



Alameda PRESERVATION Press

NEWSLETTER OF THE ALAMEDA
ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Christopher Yerke of Restoration Workshop, Ltd.

Underneath It All Restoring Period Architectural Woodwork Sunday, November 15, 2015 at 7:00 pm



Immanuel Lutheran Church: 1420 Lafayette Street, Alameda, CA
(Parking available at the corner of Chestnut Street and Santa Clara Avenue.)

FREE for AAPS Members; Non-members \$5



Original or Historically Appropriate

Story by Steve Aced and Christopher Yerke

Restoration Workshop, Ltd. is the creation of Christopher Yerke, a San Francisco based general contractor and woodworker with 30 years of trade and craft experience. Restoration Workshop was created to be a repository of rapidly disappearing, historical craft and construction knowledge. As such Restoration Workshop's services include restoration and preservation project management, exceptional finish carpentry, fine custom furniture fabrication, preservation and landmarks consulting, and uncommonly fine remodeling.

AAPS is pleased to welcome Christopher as the guest speaker at our next lecture. He will take us through the thought process involved in evaluating period architectural woodwork with an eye toward taking it back to an original or historically appropriate state. There are many potential compromises to be struck in so labor intensive a process, and it is indispensable to have a solid plan and be forewarned of what might

continued on page 2...

Restoration Workshop, Ltd. designed, fabricated and finished the mantle and surrounding built-in furnishings to complement this tile design by Michelle Nelson. The wood was carefully chosen to match the grain of existing trim in the house, and it was milled from large timbers for consistency of color and grain. Photo: Daniel Moore.



Victorian entry door after paint removal and subsequent restoration.

Victorian entry door, detail showing refreshed carving and restored original lock set.



Victorian mantle after paint removal and refinishing.

Underneath It All...continued from page 1.

be lurking under all that paint. Topics will include: To strip, or not to strip; Cleaning and preservation of worn original finishes; How to strip, if it comes to that; and useful tools and products, as well as associated health risks.

When Christopher moved to the Bay Area in 1998, it did not take long before he was involved in very fine work in Pacific Heights, Piedmont and on Nob Hill. In 2001 he was hired to manage an exhaustive exterior restoration of the John C. Spencer house in San Francisco's Haight Ashbury neighborhood. "That is when the die was cast. I was given the best toy ever, in the form of a 9,000 square foot Queen Anne house that is still one of the best built buildings I have ever worked on. I have a very eclectic background, but somehow it was all relevant in the context of restoring that house. At that point, I decided that the preservation of craft was going to be my mission."

In 2005, Christopher won the California Preservation Design Award for craftsmanship for the restoration of the Spencer House, which he subsequently went on to successfully nominate to the National Register of Historic Places and soon thereafter shepherded it through the complex process of obtaining Mills Act status.

When asked how he came to this point, he says, "I come by it honestly. My maternal grandmother was an interior decorator and stencil artist with a strong connection to colonial architecture. She had an 1832 federal style house in eastern Ohio. My paternal grandfather was a paving contractor with really big machines, and an obsession with restoring old cars. What little kid would not be fascinated with that? As I grew up in central Illinois, I was always being taken to tour historic landmarks and museums. Frank Lloyd Wright, Louis Sullivan, Tiffany, Frederic Law Olmstead... these names have been a part of my vocabulary

from a very young age, because the adults in my life valued art and architecture so strongly, and because Chicago was such fertile ground."

Christopher holds a BFA in metal smithing from Southern Illinois University, as well as post graduate studies in music and foreign languages. He spent 12 years as a freelance TV producer/director, which he says were fundamental in teaching him how to manage diverse personalities in a collaborative effort — skills directly transferable to managing architectural projects. He is an avid collector and user of historic woodworking tools as well as a constant student of historic construction and woodworking practice. "My experience in craft is eclectic, to say the least. I have done at least some of everybody else's trade by now, even things that pertain more to mining or road building than residential architecture. It all adds up to what is required: resourcefulness."

Christopher Yerke is a member and three term president of Artistic License, a Bay Area Guild of period craft artisans. As with all guild members, he is dedicated to the preservation of traditional craft and the cultural legacy left by it.



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Portfolio available at artisticlicense.org

Have You Ordered Your Historical Plaque?



Gretchen and Arthur Lipow are the latest AAPS members to receive a plaque for their home, Fargo House.

For more information about the AAPS Plaque Program and to access a downloadable brochure and application, please visit our website:
Alameda-preservation.org/programs/historical-plaque-program/

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS 2016 AAPS BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Deadline:
November
11**

AAPS is in the process of electing its 2016 Board. We have an excellent Board; however welcome the opportunity to expand our ranks to include new members with ideas to further enhance and benefit AAPS preservation interests throughout the community we serve.

Please let us know if you or someone you know would like to serve AAPS in a board capacity. Our goal is to continue to increase awareness, understanding, available resources and support of architectural preservation throughout Alameda.

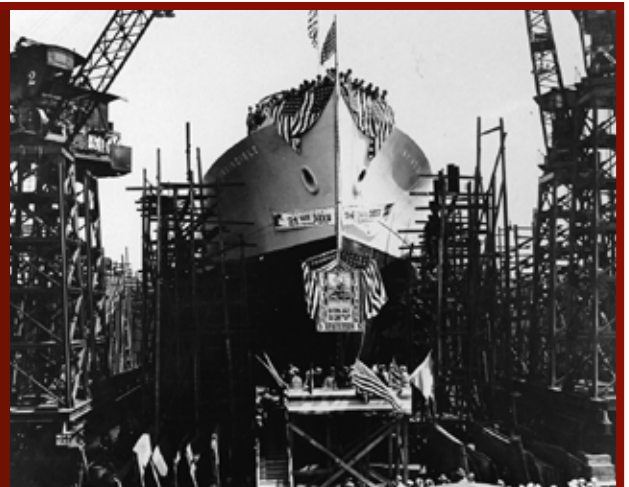
**Please contact Christopher Buckley at
aaps@alameda-preservation.org or 510-479-6489
with your nominee or questions about being a
board member by November 11.**

A Legacy of Enterprise & Innovation November 5, 2015 • 7pm • Alameda City Hall

Join Alameda historian Woody Minor in the council chambers for a special presentation about our city's remarkable legacy of achievement in the areas of industry, shipping, and transportation in the 19th and 20th centuries.



Sponsored by the Community Development Department.
Hosted by Historical Advisory Board. *Image courtesy Alameda Museum.*



Legacy Home Tour Draws Appreciative Crowds *Story by Jim Smallman*

Blessed with glorious weather and six outstanding historic sites, the Alameda Legacy Home Tour was an outstanding success. Jointly sponsored by the Alameda Museum and the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society, this year's tour continued a tradition begun in the 1970s. Five period houses and a historic church graced the tour this year. The architectural styles included a towered Queen Anne, high basement Victorian cottages, Craftsman and shingle styles, and an elegant 19th century church. Each site was enhanced with an antique automobile, parked in front. Historic photos, converted to life-size cutouts, identified each house and welcomed visitors.

Nearly one hundred volunteers aided some four hundred guests. Volunteers explained features of each home and answered visitor questions. Others provided

refreshments at the Meyers House Garden and served food at the after-tour party for docents, homeowners, and volunteers at the Meyers House.

The *Alameda Journal's* Janet Levaux wrote an excellent article promoting the tour the week before, and the *Alameda Sun* provided advertising and an appreciative summary of the tour the following week. With such ongoing community interest and support, the Alameda Legacy Home Tour should continue to be a fixture for years to come. The tour raised over nine thousand dollars, shared equally by the Alameda Museum and the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society. These funds help these organizations to continue their many preservation projects. The public support of this annual event, and the outstanding efforts of the many volunteers are greatly appreciated.



Bill and Pam Emberley receive a certificate from MC Jim Smallman in appreciation for having their home on the tour.

Docents admiring the antique automobile provided by Wendell Stewart.



Docents Liz Rush and Valerie Turpen at House #5. Party goers enjoying food and music in the Meyers House Garden.



Docents from House #1 on Paru Street: Kathy McIntire, Leah Vass, Lisa Dosa, and Nancy Marzolf. Images: Linda Weinstock.



TIPS FROM MARGY

Margy Silver has spent months and months stripping paint from the woodwork of her Marcuse and Rimmel designed Queen Anne Victorian here in Alameda. Some rooms had as many as 10 coats of paint on top of the original varnish finish. Now the house has exposed woodwork finishes that match the original and it takes your breath away.

When AAPS first started thinking about paint removal Margy's name entered the conversation quickly. Although there are numerous techniques and materials you can use to strip paint from wood Margy has given us a few "tips" she thinks are worth sharing with anyone about to start a similar project.

Safety – Safety – Safety: It Should Always Be Your First Concern

- Always wear safety goggles, long sleeved shirts and long pants
- Wear leather gloves when using a heat gun
- Wear chemical resistant gloves when using chemicals
- Keep a fan going and the windows open
- Find a comfortable respirator and use it
- Never turn off the smoke alarms. If they go off it's time to up your ventilation game
- When using a heat gun always keep a bag of baking soda and a fire extinguisher next to the plug/receptacle the heat gun is plugged into
- Never leave the room with the heat gun plugged in
- Keep a pan of water around when using chemicals in case you get splashed
- Pick up paint debris every night, put it in a sealable container and damp mop floor to minimize exposure to lead

Other Tips

- It's easy to crack glass with a heat gun. Taping a piece of cardboard covered with several layers of aluminum foil and taping it over the glass helped to reduce this problem
- Always cover the surfaces adjacent to the surface being stripped with multiple layers of blue tape
- Once you start staining and varnishing keep the room dust free

Think Small

Trying to do one room at a time may be too big of a project. Start with one door or one set of windows before moving on. You'll have a better chance of finishing the whole job.

Margy's Procedure

There are different opinions on what is the best method and materials to use when stripping paint. Margy's choice was to first use a heat gun to remove the paint, (she hauled off over 200 pounds of chipped paint). Next she applied Jasco Gel Stripper (fairly thickly), let it sit for 30-40 minutes and then scrubbed it off using small brass brushes and warm soapy water. She worked in small, two foot long sections to avoid soaking the wood and softening the embossed patterns the wood often had. To help in the removal of the paint she also used dental tools and some Japanese carving tools called Niji. For the final steps she applied Green's liquid stripper with flux brushes to dissolve the remaining paint. Once dissolved she went back to her trustworthy dental tools to remove any remaining paint residue. When the wood surface was dry she gave it a final cleaning using mineral spirits and 0000 steel wool.



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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Would you like to receive your newsletter

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☐ Renewal ☐ New member

Select your membership category

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Number of family members _____ ☐ Partner \$100 ☐ Patron \$500

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

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

Alameda Artist Spotlight

by Linda Weinstock

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

George David Powell has always been an artist. As a boy he was inspired by the work of such artists as Van Gogh and Gauguin. After a distinguished career as a Marine, he continued to follow his passion at the American Academy of Art in Chicago. Today, the Alameda veteran paints as a form of therapy for PTSD.

Of all the mediums of painting, his favorite is watercolors. It's the challenge of taking a mental image, sketching it out and directing the paint which sometimes has a mind of its own. Making sure a part of his life is in the painting brings it all together. The objective is to bring happiness into people's lives. George's work can be seen locally at the Frank Bette Center for the Arts.

Magazine Publications

Southwest Art Magazine • November 2014
(Botanicals) Collector's Choice.

The Artist Magazine • January – February 2014

Alameda Magazine • January – February 2008

George David Powell



Alameda Victorian 10" X 14" 200.00



Walk To Crab Cove 10" X 14" 200.00



Alameda Theatre 10" X 14" 200.00

Contact info:

George David Powell

powell_g@att.net

www.georgepowellvisions.com

#6 ALAMEDA HISTORICAL MONUMENT

First Church of Christ, Scientist 2164 Central Avenue

Year of Construction: 1922

Architect: Carl Werner

Architectural Style: Classical Revival

Original Owner: First Church of Christ, Scientist Alameda

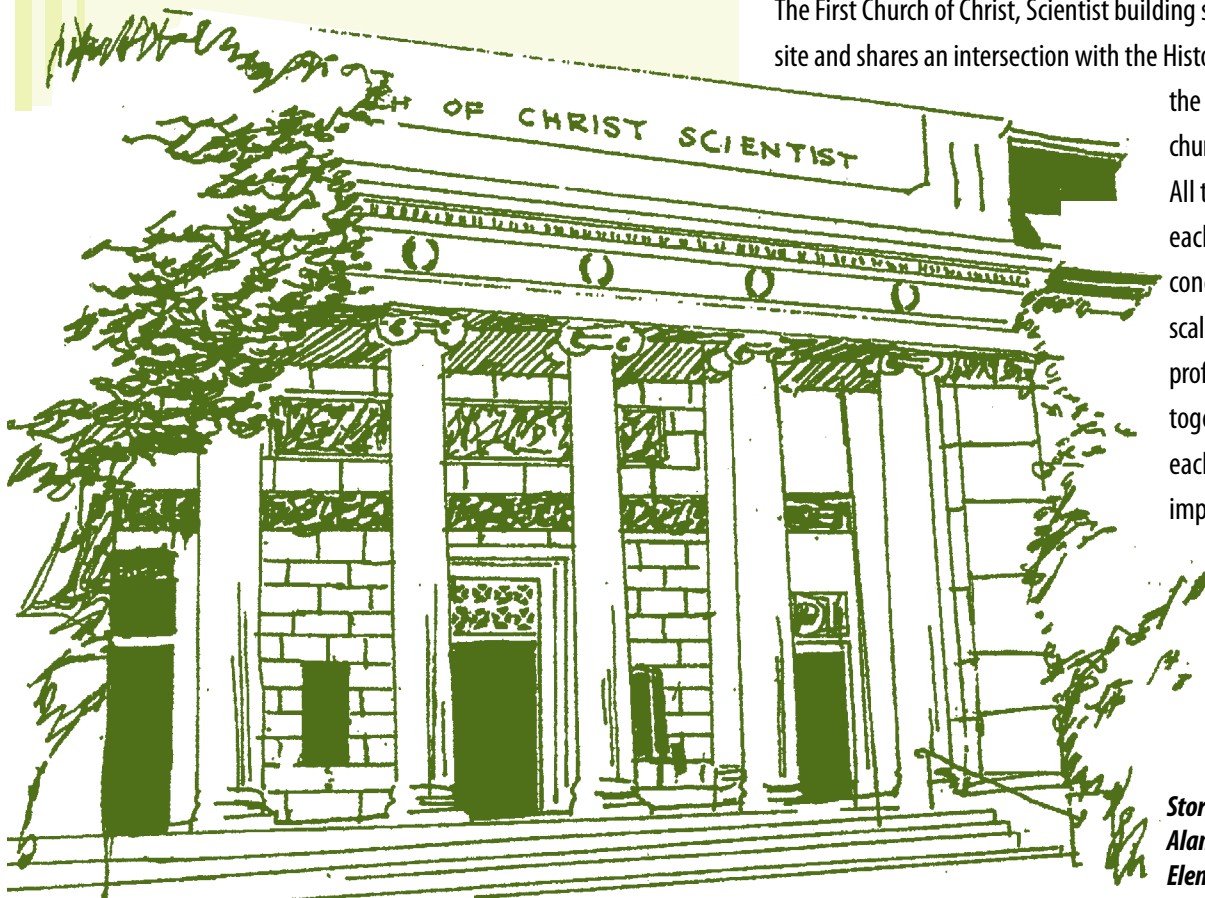
Date Monument Status

Conferred by City Council: 10/4/1978

The First Church of Christ, Scientist was formed in 1898 and was incorporated in 1903. The present site at 2164 Central Avenue was purchased in 1907. Thirteen years later, the architect, Carl Werner was hired and his plans were adopted by the church congregation. The building which was completed in 1922, served as the progenitor of the architectural design for Alameda High School. Werner was also granted the contract for the neighboring Alameda High School building finished in 1925.

The church is a one-story reinforced concrete construction of a neo-classical design, having a rectangular plan. The main part of the building facing Central Avenue appears as a Greek temple. Its front facade is dominated by a shallow portico of six Ionic columns rising from a broad flight of stairs. Three large rectangular doors are separated by two rectangular shaped windows set in the portico area. Concrete in the portico has been scored to stimulate stone block and has been superimposed above a projecting band with a marble panel embossed with the cross and crown emblem of the church. A cornice with dentil coursing runs around the front and sides surmounted by a plain first parapet. Incised into the front parapet are the words "First Church of Christ, Scientist."

The First Church of Christ, Scientist building sits on an important corner site and shares an intersection with the Historic Alameda High School, the Adelphian Club (now used as a church), and the Veteran's Building. All these buildings relate to each other by cohesive design concept or by similar architecture scale of various elements, roofing profile, and exterior materials. together the buildings reinforce each other to create an impression of a civic nucleus.



Story excerpt from the City of Alameda Historic Preservation Element, 1980.



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AAPS SCHEDULE of EVENTS 2015

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SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15
7:00 PM

Underneath It All
Restoring Period Architectural Woodwork
Christopher Yerke of Restoration Workshop, Ltd.
IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

•
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13
6:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Annual Holiday Party
LOCATION TO BE ANNOUNCED