



Alameda PRESERVATION Press

NEWSLETTER OF THE ALAMEDA
ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Woody Walk Mansion Row: A Stroll on Central Avenue

The walk will be a two-hour loop on level terrain with ample shade, beginning and ending at Franklin Park.

Sunday, August 30, 2015 at 1:00 pm

Meet at Franklin Park, Morton Street & San Antonio Avenue, Alameda, CA

FREE for AAPS Members; Non-members \$5

Alameda's Greatest Street

Story by Woody Minor

This year's Woody Walk will take us along sycamore-lined Central Avenue, providing glimpses into Alameda's original "Mansion Row" and how it's changed over the years. The tour will take in the seven blocks between Sherman and Lafayette Streets, with forays along several adjoining streets.

Central Avenue is Alameda's premier boulevard—the only street to span the full length of the island from East End to West End, from the San Leandro Bay shore to the border of the old Naval Air Station at Alameda Point, a distance of more than four miles. In the eastern half of the island, the street is true to its name, forming a more or less central axis; west

continued on page 2...



Looking east on Central Avenue from Benton Street in the early 1890s. Photo: Oakland History Room.

Central Avenue...continued from page 1.



of Grand Street it veers southward (along with other cross-town streets) and ends up bordering the shoreline west of Webster. Over much of its length the street is shaded by a splendid canopy of sycamores, planted in the 1920s by the city's park department. Since the city's name is the Spanish word for a tree-lined way, Central Avenue is truly iconic.

The history of Central Avenue extends back to the early years of settlement in the Gold Rush. An 1852 agreement among the pioneer property owners established the street and gave it its name, though it would take several decades before the route was fully opened.

In finished form, it linked the 1850s village of Alameda in the East End to the 1870s bathing resorts in the West End, with trains running down its

center west of Sherman Street (where track-laden Encinal Avenue merged with Central).

East of Sherman Street to the vicinity of Park Street, Central Avenue became a showcase of fine homes. This was Alameda's first Mansion Row, and it included notable works by many leading architects and builders. The first houses, dating to the 1860s, were built near Park Street in the early years of the railroad era. The western reach of the row began in the 1870s with Oak Park, laid out in 1876 west of Grand Street (the genesis as well of the Gold Coast). Stylish homes spread west from Park Street and east from Oak Park, coalescing into more or less continuous vistas along a mile or so of Central Avenue.

On the walk, we will see gems in the Italianate, Stick, Queen Anne, and Colonial Revival styles by

the Newsoms, the Mathews, A.W. Pattiani, D.F. Oliver, Cunningham & Politeo, Ernest Coxhead, Julia Morgan, and others. Along the way we will "read" the landscape, deciphering the sites of vanished mansions and decoding how cities change through time.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 27th

7:00 pm

**STREET OF DREAMS
CENTRAL AVENUE IN ALAMEDA**

Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Avenue

Woody Minor will give an illustrated lecture on the history of Central Avenue. The talk will highlight the avenue's architecture, including rare images of vanished landmarks.

Free for Museum Members • \$10 for Others



This is how Central Avenue appeared at the turn of the 20th century, looking west from a lofty upper story at the corner of Union Street. These blocks, which retain a number of historic houses, will be covered on the walk. Photo: Alameda Museum.

The Alameda Museum & The Alameda Architectural Preservation Society Present

• 2015 • ALAMEDA LEGACY HOME TOUR

Sunday, September 27, 2015
11:00 am to 5:00 pm

A Self-Guided Tour of Six Period Homes &
Refreshments During Tour Hours in the Meyers House Garden

\$30

**Advance
ticket vouchers
available at:**

**Daisy's
1347 Park Street**

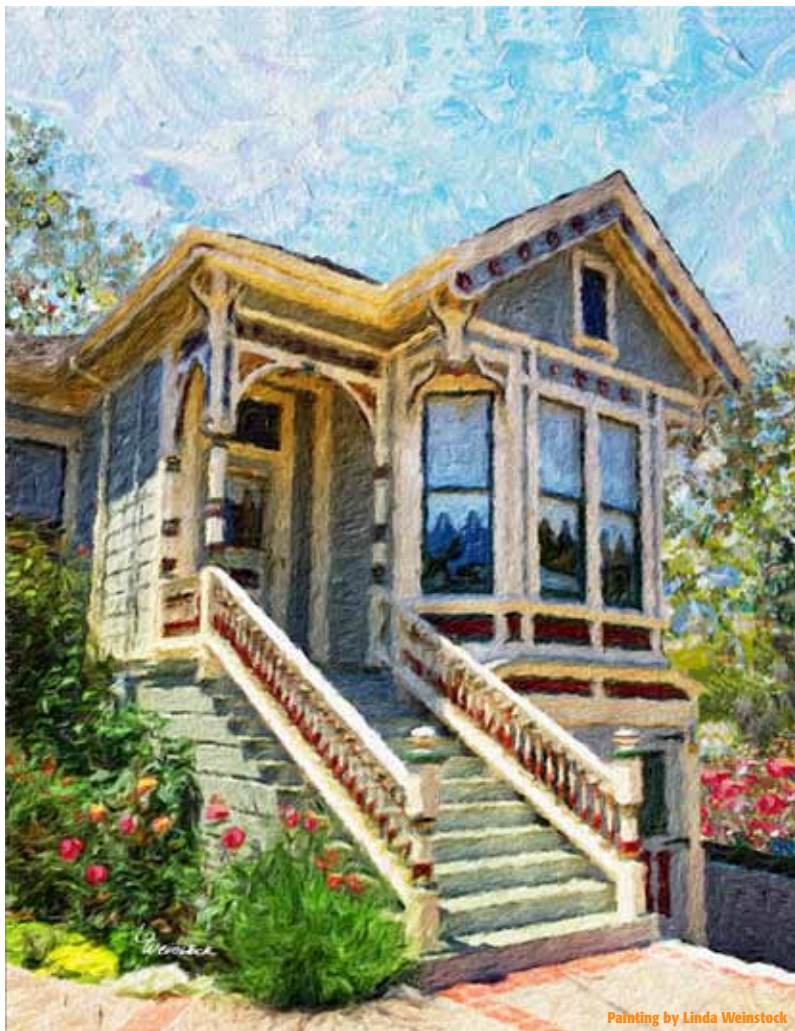
**Alameda Shade Shop
914 Central Avenue**

**Wescafe
1518 Webster Street**

\$35

**Tour day tickets
available from
10:00 am at:**

**Franklin Park
Morton Street &
San Antonio Avenue**



Painting by Linda Weinstock

**\$30 Tickets Online: alameda-home-tour.org
Information: 510-523-5907**

Fireplace Inserts

Story and images by Jim Smallman

It starts with the decision to replace the brick foundation. Delayed far too long, the brick foundation that supports 1833 Clinton is slowly failing. I knew in my heart that the next "big one" could finish the house. The foundation plate floats on top of the brick, not firmly attached. The bricks themselves are connected with lime mortar, slowly deteriorating. Some of the bricks are loose and falling out. So I talk with a foundation contractor.

He has an unwelcome message: "The chimneys in the house should be removed." All experts agree that unreinforced masonry is a hazard. Still, there are some alternatives to consider: The brick chimney could be removed and replaced with a stainless steel chimney in a wood frame, possibly with a light-weight brick plate veneer; or, an attempt could be made to reinforce the chimney.

Given the poor condition of both chimneys, reinforcement was not realistic. (Although not a concern in my project, some chimneys possess architectural significance for which retention is desirable. In addition, the chimney top may be replicated with lighter material and the duplicate married to a new stainless steel/wood frame chimney.)

In the end I decided to remove the brick chimneys during the restoration. There were two double-flue chimneys, supporting four separate mantles: dining room, front parlor and two bedrooms. With their removal the safety issue was addressed, but this left



3

four ugly gaping holes behind the mantles. Some acceptable cosmetic solution was needed.

The mantle in the front parlor was the easiest. The original summer screen covering the opening had survived. So that mantle was left untouched. (Photo 1)

In another restoration, I created a summer screen to fill the opening. This was a challenge, but the results were very satisfactory and the cost was negligible, about \$100. (Photo 2)

The remaining options are limited. A search in salvage yards might yield a summer screen of the correct size, but that's a long shot. (I wasn't successful.) So I began to look at the possibility of fireplace inserts. There are two kinds, each of which simulate "real" fires:

- Gas inserts: Require a glass separator, external combustion-air source, external exhaust, plumbing for the gas supply, and electrical wiring for the controls.
- Electric simulators: Require a dedicated electric circuit for the controls.

Both types of inserts require the construction of an enclosure, roughly the shape of the original brick combustion chamber. Gas inserts provide a real flame, but the glass front detracts somewhat from the effect. The more complex requirements for the gas inserts drives up the cost. Typical gas insert installations run in the neighborhood of \$5,000.

Electrical insert installations run about \$1,500, including \$1,000 for the insert, and about \$500 for minimal electrical work and construction of the enclosure. I chose the electric option for my restoration at 1833 Clinton. The electric inserts have a heat setting, or can be operated in "flame



1



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simulation" mode only, without heat. The tiles in the upstairs bedrooms had been removed years before, so they had to be replaced. The original American Encaustic Tiles in the two downstairs mantles survived intact. Here are pictures of the four mantles. (Photo 3, Photo 4, Photo 5, Photo 6)

Another challenge is finding inserts of the correct size. After a substantial on-line search, I found a source located on the East Coast: www.victorianfireplaceshop.com. They have searched in England and other European countries



6

for the narrower styles typically used in Victorian homes. I found them very helpful in selecting an appropriate insert.

Free Trees & Shrubs

IN 1-15 GALLON CONTAINERS.

Selection includes:

- Deodora Cedar
- Linden
- Maple
- Oak
- Redwood
- Viburnum

and more!

**FOR MORE INFORMATION
CALL CHRIS BUCKLEY AT 523-0411**

ALAMEDA LEGACY HOME TOUR

Sunday, September 27, 2015

11:00 am to 5:00 pm

Calling All Docents!

FREE ADMISSION to the tour in exchange for being a docent on either the early or late shift. Two shifts: 11:00 am – 2:00 pm or 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm.

Enjoy a day of Alameda's finest architecture and finish with a wonderful party after for docents and homeowners.

To sign-up contact htdocents@earthlink.net

Costumes admired but not required.



Alameda Artist Spotlight

by Linda Weinstock

AAPS is pleased to feature a series of accomplished artists who have focused on Alameda architecture.

Born and raised in Alameda, Emily Brock Bonnes studied Studio Art at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon and was awarded a Bachelor of Arts degree in 2011. While there she learned the practice of fine art-making, of mastering technique and harnessing intellect to create visual artwork. Emily is happy to be back in Alameda where she spends her time creating art and working as the Assistant Manager of Redux Studios & Gallery: A Social Enterprise of St. Vincent de Paul of Alameda County.

For her most recent art exhibit, "Moving Forward into the Past", she created a series of paintings based on areas of Alameda that while showing signs of aging still reflect the charm and character of Alameda in days past.



Oak Street and Encinal Avenue.
18" x 20" framed. \$150.

Pegasus. 18" x 20" framed. \$150.

Emily Brock Bonnes



Pan Am. 18" x 20" framed. \$150.



Walnut Street and Pacific Avenue. 18" x 20" framed. \$150.

Contact Emily
Phone: 510-502-6123
Website: emilybrockbonnes.com
emily@emilybrockbonnes.com

SAN FRANCISCO VICTORIANA

Renown Bay Area source of architectural restoration materials, San Francisco Victoriana has closed.

As many of you may know, San Francisco Victoriana's owners have decided to retire and have closed its manufacturing operations after 43 years of serving the restoration community.

Their website www.sfvictoriana.com/index.htm is still live and provides a list (please see below) of local businesses that provide architectural services.

CNC ROUTING, CUSTOM MANUFACTURING, CURVED MOLDINGS, 5-AXIS MACHINING

Lucid Machine Art

2070 Newcomb Avenue, San Francisco, CA
(650) 825-5305 • www.lucidmachineart.com

MOULDINGS, FLOORING, SF VICTORIANA MOULDING PROFILES

White Brothers Mill

430 Lesser Street, Oakland, CA
(510) 261-1600 • www.whitebrothersmill.com

MOULDINGS

Lowpensky Moulding

900 Palou Avenue, San Francisco, CA
(415) 822-7422

MOULDINGS, LUMBER

Saroyan Lumber

dl@saroyanlumber.com • www.saroyanlumber.com

PLASTER, CASTINGS

Lorna Kollmeyer Ornamental Plaster

(415) 312-6269 • www.lornakollmeyer.com

TURNINGS, MOULDINGS

Haas Woodworking

531 Mercantile Drive, Cotati, CA
(707) 665-0664 • www.haaswoodworking.com



THE ALAMEDA ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

(AAPS) has been protecting the architectural legacy of Alameda's historic buildings for more than 40 years. Through AAPS action committees, educational seminars and home tours, citizens of Alameda have learned to embrace their diverse older neighborhoods. Over 4,000 buildings are on the City's Historic Building Study List. Alameda City Hall, one of the oldest in California, is a historical monument.

Alameda retains the rich charm of a bygone era, in both residential neighborhoods and commercial districts. Alamedans responded to AAPS's preservation mission back in the early 1970s, when Victorians were being demolished in order to construct large apartment buildings. AAPS, then called the Alameda Victorian Preservation Society (AVPS), helped pass a local initiative, Measure A, that preserved vintage homes by forbidding the construction of buildings with more than two housing units. To learn more about Alameda architectural treasures and the organization, visit the AAPS web site:

www.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.

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Select your membership category

☐ Family \$35 ☐ Student \$10 each ☐ Sponsor \$250

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☐ Single \$30 ☐ Senior \$20 each ☐ Donation \$_____

Mail to: AAPS P.O. Box 1677, Alameda, CA 94501

Credit cards accepted online. **www.alameda-preservation.org**



P.O. Box 1677
Alameda, CA 94501

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

In This Issue:

- *Woody Walk, Mansion Row:
A Stroll on Central Avenue*
- *Alameda Legacy Home Tour*
- *Fireplace Inserts*
- *Alameda Artist Spotlight:
Emily Brock Bonnes*

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AAPS SCHEDULE of EVENTS 2015

•
SUNDAY, AUGUST 30

1:00 PM

Woody Walk

Mansion Row: A Stroll on Central Avenue

MEET IN FRANKLIN PARK

MORTON STREET & SAN ANTONIO AVENUE

•
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

11:00 AM – 5:00 PM

Alameda Legacy Home Tour

alameda-home-tour.org