General Membership Meeting

Historic Preservation Awards and
Victorian Glory with Paul Duchscherer

Sunday, May 19, 2002 ~ 7:00 p.m.

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

Note: meeting at different location. AAPS is pleased to be able to use the facilities at First Presbyterian Church, on the corner of Santa Clara Avenue and Chestnut Street. The magnificent Colonial Revival architecture and stained glass windows are well worth the visit. The meeting will commence with the annual Historic Preservation Awards. Woody Minor will take us through a presentation of each building or home receiving an award. (Please see details on pages 2-7).

Next, AAPS is pleased and honored to have Paul Duchscherer presenting slides from his newly released book Victorian Glory, his volume about Bay Area Victoriana. The book examines the development of various architectural styles in the Bay Area and includes before and after stories about spectacular restorations. The book concludes with a listing of Bay Area house museums so readers can see for themselves why the homes of this era are so seductive, with their ornate decorations gleaned from eclectic concoctions of historical motifs.

Paul has a distinguished career in Bay Area architecture and historic preservation. He graduated from the Rudolph Schaeffer School of Design and initially worked on commercial interiors. In 1985 he escaped into a realm more closely aligned to his interest in history, spending nine years as Director of Design Services for Bradbury & Bradbury Art Wallpapers in Benicia, California. Paul’s knowledge of and enthusiasm for the history of design has found expression through lectures, writing and television, as well as teaching courses about architecture, interiors and decorative arts. Paul has been featured on This Old House as the interior designer for the Santa Barbara House. He has also been seen on the HGTV series Curb Side Appeal as a designer for the front of houses ranging in nineteenth and early twentieth century eras. In addition to his Victorian Glory book, Paul has written The Bungalow, Inside the Bungalow, and Outside the Bungalow. These books will be available for purchase at this meeting, courtesy of Silva Book Company on Park Street in Alameda.

We will be holding a raffle for 3 separate tickets to this year’s Alameda Legacy Home Tour, Comfortable Living in Vintage Houses, held September 15, 2002.

Information regarding Paul Duchscherer provided courtesy of Judith Lynch.
This lovely Queen Anne at 1185 Park Avenue, designed by architect Charles Shaner, was built for Robert Harvey in 1890 for $3,500. In the early 1920s, the home was divided into a duplex. Walls were built to separate the first and second floors. Two additional exterior staircases and doorways were also rigged. In 1950 the structure underwent another transformation, this time to the exterior. The majority of the home’s ornate exterior was encased with cement-asbestos siding, a big “home improvement” trend during that time period.

On September 18, 2000, only two and a half weeks after current owners Betsy and Scott Mathieson moved in, they began restoring their Victorian-in-the-rough. For more than 20 years, the couple resided in the San Jose area, where they had renovated two other historically significant buildings. Their new house in Alameda would be their third and final soulful project.

Betsy and Scott, both geologists, felt that even though the foundation to their 110-year-old home was sound, the building needed to be bolted down to a foundation to withstand an earthquake. This meant replacing the original brick foundation with a new concrete foundation. To increase the home’s livability for their young family, the owners also decided to increase the square footage by having the basement dug out for a home office, a home theater, a bathroom, and a washrum. Soon after local concrete specialist Ken Gutleben completed the foundation work, he installed a stairwell from the first story to the basement.

The walls that had previously separated the two floors of the living quarters were dismantled exposing the original floor plan. A floor furnace in the dining room; the only source for heat in the entire house, proved inadequate. It was replaced with two separate furnace units. One was installed in the basement to heat both the basement and the first floor, and the other was installed in the attic to heat the second floor.

Another major undertaking for the inspirational couple included a full roof replacement. As Betsy exclaimed, “A cross section of the roof’s shingles was about two inches thick.” After inspection, the rain gutters were found to be in good shape, but the downspouts needed repair. Luckily, the only area of dry rot was under the front porch steps.

Within two days of erecting the scaffolding, contractors had removed the asbestos siding. The home appeared almost as good as new. It’s siding was well preserved with only minor deterioration to some of the shingles. The Mathiesons were delighted by the amount of decorative gingerbread that had survived the Victorian’s past alterations. Only window aprons and other projecting trim work had been severed. The “ghost” markings allowed Scott to determine how the original woodwork appeared. From these markings, he created templates. Bob Haus remilled the gingerbread and Scott installed it himself. Scott also demolished the two porches and staircases of the upper unit as well. Local contractor, Alan Pryor, filled in the former upstairs entrances with the same type of redwood siding and shingles used on the rest of the house.

Betsy repaired all of the windows in the Victorian. Over the years, paint and caulk had accumulated between the joints, making the windows unstable. Betsy tediously removed every pane of glass, disassembled the frames, and cleaned up the residue. She then reassembled and primed the frames, and then reset each windowpane with new...
ter ceilings with geometric designs, flowers, stars and lion faces over the windows. The high ceiling was covered with two suspended ceilings, each lower than the other ceiling to reduce noise shortly after the Electric Company personnel took occupancy. The beautiful ceiling was further insulted with gaping holes to install wires and air conditioning ducts as time passed. Oily soot from heating units (possibly oil) was forced upon the mural surface. Some of the design had been painted out.

In the 1960s, the building was used by the Alameda First National Bank, which used it to house their mortgage business. Through the years, the building was "updated" by its occupants with layers of white paint splashed over walls and acoustical tile.

When Jim and Bernadette Allen purchased the building to use as their offices for 21st Century Toys, they were not aware of the treasure that awaited them above the dropped ceiling. Bernadette moved some of the acoustical tiles and was surprised to view the arches and large beams. She could faintly see some colors and patterns beneath the black soot and grime covering the mural.

The Allens hired decorative painter Jett Thorson and her son, Christopher Brooks to restore the original ceiling to its current splendor. While searching for candidates for the 2001 Preservation Awards, AAPS members came across Jett and Christopher using paper towels and water to gradually remove the dirt, oily soot and tobacco smoke inch by inch, not unlike the restoration of the Sistine Chapel. The two artistic professionals toiled for nine months in the unheated building accomplishing this task. A plasterer repaired the holes using the original materials. Jett and Christopher made tracings of each design and created stencils to recreate the original mural. Stencils were used as patterns to paint the large blocks of designs, while the other details were hand painted.

William Berg and Associates, who use the offices for their law firm, currently own the building. Members of the public can visit the interior of the building but are asked not to disturb the occupants. If you go, don’t miss the photo of the original electrical company appliance show room located on the wall to your right as you enter the building. Your visit will leave you with an appreciation for the historical preservation of Alameda’s treasures.
At about 11:00 PM on September 2000, Pat Payne was awakened by the shouts of her neighbors. Her house was on fire but her smoke alarms had not gone off because the fire had started outside the house in debris left by her roofing contractors. The fire had been sucked into the house through an exterior vent and since her 1873 Italianate had few fire breaks, every six inches of interior wall space acted as a chimney sucking the fire up through the walls straight up to the roof. The house was almost a total loss from the gutters up and water damage ruined the rest.

Since Ms. Payne had faithfully paid premiums to the same insurance company for 30 years for full replacement value, she assumed she would have no problem restoring her Italianate. She had understood that insurance is supposed to replace what was there and you can rebuild any way you want with the money. And although the shock of losing her beloved home was considerable, she didn’t realize that the struggle with her insurance company to get full replacement value would be almost as bad. This was also the worst time to find a decent contractor since all were busy from two to five years and most lacked the thing a Victorian needs most, a great trim carpenter. She finally found Westwind Builders through Jim Spalding—a great trim man. She was forced to stop working and instead spent 7 days a week for almost two years to restore her Italianate to its original 1873 splendor.

The 1873 Italianate was originally located on the present site of Stone’s Bicycle Shop on Santa Clara near Park Street. It had been moved in 1902 to its present site at 2121 Alameda Avenue. Sometime in the 1930’s, the elaborate front façade had been modified, losing part of its original woodwork and roofline. Determined to bring her Italianate back to its unmuddled glory, Pat found an early photograph of the original front façade as well as a similar Italianate on Eagle Avenue to help her match the original woodwork and roofline of her home.

Then the real struggle began. The insurance company fired the first shot in the war when their damage estimate showed that the original redwood siding under the previously added shingles would be replaced with plywood. Ms. Payne insisted that full replacement value meant just that: redwood siding should be replaced with redwood siding, not a cheap substitute. The real worth of a Victorian is in all of its parts.

Along the way, Pat discovered that there are public adjustors who for 10% of the gross proceeds will represent individuals in the struggle with insurance companies. However, since she had to be at the site to consult on the Italianate design and construction, she decided that she might as well do it herself. Likewise, she discovered from her insurance company that the real present cost of restoring an older home is $300 a square foot; the insurance company was offering much less than that as “replacement value”.

She also discovered some important allies. Haus did the bracket work for her; White Brothers lumber was important in finding original materials, such as redwood siding as well as successful substitutes, such as Cambera woodwork. Finally, Bob Nicol, architect, was of great assistance in ensuring that all the details were correct and speeding the project through the City. Pat was also able to reproduce much of the interior picture rails herself from pieces of the rails that had been saved from the fire.

She has decided to replace the exterior roof sprinklers but not install interior sprinklers because if they are accidentally triggered, the insurance company will not pay
for damage. An insurance company will only pay for water damage resulting from an actual fire. The sprinklers are to be placed on the upper outside roof to minimize interior water damage as well as protect the roof and the wood gutters from outside fires. They are manually turned on because by the time the heat activated the automatic ones it would be too late.

Pat did discover one fire preventive that is less costly and disruptive than tearing out all the walls and installing fire breaks. She had poured a product called Vermiculite in the West wall of her home because of fire worries and the close proximity of a 4 unit rental and it worked. That wall was untouched by fire except at the very top where it had compacted somewhat. Vermiculite pours down through the smallest openings at the attic and insulates and fireproofs. You just have to make sure any holes at the cellar level are closed off or it will pour out.

Our hats off to Pat Payne for her true grit in restoring her Italianate, Phoenix-like from fire.

1537 Webster Street
Opportunity From Adversity
David Baker

When Michael O’Connell’s showroom on Webster Street suffered a major fire, he didn’t accept it as a setback but took it as an opportunity. The Webster street streetscape has had a major enhancement thanks to his efforts.

In addition to repairing the damage caused by the fire, Mr. O’Connell chose to take advantage of the City of Alameda’s façade grant program to assist with the restoration of the historic features of the building. The Design Committee of the West Alameda Business Association offered preliminary suggestions regarding the historic features and Michael worked closely with his designer and contractor to develop the final design details.

The interior work included not only the new roof structure, but seismic upgrades, a refurbished floor, and a suite of modern offices above the showroom. Each office is filled with natural light from new skylights and the new clerestory windows along the Webster Street façade.

The façade has been completely refreshed with a new color palette, new canvas awnings and a hand-painted blade sign. The clerestory windows, which had been removed in a previous remodel, were replaced with new windows in a style similar to the originals. The attractive new ceramic tile along the building bulkhead was selected to compliment the original terra cotta cartouches above the windows.

Our thanks to Mr. O’Connell for his vision and all his efforts.

Building Owner: Michael O’Connell
Designer: Mi’Chelle Fredrick
Contractor: Patrick Brady
Jackson Park
Jackson Park Bandstand
Restoration
Christopher Buckley

The Jackson Park Bandstand restoration is an outstanding example of a seemingly far-fetched public project that was achieved through a combination of persistent community determination; a clear vision; a responsive and sympathetic city staff and design team; and a supportive Recreation and Parks Advisory Commission and City Council.

Jackson Park, originally called Alameda Park, is Alameda’s oldest park and retains the highest degree of historic integrity. The bandstand was erected in two weeks in 1890 at a cost of $200. It is Alameda’s oldest park building and oldest surviving municipal building. It was designed and built by Joseph A. Leonard, one of Alameda’s leading nineteenth century builders, architects and developers.

The most significant part of the restoration was reconstruction of the missing columns and railings, which formed the bandstand’s main level. These elements had been removed, probably in the 1920’s or 1930’s, resulting in the conical roof resting on the solid-walled basement level, making the structure look like a truncated silo. The replacement columns and railing designs were based on old photographs of the bandstand, surviving physical evidence and analysis of column and railing treatments on other buildings by Joseph A. Leonard.

Additional elements of the restoration were handicapped accessible restrooms, a new foundation, structural reinforcement, repair and replacement of damaged siding, a new wood shingle roof and restoration of the missing finial at the peak of the roof. The finial is an exact reproduction of the deteriorated original, in the possession of the Alameda Museum. The Museum acquired the original quite fortuitously. The city had it removed, probably around 1980, because youngsters were lassoing it with ropes to create improvised swings and the city considered the situation hazardous. The employee who removed the finial, Fred Krueger, kept it in his yard for a number of years, then brought it to the museum.

The bandstand’s restoration allows it to regain its original role as the centerpiece of the park. The structure’s elegant and delicate proportions and detailing and beautiful new paint scheme give it a very striking, jewel-like quality.

The restoration was central to the Phase I Jackson Park Renovation Project that was spearheaded by the Jackson Park Neighbors – a group of surrounding residents led by Pete Halberstadt. For years, the Jackson Park Neighbors had been urging the city to improve the park and address long-term neglect. In response, the city hired a consulting Landscape Architect, Jim Hemmann, to develop a park Master Plan. The Master Plan initially proposed demolishing the bandstand and replacing it with a new gazebo-type structure. At AAPS’s urging, the city’s Park and Recreation staff, under the leadership of former Director Sherry McCarthy, recommended that the historic bandstand should instead be restored. The Parks and Recreation Advising Commission and City Council concurred.

As project designer, Jim Hemmann, was especially helpful. He meticulously examined surviving physical evidence of the missing columns and railings, accepting numerous AAPS suggestions on the design details. Ken Carvalho of Buested Construction, served as a consulting cost estimator for the city, provided major assistance in photographing other designs by Leonard, arranged for replication of the finial and facilitated resolution of numerous design and construction issues.

Finally, Pete Halberstadt and the Jackson Park Neighbors continued their efforts to make sure that the project was realized and the Friends of the Parks Foundation contributed $5,000 towards the effort. The contractor was Nema Construction in Albany.

Alameda Architectural Preservation Society
A DANISH DELIGHT: Current Owners—Per Nielsen, Carol Nielsen and Mike Regan

In 1997, Per and Carol Nielsen purchased Danish Interiors from prior Danish Interior owners who had owned and operated the store for more than 30 years. When the Nielson’s purchased the building, the felt the storefront didn’t seem to complement the attractive and distinctive Danish Interior furniture they wished to invite customers to see, feel, appreciate and buy. They felt the curbside and sidewalk view was tired and not particularly attractive. Immediately, their quest toward renovation and restoration began.

Danish Interiors is historically known as the Randolph Building. In 1891, Daniel L. Randolph, a San Francisco real estate investor who had resided in Alameda since the mid 1880’s, purchased an L-shaped parcel from the Masonic Building Association. In the fall of that year, Randolph commissioned drawings for a two-story building on the Park Street frontage of his property—the architect being a chief draftsman for Joseph A. Leonard, Co. – a prolific Alameda design and building firm. The construction of the building began with a budget of $8,000 and was completed six months later. Mr. Randolph maintained the building until 1920, with professional tenants occupying both floors. In 1924, Park Street merchant John Damianakes, who operated the ‘New Alameda Market’ through the 1940’s, purchased the space. No one is absolutely sure when and why the 2nd floor of the building was removed—but today, this single story building thrives along with the magnificent Masonic Temple structure its south wall shares.

Due to the significance of the materials and craftsmanship of the 1325 Park Street building, it is a contributor to the Park Street Historic Commercial District, which was listed on the National Register in 1982. It is through the Registry listing that the building was able to receive a Grant through the Alameda Storefront Assistance Program. The $4,500 Grant—thanks to Bob Haun, Reconstruction Coordinator for the Alameda Planning Department—didn’t pay for all the work and effort contributed to the redesign and reconstructed storefront, but it was a valued resource and support for the business.

The renovation that the Nielsen’s went through started from the top and went down. There were loose and missing bricks that required replacement. The top windows were boarded up with wood paneling. Eleven panels required replacing, but the rest of the true divided light windows were in perfect condition. The redwood framing was rotted out and needed replacing. Then came the tile…when the rest of the restoration work was underway, the owners noted that some liquid from the top-down refinishing removed the finish of the brown trim base. To the owners delight, the underneath revealed beautiful blue ceramic tiles emerged. Immediately, the decision was made to remove the rest of the brown cover to reveal the beautifully preserved blue ceramic tile surround.
**Future 2002 AAPS General Membership Meeting**

**Sunday, August 25, 2002, 7p.m.:** “How to Identify Quality Antique Furniture,” by Lee Jester. Lee is the owner of The Craftsman Home in Berkeley. He has invited our group to take an exciting field trip to his furniture workshop here at Alameda Point. He will be giving us an important education on how to look for quality furniture when shopping.

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**Alameda Legacy Home Tour**  
**Comfortable Living in Vintage Houses**  
**September 15, 2002**

Spend a day on a lovely island in San Francisco Bay, visit historic homes where families dwell, and stroll through neighborhoods rich in architectural heritage. The Alameda Legacy Home Tour takes place Sunday, September 15, 2002, from 11 am until 5 pm. The event is hosted by the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society and the Alameda Museum. The architectural styles featured will span the Victorian and Edwardian eras, so of course Queen Victoria with her consort Prince Albert, King Edward VII with Queen Alexandra will be on the tour to inspect the premises. Please practice your bow and curtsy!

Another special attraction is a “work in progress” house, where a family has undertaken the major restoration of a Queen Anne Victorian. The ground floor has been renovated as their refuge during the vicissitudes of the project; the main floor is mainly untouched; the upper floor has been completely restored with glorious wallpapers, faux finishes, stenciling, and decor. Here you will have an opportunity to speak with experts of vintage house renovation, including wallpaper maven Bruce Bradbury, decorative glass artist Ken Matthias, and others.

**Tickets cost $20 in advance or $25 on the day of the tour. The price includes a keepsake Legacy Guidebook and light refreshments. To buy tickets by mail, make your check payable to ALHT and send it to the Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Avenue, Alameda CA 94501. For information, kindly call 510.523.5907. You can also send e mail to alamedahometour@netscape.net. If you are coming from out of town, call for a list of local accommodations and restaurants, or check our website www.alameda-home-tour.org**

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Look for the raffle at the May 19 General Membership Meeting. Three tickets to the home tour will be raffled off!
AAPS is pleased to announce that we will be entering this year's Annual Fourth of July Parade. We have reserved a six person horse-drawn carriage. We are looking for volunteers that want to dress in period costumes and walk in the parade. We will be handing out brochures about AAPS and flyers about the Alameda Legacy Home Tour. Even if you can only walk half the route, please don’t hesitate to contact us as we would appreciate all volunteers. It is also great fun! For more information or to sign up please call Ruth Tillman at 337-1405.

**Preservation Action Committee**

A meeting with our new Planning Director will be held on May 6th to introduce him to AAPS and discuss our organization’s concerns. Among topics we will discuss will be updating the Historic Study List and Residential Design Guidelines. Also on the agenda are preservation incentives, permit processing/requirements, Planning Department customer service and code enforcement.

In April, the Northern Waterfront Specific Plan Advisory Committee presented their progress for development of this area of Alameda. Nancy Gill represented the Historical Advisory Board on this panel. The committee has recommended the Del Monte Building rehabilitation follow the Department of Interior Standards. The consulting group working with the city will refine the development plans and return to the city in mid summer or early fall with an updated specific plan including policies, regulations and a fiscal and implementation plan. An Environmental Impact Review will evaluate impacts and recommend mitigation measures. The plan and EIR refinements will be available for public review before presentation to the Planning Board.

The Historical Advisory Board has been discussing new street names for upcoming developments. During the past few months, the Board has approved the removal several Live Coastal Oak trees. The tree is endangered and required HAB approval for removal. The board required a new tree be planted for each one removed. Now that the New Planning Director has joined the city and the Northern Waterfront Plan is underway, the HAB will again address the Mills Act to encourage preservation of historical homes through tax incentives.

*The Preservation Action Committee meets at 7:00 pm on the fourth Thursday 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!*

Alameda Architectural Preservation Society
If you would like to join the Architectural Preservation Society or renew your membership, please send this portion back with your payment.

Membership Chairperson - Denise Brady
@ 523-8886

Name: ___________________________ Date: __________
Address: ___________________________________

Phone#: ___________________________________

Check your membership category.

☐ renewal    ☐ new member
☐ Family $25    ☐ Single $20    ☐ Seniors $10 each
☐ US Mail Newsletter   ☐ e-mail Newsletter

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

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Electronic Newsletter

AAPS is going to be making our newsletters available to download off of our website, www.alameda-preservation.org. It will be in Adobe Acrobat form, which can be downloaded for free from http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html. This will not only cut down on our mailing costs but also make it more convenient for those of you who prefer to receive e-mails over snail mail. Please e-mail Ruth Tillman at ruth.tillman@attbi.com to request to be put on the electronic e-mail list. Include your name, address, and e-mail.

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AAPS MEMBER Classified

For Sale
3/4 Victorian Iron Bed
$100 or best offer
call Nancy for more information at 814-4815

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

The California Preservation Foundation is having their 27th Annual California Preservation Conference: Vintage Sonoma County. May 2-5, 2002 in Santa Rosa. Phone: 510-763-0972 e-mail: www.californiapreservation.org

Alameda Museum Lectures:
Admission is free for Museum members and $5 for others. Call 510-748-0796.
Thursday, June 27, 2002, 7 pm: Neon: The Living Flame, by Michael Crowe

Musical to Benefit Museum
Supporters of the Alameda Museum offer an afternoon of food and theater at the Altarena Playhouse, Sunday, June 9, 2002. Wine and appetizers will be served at 1:00 pm; the performance is at 2:00 pm, when playgoers will see the poignant and charming musical Carnival The show began life as the bittersweet film Lili, starring Mel Ferrer as a magician and Leslie Caron as a poor French orphan who is adopted by a band of puppeteers. Carnival is the musical made after the film won critical acclaim in 1953. The Playhouse invites us to “follow Lili’s quest for love in a war-torn world as she joins a circus troupe in France. She overcomes despair to find that people are not always what we take them to be.” The play admission of $20 includes both the show and the comestibles. For information and reservations call Diane Coler-Dark: 510.523.5907. The Altarena Playhouse is located at 1409 High Street, between Central and Santa Clara Avenues

The Victorian Alliance of San Francisco Garden Tour 2002. Saturday, May 18, 1-5 p.m., call (415) 826-1437 or visit www.victorianalliance.org
AAPS Calendar

Wednesday, May 8, 2002, 7:00 pm: Home Tour Meeting.

Wednesday, May 15, 2002, 7:30 pm: Board Meeting at the home of Nancy Hird


Wednesday, June 12, 2002, 7:00 pm: Home Tour Meeting.

Wednesday, June 19, 2002, 7:30 pm: Board Meeting.


Wednesday, July 10, 2002, 7:00 pm: Home Tour Meeting

Wednesday, July 17, 2002, 7:30 pm: Board Meeting


For information on meeting locations please call Ruth Tillman at 337-1405.