General Membership Meeting

The Hidden Treasure

Jett Thorson, Decorative Painter

Sunday, October 19, 2003 ~ 7:00 p.m.

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

AAPS is pleased and honored to announce the first guest speaker of this year decorative painter and artist Jett Thorson. AAPS awarded Thorson and her son, Christopher Brooks with a 2002 Preservation Award for painstakingly restoring the ceiling of the 1928 Alameda Bureau of Electricity building located at 2440 Santa Clara Avenue, now the offices of William Berg and Associates. The ornate hand painted and stenciled ceiling was hidden and forgotten under two false ceilings for many years. Previous owners Jim and Bernadette Allen discovered the ceiling by chance one day when Mrs. Allen moved some of the acoustical tiles and was surprised to view the arches and large beams. She could faintly see some color and patterns beneath the black soot and grime covering the mural.

Thorson will be giving us a captivating slide presentation on the details of how she and her son went about their work on restoring the ceiling back to its original beauty. This includes describing how they removed not only dirt but oily soot and tobacco smoke inch by inch and how the plasterer repaired the holes using the original materials. Thorson will go into detail of how she and her son made tracings of each design and created stencils and they then hand painted the final details back in.

This presentation will be an exciting look on how people are preserving our local buildings history and beauty.
At its September 22, 2003 meeting, the Alameda Planning Board spent about three hours considering the draft Residential Design Review Manual. Improving the Manual has been one of AAPS’s highest priorities. Under the existing 1974 Design Review Manual many projects are approved by the City that should not be approved, such as vinyl siding on Victorians and inappropriate additions, porch enclosures, replacement windows, etc. (see August, 2003 AAPS News).

Prior to the meeting, AAPS provided extensive written comments to the Board, including a revised version of the Manual.

AAPS’s more significant comments include:

- The Manual should promote high design quality for both “historic” and “non-historic” buildings. The draft tends to set a higher standard for “historic” buildings, but doesn’t clearly define what is meant by “historic”.
- Changes to existing buildings should be consistent with their original architectural style.
- The Manual’s text should be more direct and eliminate unintended verbal loopholes. Words like “should”, “recommended”, “whenever feasible”, etc should not be used unless exceptions are intended to be allowed, in which case, the nature of the exceptions should be described.
- Substitute or synthetic materials like cement fiber or vinyl siding or vinyl windows must visually match the original materials or other materials which could have been used on the building originally.
- The manual needs to state that certain replacement materials, such as vinyl siding, often do not visually match original materials.
- Total enclosure of main entry porches should not be allowed.

About thirteen speakers addressed the Board, all generally supportive of AAPS’s positions and many of whom were AAPS members. The Board also received at least five letters, all but one supporting AAPS’s positions.

Much of the Board discussion focused on the following issues:

- Use of words like “shall” vs. words like “should”
- Appropriations of vinyl siding. Some Board members expressed concerns over this material.
- Whether a complete change of a building’s style should be allowed. Some Board members felt such changes should be approved if they were well-designed.
Board members seemed to generally agree that any changes to existing buildings “should look like they were always there.”

The Board will consider the Manual again at its October 15, 2003 meeting. Prior to that meeting, the Board agreed to review AAPS’s revised version of the draft Manual in detail and forward comments to Staff. Staff will use these comments, along with the Board’s previous comments as a basis for a revised draft of the Manual.

Thank you to all of the AAPS members who attended the meeting or wrote letters. Please call Chris Buckley at 510-523-0411 for further information or if you would like copies of AAPS’s written comments on the Manual.

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!

The Preservation Community Calendar

**The Victorian Alliance of San Francisco 2003 Annual House Tour featuring The Panhandle of Golden Gate Park**  Sunday, October 19, 2003, 1 pm- 5 pm

Tickets cost $20 in advance or $25 after October 1 deadline. Call 415-824-2666. Website: www.victorianalliance.org.

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

HELP NEEDED:
Can you help AAPS with our newsletter and/or webpage? We are looking for somebody to help take the strain off our volunteers.

Please contact Ruth Tillman at 510-337-1405 or ruthtillman@alamedanet.net
ALAMEDALEGACY HOME TOUR
Victoria’s Heritage in the Gold Coast
September 21, 2003 11am-5pm

Thank you
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 from the beginning planning stages 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
If you would like to join the Architectural Preservation Society or renew your membership, please send this portion back with your payment.

Membership Chairperson - Ruth Tillman
@ 337-1405

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

2004 Board Nominations

Do you know someone for the Board?
Are you interested in being a part of our team?
Do you want to know more about becoming a team member on the AAPS Board?

Call Christopher Buckley at 510-523-0411 or
e-mail Ruth Tillman at ruthtillman@alamedanet.net

AAPS BOARD MEMBERS 2003

President: Nancy Hird-523-0825
1st VP: Jean Graham-Gilliat-769-6293
2nd VP: Gia Boscacci-865-1249
Treasurer: Mary Jacak-749-1320
Advisor to the Board: Ruth Tillman

Corresponding Sec.: Janelle Spatz-521-4045
Recording Sec.: Randy Horton-523-0135
Member at Large: Christopher Buckley-523-0411
Newsletter Editor: Ruth Tillman-337-1405,
ruthtillman@alamedanet.net
AAPS CALENDAR

Monday, October 6, 2003, 7 pm: Preservation Action Committee Meeting
Wednesday, October 15, 2003, 7 pm: AAPS Board Meeting

Monday, November 3, 2003, 7 pm: Preservation Action Committee Meeting
Wednesday, November 19, 2003, 7 pm: AAPS Board Meeting
Monday, December 1, 2003, 7 pm: Preservation Action Committee Meeting
Sunday, December 7, 2003, 6 pm - 9 pm: AAPS Annual Holiday Potluck, for members only.