or reuse historic property in a way that enhances their architectural character. Award winners receive certificates that recognize the work of the team, from architect and contractor, to painter and landscape designer.

The property owners also receive a bronze plaque that is placed on the property and preferably close to the street for public viewing. Every year nominations are reviewed and winners are selected from a variety of buildings that may range from the 19th century through the 1950s, including houses, apartments, commercial properties, churches or governmental structures.

If you'd like to "have a say", join the Awards Committee! Or, if you know of a property that deserves a Preservation Award, contact Lisa Baker at lbaker@alameda-preservation.org.



Thank you to Bob Farrar for coordinating the distribution and placement of the plaques.



▲ 929 Lafayette Street:
Quinton & Megan Larson



▲ 1528 Mozart Street:
Peter and Joyce Boyd



◀
Sherman Avenue:
Nancy Lewis and fantastic
assistant, Christopher



▲ 779 Santa Clara Avenue
John Beall and his daughter
Penelope



▲ 1021 Union Street:
Nancy Gordon



▲ California Historical Radio Society
2152 Central Avenue:
Rachel Lee, Executive Director

Need any work done to your vintage home?



Look no further than the Resource section of the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society's website to find that plumber, contractor, electrician, etc. or artisan to hire to repair or enhance your vintage home.



If you've had someone work on your home that's not on our list contact us to add their name to our page.



[alameda-preservation.org/
publications/resources-recommended-
by-building-owners/](http://alameda-preservation.org/publications/resources-recommended-by-building-owners)

RENEW
NOW



THE ALAMEDA ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

(AAPS) has been protecting the architectural legacy of Alameda's historic buildings for more than 50 years. Through action committees, educational seminars, workshops, and home tours, AAPS promotes its mission of increasing public awareness and appreciation of historic architecture in Alameda.

Alameda retains the rich charm of a bygone era, in both residential neighborhoods and commercial districts. Over 4,000 buildings are listed on the City's Historic Building Study List, which also includes many official historical monuments, such as Alameda's City Hall – one of the oldest in California. At the time AAPS was founded, Victorian homes were being routinely demolished and replaced with new development. With strong public support, the Society helped pass a measure to stop demolition of historic buildings and has actively advocated for the first Alameda city historic preservation ordinance. To learn more about Alameda architectural treasures and the organization, visit the AAPS web site: alameda-preservation.org

AAPS MEMBERSHIP

Join the AAPS or renew your membership by sending this form back with your payment or visit our web site and pay with PayPal. Call AAPS at 510-479-6489 if you have any questions.

Name _____

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I would like to make an additional donation of \$_____. AAPS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Tax identification #51-0139572.

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AAPS SCHEDULE of EVENTS 2025

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6
5:30 PM - 8:30 PM

Holiday Party

* * * * *

The Trident Room
Albert H. Dewitt
Officers Club
641 West Redline Avenue
Alameda CA 94501

*Check your email for your
invitation and make sure to
RSVP no later than
November 24th!*

Remember to Vote for the 2026 Board of Directors!

Ballots for the 2026
AAPS Board of Directors
were emailed or mailed to all
current members.

Please remember to submit your
completed ballot by December 1.

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If you have any questions,
please contact Brenden Sullivan at
bsullivan@alameda-preservation.org.