alameda-preservation.org | January 2019

Alameda PRESERVATION

NEWSLETTER OF THE ALAMEDA ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY **Press**

A Presentation by Conchita Perales & Woody Minor

History of the Alameda Legacy Home Tour

45 Years and Counting

Sunday, January 13, 2019 at 7:00 pm

First Congregational Church of Alameda 1912 Central Avenue, Alameda CA Free for AAPS members • \$5 for non-members

Preservation Society hasn't stopped reaching out to make the case for historic buildings. While it may seem self-evident that vintage architecture imparts a priceless patina to a community—an aura of authenticity, of mellowed time and taste—not everyone sees eye to eye. Thus the need for outreach and education, for celebration, and what better way than a day-long event in which you get to see fine old homes up close and personal.

The Alameda Legacy Home Tour, which had its forty-fifth anniversary this past September, hasn't always been an annual undertaking. Which isn't surprising, considering how much work it takes an army of volunteers to pull one off. The best we can tell, the inaugural tour was held in 1973 and reprised every year through 1979. There were lapses in the 1980s and '90s, when it seems to have been repurposed as a biannual event or simply fell off the calendar. Since

The Alameda Museum & The Alameda Architectural Preservation Society Present

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 four Hours in the Meyers House Garden

SEPTEMBER 15, 1974

1:00 - 5:00

ALAMEDA VICTORIAN PRESERVATION PO. BOX 1637

PO. BOX 1637

ALAMEDA VICTORIAN PRESERVATION HOUSE TOUR

ALAMEDA VICTORIAN PRESERVATION HOUSE TOUR

ALAMEDA 1637

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NEW SLETTER OF THE ALAMEDA ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY.

Home Tour...continued from page 1.

1999 we've been back on track and running on schedule. The 2018 event marked the twentieth straight year and the thirty-fifth tour overall since its inception.

Over the decades the event went by various names, ranging from "An Afternoon in Victorian Alameda" to "Victorian House Tour" to "Classic Homes Tour." The official moniker "Alameda Legacy Home Tour" dates from the 1990s, when the AAPS began partnering with the Alameda Museum to sponsor the event. Since then it has been a joint production, with the two organizations sharing the work and the revenue.

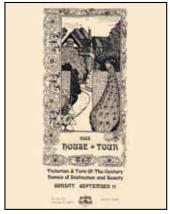
The AAPS began life as the Alameda Victorian Preservation Society, and in the early years of the home tour it was true to its name in the emphasis placed on Victorian architecture, particularly Queen Anne. Nearly 90 percent of the tour houses of the '70s and '80s were built in the 19th century. As time went on "old" acquired new connotations and the field of choice expanded. Fully a third of the ALHT houses since 2000 have had 20th century pedigrees, including (in 2012) our first post-World War II specimen, a 1947 hacienda in Fernside.

Even so, Victorians continue to be tour mainstays. This makes perfect sense given Alameda's amazing collection of 19th century buildings, numbering in the thousands. Over 250 houses have been featured on the tours to date. When you take encores into account (many houses having appeared more than once) the total drops to around 185. Nearly three-fourths of these charmers date back to the 1800s.

In terms of tour frequency the most popular 19th-century house style by far is Queen Anne (110 appearances), with perennial favorites by such well-known designers and builders as A.W. Pattiani, Charles S. Shaner, Joseph A. Leonard, and Marcuse & Remmel. Running a distant second is the long-lived Colonial Revival (45), including many examples from the early 20th century, followed by square-bay Stick designs (37). Availability as well as taste has played a role in the selections. Turn-of-the-century Colonial Revival and 1880s-90s Queen Anne are the most prevalent of our older house styles, with fine specimens all across the island. And while our 1870s-80s Stick Style landmarks have largely vanished, enough remains for a respectable showing. The further back we go the less we find, a lamentable truth reflected in the tours—only five showings of 1860s-70s Italianate, a single showing of 1850s-60s Gothic Revival.

When we turn to 20th century houses, taste appears to be the overriding factor; availability isn't an issue. The ever-growing popularity of Arts and Crafts architecture, including bungalows, is a case in point. Prior to 1992, only three specimens were included in the home tours; since then there have been more than 40 examples from the years 1904-1917, comprising nearly a fourth of the ALHT offerings over the past 25 years.

More recent styles remain a rarity. The last hundred years of our history, since World War I, has been broached a total of ten times in the history of the Alameda Legacy Home Tour. Most of these samplings have been revivalist designs (Spanish, Medieval, and Colonial) from the 1920s and 1930s. As for modernism, it's barely on the radar, despite widespread interest among a new generation of homeowners. The sole offering to date (on the 1997 tour) was a 1935 landmark of streamlined styling in Fernside, and mid-century modernism has yet to make the cut. Give it time. Soon modern will mean vintage, if it doesn't already. — *Story by Woody Minor*



Guidebooks from 1983, 1986, 1992, 2000; Posters from 2018 and 2010.









Local artists such as Lisa Baker, Richard Knight, Judith Lynch, Valerie Turpen, Linda Weinstock, Candace Rowe & Chris Rummel have been featured.

An Evening with Glass Artist, Joan Di Stefano by Karen Lithgow

oan Di Stefano gave the AAPS audience a very informative and entertaining talk about her life's work as a glass artist. She was quick to tell us that there is more to glass than just stained glass and described to us the myriad applications and creations world-wide involving glass; many of which we saw in an accompanying slide show. Joan has been doing glass work full time since 1978 after receiving a degree in art. Her initial intention was to paint but a last-minute decision to take a course entitled "Stained Glass as Art, not Craft" sent her in another direction. As her art career progressed, continual strong interest in her glass work kept her working with glass as an art form.

Joan's world-wide quest for more knowledge and participation in the international glass scene took her to locales in Italy, France, England and other places where glass work has been revered for centuries. There she learned about various techniques and resources to create, reconstruct and conserve glass windows. Some of the materials Joan learned about while abroad included glass paste in Italy that is particularly useful in making mosaics.

Many of her projects took place in churches and monasteries which contain some of the oldest and most elaborate glass designs. Amongst her many projects, Joan got involved with medieval windows in Cambridge where she did glass conservation work, restored glass in a 9th century church in France and pieced together broken stained glass pieces in a monastery. Some of this glass work involved recreating the paint work on the glass to complete the restoration. Joan went on to explain some of the steps that she takes to make historically accurate and authentic restorations. She's also been asked to remove large old windows out of their original location to be transported elsewhere which she described as a challenging and time-consuming process.



AAPS members met at the Alameda Buddhist Temple on Pacific Avenue in October for an evening with glass artist Joan Di Stefano. Image: Conchita Perales.

Joan noted that restoration work often takes the form of repairing vandalized religious figures. She shared with us her thoughtful musings as to these targets of vandalism. Joan also told us about making new windows for religious groups and showed us the finished beautiful pieces that conformed to the requirements; color and cheeriness were not always allowed! Another amusing cross-cultural encounter Joan related involved a French customs agent who mistook her glass powder for cocaine and actually inhaled some of it!

Joan has also restored and made new and original glass windows for various religious institutions here in the United States including St. Paul's Catholic Church in Florida, the old cathedral in Oakland and the Twin Towers here in Alameda. She created many non-secular works for local businesses too, such as the Ballena Bay Yacht Club sign and a mosaic for nearby Blondies Pizza. Local homeowners also proudly display some of her glass work.

Pivoting to a very different type of glasswork, Joan has embarked on a series of glass sculptures infused with deeper meaning. Her mixed-media creations use fused glass and combinations of leather, shells, and barbed wire. She particularly likes using barbed wire and its use as a dark metaphor surrounding glass hearts. Certain personalities have apparently been the inspiration for these complex artworks. More whimsical sculptures Joan has made include a large chicken and egg combo installed outside a park.

Joan concluded her discussion by showing us and passing around various types of machine and made-made glass pieces to demonstrate their variety and how different processes affected their appearance. Red and pink glass is more expensive because it has gold dust in it! She also taught us how to identify hand blown pieces and demonstrated the differing types of lead used in stained glass. Lastly Joan answered the audience's questions about how to care for their glass works and even offered to visit those who wanted her to see the works firsthand. A large variety of books with glasswork were also on display.



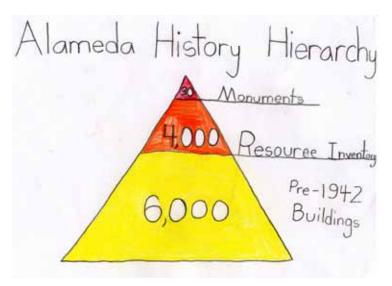
Years of Tumult and Triumph for AAPS: 2002-2004

by Judith Lynch

Preservation Program Overview

ehold the Preservation Pyramid (below) as of 2003, as charmingly depicted by second grader Gabriel Pagal. These programs, ordinances, and decisions are major tools in both documentation and recognition of our vintage structures. A perch on the pyramid may entitle a building to a smidge of protection—including being offered to more sympathetic owners, or fending off demolition, however briefly. To encourage future scrutiny that ensures our architectural heritage, AAPS has embarked on a detailed study of the parts of the pyramid; Level 3 is the current topic, other levels will be examined in future issues.

- Level 1: Monuments (30 designated, 29 surviving)
 This upper segment hosts our most distinguished structures and districts, those best documented so far. In Alameda they are still known by the quaint title of "Monuments," elsewhere they are called Landmarks.
- Level 2: Historic Buildings Study List (4,000, number approximate)
 This level was christened the "Study List," and was then renamed
 "Historic Resources Inventory," a much more fitting name that
 banishes the notion that cadres with clipboards are stalking the listed
 structures. The Inventory is the result of a 1978-79 survey with some
 later additions.
- Level 3: Pre-1942 Buildings (6,000, number approximate)
 This category applies to properties completed before 1942 that are not Study-Listed; see below for a more complete delineation.



The Pyramid of Preservation in Alameda depicted in colored pencil by artist Gabriel Pagal.



Attributed to George W. Percy of Percy and Hamilton, architects of Alameda's City Hall, this image shows the reclamation of 1423 Morton Street after it was added to the Study List.

Level 4: Completed Between 1942 and 1960 (5,900, number approximate)

The highest accolade for any building in the country is a listing on the National Register of Historic Places. According to NR criteria, buildings 50 years old or more may, with documentation, qualify as historic.

Decoding Level 3

Rallying Round: Worthy But Not Listed

In 2002-3, AAPS helped save a Victorian, significant although shrouded with asbestos shingles and tumbledown from neglect. The property at 1423 Morton Street was deserving of Study List designation, but was overlooked during the 1978-79 survey. Owners of this "misguided improvement" were ignorant of its history and applied for permits, intending to replace it with a duplex. AAPS asked the Historical Advisory Board (HAB) to add the place to the Study List, thus affording it some protection from being torn down, but the HAB voted 3-2 not to list the building. AAPS intended to appeal the decision to City Council but this remedy was not necessary because Mayor Beverly Johnson asked that the HAB decision be considered under the Council's "Call for Review" procedure. In February 2003 the Council voted 3-0 to list the property: Council members Tony Daysog and Frank Materrese supported the measure along with Mayor Johnson.



Years of Tumult...continued from page 4.

From this modest "one-house" beginning grew serious discussions among citizens, preservationists, and city officials. As a result of these deliberations, three months later the Council—urged by Mayor Johnson-proposed an ordinance that required HAB approval for demolition of any building completed before 1942. Both AAPS President Christopher Buckley and Society member David Baker spoke at City Council in favor of the ordinance, which passed unanimously. It was incorporated into the Municipal Code as 13-21.7(a) "Any building that was constructed prior to 1942 shall not be demolished without approval of a Certificate of Approval issued by the HAB . . ." It almost doubled the number of Alameda structures that enjoy some measure of protection. The result "produced a safety net for restored or architecturally significant older buildings that are not in the Study List," according to Christopher Buckley, writing in the *AAPS Newsletter*, May, 2003.

Ruminations About the Council Decision

Architect Scott Brady served on the HAB for two terms; he was its chair for six years. He was interviewed in 2005 and said in part, "The owner of 1423 Morton Street had submitted plans to replace the existing 1883 house with a duplex. This property was ignored when the initial Study List was prepared, because by late 70's standards, it didn't look significant enough to warrant inclusion. AAPS asked the HAB to add the property to the Study List. Three Board members felt that the property owner had followed the City rules only to have approvals basically taken from him at

M.W.F.

Years after being touted as "the oldest documented commercial building in Alameda," 2320 Lincoln languishes. At least it stands! Images: Judith Lynch.

the last minute. The other two members of the Board, including myself, felt that there was still time to rescue the house: it hadn't been demolished, and final plans had not been approved. The Board decision was called for review by Mayor Johnson, after that the City Council came out strongly in favor of preservation. So the property was added to the Study List, and that owner sold it to more sympathetic people. That house is the one that caused us to initiate the post-1942 ordinance. "

A Major Victory Caps Off 2004

Saving the Encinal Saloon

While the new Main Library was under construction at Oak and Lincoln, the Library Board recommended adding a 96-space staff parking lot on two nearby parcels of land, site of Gim's Chinese Kitchen and its adjacent storage building. The library hired a mercenary architectural firm whose Environmental Impact Report (EIR) admitted that demolition of the pair would cause a "significant and unavoidable impact." However, because destruction seemed inevitable, the report suggested mitigations to soften the blow, including a "plaque . . that explains the historical significance of the buildings." The two places seemed doomed.

Luckily the EIR piqued the curiosity of amateur researcher Kevin Frederick, who disputed its conclusions. His dogged zeal for the truth led him to interviews, dusty archives, back issues of periodicals, and such on-line possibilities as there were in 2003-4. To counter the "professionals,"

Continued on page 6. . .



Close-ups taken in 2018 show the deplorable condition of 2320 Lincoln, originally the Encinal Saloon, and dating from the 1860s.



Years of Tumult...continued from page 5.

Kevin issued dramatic findings, helped by architectural historian Elizabeth Krase and others. The past of the two places was murky; finally Kevin ascertained that Gim's was constructed in 1890, although it was so altered in the 1950s that its past was invisible. Next door was 2320 Lincoln, whose dreary paint and sad neglect disguised its origin. Woody Minor summed up its significance later in Taking Care of Business, "By 1876 the Park Street commercial district had about 35 structures . . . The oldest and most intact [today] is the Encinal Saloon erected in the late 1860s at the southwest corner of Park Street and Railroad Avenue [now Lincoln], and later moved down the block to 2320 Lincoln, . . [It is] the city's oldest documented commercial building." This is one of the structures that the library intended to replace with a parking lot.

After outpouring from preservationists and buttressed by the Chinese and Japanese communities, City Council voted to save the two structures in 2004. Gim's still functions, and the Encinal Saloon still stands, although so neglected that its importance is too easily overlooked. Thanks to concerted and effective efforts, these exceptional reminders of our heritage are still with us!

(Thanks to: AAPS archives, Scott Brady, Christopher Buckley, City Clerk, City Planning staff Allen Tai, Kevin Frederick, Elizabeth Krase, Woody Minor, Jill Russell, Reference Department, Main Library.)



AAPS Holiday Party

This year the party was held at the First Congregational Church of Alameda. Members had a chance to socialize and enjoy the good food. Also, the new and returning board members were introduced by outgoing president Christopher Buckley. Shown above left to right: Doree Miles, Patsy Baer, Patty Ferrari, Karen Lithgow, Steve Aced, Christopher Buckley, with Conchita Perales and Janet Gibson seated in front.



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:

alameda-preservation org

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

Credit cards accepted online. alameda-preservation.org

Alameda Artist Spotlight

by Candace Rowe

Garr Crookston developed a love for Alameda in a rather round-about way. His son, an audiologist, had an interest in the Oakland/Alameda area as he was looking for locations to open his practices. As a result of his son's professional location to the East Bay, Garr and his wife Carol purchased a home on Santa Clara Avenue and moved to Alameda. Their home was originally built in 1906, and needed some work. Garr and Carol lovingly restored it from top to bottom, giving it the care and attention it deserved. The process gave them a love for Alameda's other fabulous homes and structures.

Himself a retired doctor of audiology, Crookston has ignited a second career in the field of fine art. A student of his wife, Nancy Seamons Crookston, OPA master, he has been recognized in plein air shows in the Rocky Mountain area and is a member of the Oil Painters of America and the California Art Club. In the fall of 2011 he launched his art career in China at the Desheng International Canvas week. Thirteen of his works are now in the collection of museums and collectors. More recently, he has been involved in plein air events in the San Francisco area.

A native of Hyrum, UT, Crookston graduated from South Cache High in 1963. He received his Masters in Speech Pathology and Audiology from Arizona Health Sciences University in Tempe, AZ. He now owns Hearing Zone Audiology in Alameda, and his busy schedule has only allowed him to paint a few of the buildings and houses of his adopted island home.

As avid travelers, Garr and Nancy love seeing the world. Their travels, however, have made them even more aware of the beauty around them right here at home. They plan to do many more Alameda-focused paintings in the upcoming year.

Garr Crookston

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











Crookston can be reached at garrcrookston@hotmail.com



P.O. Box 1677 Alameda, CA 94501

DON'T MISS OUT!

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AAPS SCHEDULE of EVENTS 2019

SUNDAY, JANUARY 13 7:00 PM

History of the Alameda Legacy Home Tour **CONCHITA PERALES & WOODY MINOR** First Congregational Church of Alameda 1912 Central Avenue

* **NOTE NEW** LOCATION

SUNDAY, APRIL 14 7:00 PM

Architectural Forensics JUDITH LYNCH First Congregational Church of Alameda 1912 Central Avenue