

Alameda PRESERVATION Press

NEWSLETTER OF THE ALAMEDA
ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

A Presentation by **Ornamental Plaster Expert Lorna Kollmeyer**

○○○○○○○

Sunday, February 12, 2017 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; \$5 for non-members

Don't miss attending AAPS's first General Meeting / Lecture of 2017. Bay Area ornamental plaster expert Lorna Kollmeyer will share her knowledge and experience during a video presentation and audience discussion.

Lorna has been working in the Bay Area for thirty four years and holds the quintessential archive of authentic cast plaster ornaments for historic Bay Area architecture, be it Victorian, Edwardian, Mediterranean, or Art Deco in style. Lorna is an expert not only in specifying choices from her vast selection of moldings, brackets, medallions, and other plaster ornamentation, but also in guiding her clients efficiently, correctly, and economically through their restoration processes. Her work has been the subject of profiles in "This Old House" magazine and on HGTV's programs "Modern Masters" and "Curb Appeal."

Lorna Kollmeyer is a member of Artistic License, a guild of professional artisans whose work continues time-honored traditions of crafts for the built environment. Artistic License members promote the highest standards for period architecture, interiors, and the decorative arts; encompassing restoration, renovation, and newly interpreted period revival design.

Her work with homeowners and contractors has emanated from her studio at Hunter's Point Shipyard since 1983. Hunters Point Shipyard Artists (HPSA) are the



continued on page 2...

Lorna Kollmeyer in her studio working to restore a Victorian crown molding.

Ornamental Plaster ...continued from page 1



A restored Art Deco apartment building by Lorna at Fisherman's Wharf.

largest community of artists in the United States with more than 250 artists in working studios.

The studios are open to the public just three times a year: Spring Open Studios (4th weekend of April), Fall Open Studios (mid-October) and the Holiday Party & Art Show (1st Sunday in December).

To learn more about Lorna's work and review her extensive catalog of stock ornaments visit the following websites:

lornakollmeyer.com

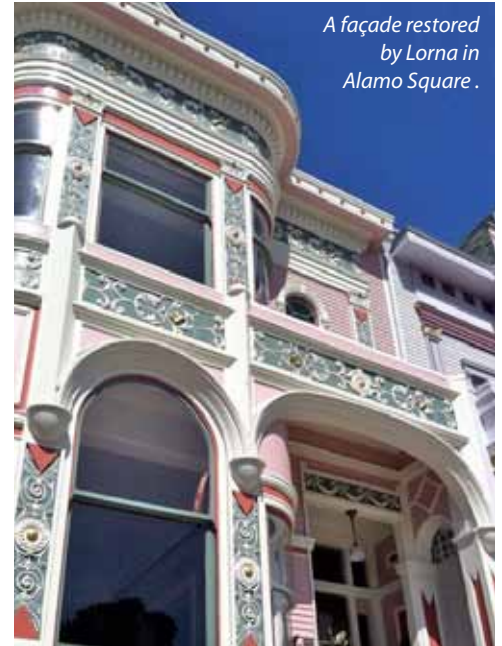
shipyardartists.com/work/lorna-kollmeyer

artisticlicense.org

Lorna can be contacted at

415-312-6269

LornaK@sonic.net



A façade restored by Lorna in Alamo Square.

AAPS Holiday Dinner: A Good Time Was Had By All by Janet Gibson

A lovely evening was enjoyed by all who attended the annual AAPS Holiday Dinner on December 4th. The large open space at First Congregational Church's historic 1893 Social Hall allowed room for fifty-one AAPS members and guests to mingle and talk with each other over wine and appetizers. Tables were set with the church's early 20th century "Syracuse China" and attendees brought delicious food dishes to accompany a main menu of wild salmon with organic vegetables and chicken masala with mushrooms. Thanks to the catering expertise of Chef Deanna Satterwhite and the top-notch church kitchen, serving and cleanup were smooth and easy.

Throughout the evening we were entertained with period holiday music from Jim Rebhan. AAPS's newly elected Board members were introduced and officially installed. Church Historian, Ann Johnsen, gave a tour of the church's nooks and crannies. In 1885 a small church was moved to Central and Chestnut. By 1893 the Social Hall building was added and in 1904 the present Sanctuary replaced the original church.



In 1904 the cornerstone for the church was laid and the finished structure was dedicated on Easter Sunday, 1905.

Our Holiday Dinners, as well as all other AAPS events and activities, owe their success to the support and work of many members. As co-chairs of this year's dinner, Linda Weinstock and I would like to thank everyone who helped to make the event such a success. In particular we want to recognize: Erich Stiger for storing, delivering and replenishing our wine and drink supply; Charlie (and Gail) Howell for bartending and serving the drinks; Kathy McIntire for balloon decorations; Vicky Bell and Mely Perales for welcoming guests; the entire AAPS Board for decorating, setting up, and cleaning up; and First Congregation Church for providing the facility free of charge.

Keep up the good work in 2017!

AAPS WELCOMES NEW AND RETURNING BOARD MEMBERS

AAPS BOARD MEMBERS 2017

President

Chris Rummell • 510-309-7131

1st Vice President

Johanna Hall • 510-701-9392

2nd Vice President

Janet Gibson • 510-521-1332

Treasurer

Bob Risley • 510-864-1103

Corresponding Secretary

Conchita Perales • 510-205-6762

Recording Secretary

Patsy Baer • 510-769-1143

Advisor to the Board

Vacant

Member at Large

Christopher Buckley • 510-523-0411

For more information, please contact:
Alameda Architectural Preservation Society
P.O. Box 1677 • Alameda, CA 94501
510-479-6489

alameda-preservation.org

Newsletter Design: Valerie Turpen 510-522-3734

Alameda Artist Spotlight

by Linda Weinstock

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

In 2015 Mandar Wagholikar moved from New York to Alameda and fell in love with the beauty of Alameda's homes and beaches. In his artwork Mandar strives to capture the inspiring quality of the city which is an integral part of its charm and cozy lifestyle.

The interplay between the geometric shapes of the houses and the colorful trees and greenery makes a perfect subject for his paintings. He has a vibrant and energetic style which is reflected in his use of both acrylics and pastels. While he has worked extensively with acrylics, he sometimes prefers the quality of soft pastels to capture the beauty of the moment.

Painting impressions of light as it falls and reflects over the subject of his artwork has become a heart-felt passion of his. Mandar is inspired by the magic of nature and by life itself which is reflected in his expression as an artist. He believes art can help encourage preservation of the city's architecture for our children and grandchildren to enjoy.

Mandar Wagholikar



Contact info:

Cell: (914) 419-3989

Email: mandar_wagholikar@hotmail.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/mandarfineart

Etsy: www.etsy.com/shop/mandarwagholikar

Quick Action Saves Railroad Landmark

by Conchita Perales



The Mission Revival station shelter in its original setting. The billboard seen on the right edge of the photo for the Neptune Palace Theatre, where "Good Dame" and "Melody in Spring" were running at the time, dates this picture to 1934. Image: "Alameda by Rail", by Grant Ute and Bruce Singer.

An important piece of Alameda's history was just a few months away from being destroyed, when railway historian Thomas Cornillie prevented its scheduled demolition by alerting the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society of its imminent demise.

On the south side of Lincoln Avenue, about 100 feet East of Webster Street, on what used to be the last mile of the Transcontinental Railroad, sits a small forlorn building. Last used as an office for a car rental business, the structure was now standing in the way of plans for a new two-story mixed-use commercial building on the site.

In July of last year, developer Kevin Lam was in the final stages of plan approval for a new 7,100 sq. foot building that called for the removal of the odd little office. In turn, the City Planning Board posted notices at the site alerting property owners and residents of the plan approval hearing that would take place just a few days away. No one knew, except Thomas Cornillie, that hiding under the plaster and concrete blocks about to be demolished, was a living piece of Alameda's railroad history dating back to the turn of the 20th century.

Thomas grew up in a railroad family and has spent most of his career working with Railroads

and in Public Transportation. He'd been living on Lincoln Avenue for 5 years now, and he knew that it had been an important railroad line connecting Alameda with other parts of the Bay Area since the first transcontinental rail passengers arrived at the Alameda Mole on September of 1869. "I was always on the lookout for remnants of that railroad history on the island", he recalls. "So when I first saw this building, I was suspicious that it had some railroad connection. The massing of it, its construction, so close to the sidewalk... It looked like it was built for a more permanent purpose than... as an office for the small rental car lot that was on the site."

Then one day, while looking through Grant Ute and Bruce Singer's book *Alameda by Rail*, Thomas saw a picture from 1934 of the Webster "waiting station shelter" in its original setting. "When I saw the picture in the book I just put two and two together," he explains. "At this point, the rental car office was still open, so I brought the book over and asked the man working there, Oswaldo Loly, if he'd let me look inside the walls. As I did, I saw that the original arches were still there, covered by the wood panels that were put in later... the walls that you see today. The arches weren't demolished, just covered up!" Lying dormant under what now looks

like a shack, was a Mission Revival^[1] station shelter for commuters, "probably dating to 1912 from the electrification of the railroads by the Southern Pacific Railroad" when passenger trains ran down Lincoln Avenue, once aptly named Railroad Avenue.

"I liked having this station in the neighborhood", he continues. But "just walking down the street last July, I saw a notice for a hearing with the Planning Board regarding that site. When I looked at the agenda and the map with the development that was proposed, I saw that this building — which was just called "an office", without any other notes — was proposed for demolition!"

"So I searched for someone to reach out to," he continues. "I knew that there had to be someone or some group in Alameda that cared about historic preservation, and that's how I found out about AAPS. I sent them an email alerting them about the situation, and I let them know I had this information, I had the research and I wanted to see if they could do something about it. Chris Buckley picked up the ball and ran with it."

Chris, the Chair of the Preservation Action Committee, knew that something had to be done and fast. An email with the subject line: 'Southern Pacific Train Station at 712 Lincoln Avenue threatened with demolition' went out to the AAPS' Board members and Preservation Action Committee just four days ahead of the hearing. "The demolition — it stated — was to be considered for approval at the Planning Board's 7-25-16 meeting."

"It was very fortuitous that Thomas brought this to our attention when he did, so that we could go to that hearing and not 'miss the train' so to speak", Chris recalls. "We didn't know it was a historic train station! It was a real revelation to learn that this is the last surviving free-standing station for the Southern Pacific trains in Alameda. We immediately sent a letter to the City Planning Board alerting them of its existence and historical value, and to require that the station be preserved on the site as part of the new development and, ideally, restored."

The City Planning Board was very receptive to the discovery and importance of saving the Webster waiting station and responded favorably to AAPS' news by quickly addressing the issue of preservation. Henry Dong, the City Planner in charge of the project, promptly met with the developer and his architect Simon Kwan. "They have been very cooperative with the whole restoration process", he asserts. But plans for the development of the site itself were too



Current forlorn state of affairs for the Webster Street waiting station, January 2017. Note the window openings on both west and east sides confirm the existence of the underlying architectural structure for the original 32 light windows that at one time enclosed the station. The concrete blocks that form the back portion were added later to enlarge the structure and at that point most of the back wall of the station was removed.

Next to the front door and below the map on the wall, notice that the plaster has been pulled off to show the original paneled woodwork that formed the front low wall of the station.

far down the line to be re-engineered, so relocation of the station became the immediate concern.

"It was the Alameda Planning Board's idea to relocate the station shelter to Jean Sweeney Open Space Park," recalls Amy Wooldridge, Director of Parks and Recreation. "It's a 27-acre property that we're developing that used to be the Alameda Belt Line's switch yard, so it was really a primary location for them." (for the Planning Board to consider it as an alternative).

Jean Sweeney Park's Railway Roots

Thomas explains that "The Alameda Belt Line (ABL) was a railroad located along the Oakland Estuary co-owned by Western Pacific and the Atchison,

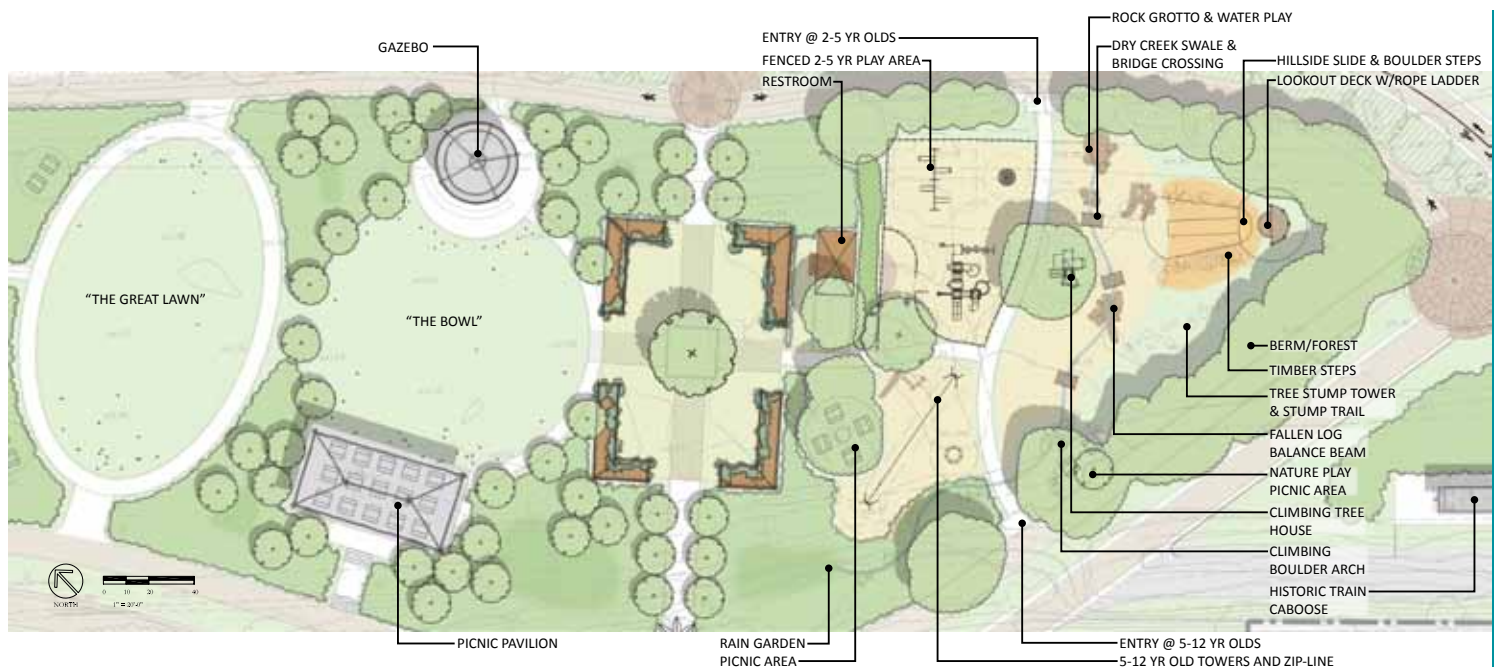
Topeka and Santa Fe railroads. It received freight cars via interchange with the Southern Pacific on Alameda via barges, coming from as far as Richmond. The ABL offered a way for Alameda businesses to have a competitive source for rail freight traffic, avoiding what many believed to be monopolistic abuses from the Southern Pacific. Much of the ABL was built on property purchased from the City in 1924 and it remained in service until 1998. Local businesses, such as Pennzoil, were interested in continuing service, however the Belt Line's parent railroads instituted tariffs to discourage local businesses from using the railroad so that it could be abandoned and its property sold for redevelopment."

A year later the City learned that ABL was cutting back operations and selling parcels of its property,

including a specific piece (the belt line) that was about to be purchased for \$18 million dollars. But Jean Sweeney, an Alameda resident and open space advocate, discovered a provision in the original 1924 contract with ABL that allowed the City to buy the land back from them for just over a million dollars.

"It was like striking gold!" says Amy. "We are working with the California Office of Historic Preservation and we're bound to make sure that the history of the belt line is incorporated and honored with interpretive displays. We've really tried to infuse the railroad theme throughout the design of the park," she adds. "We're repurposing an original rail line found on the site and a large trellis will have columns inspired by railyards in Oakland, for example. So, when the idea to relocate the Webster station shelter in the park

JSPOS detail of the South-Eastern side of the park. The waiting station will be situated in place of the Gazebo shown below.

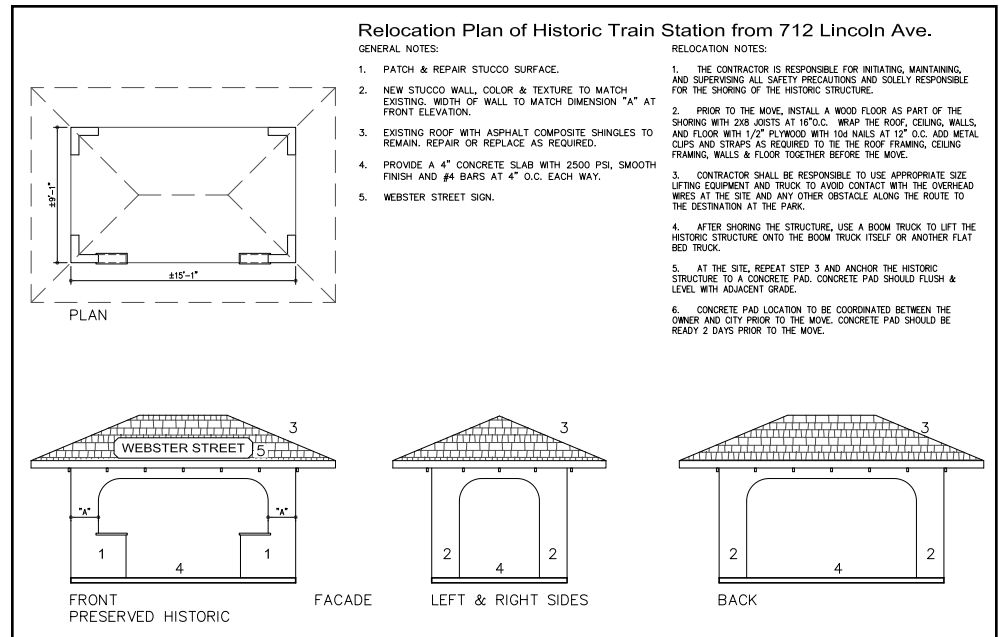


came through, it was quite serendipitous! Because we'd taken out a gazebo and sitting area that we couldn't afford, so now the station will take its place. To have a true and living part of the railroad history in the park, it's a great fit."

Although some railroad enthusiasts may not see the waiting station's new home as a perfect match. Thomas points out that "the Alameda Belt Line was built exclusively for freight service, it never had passenger trains running on it. . . and the Park District has also proposed significant modifications to the original design" (due to public safety concerns) "to create an open-sided enclosure compared to its semi-enclosed historic configuration", he adds. Aside from those concerns, Grant Ute is encouraged by the "railroad connection, and what's important (in the end) is that "you're saving it, you're conserving it, you're putting it in a public place. . . it's definitely better than flattening it — I think it's great!

"Alameda was a city built around railroads," recalls Thomas. "What drove it home to me was an 1880's bird's-eye view map of Alameda, where one of the key points it makes is that there was no property on the island that was less than an eighth of a mile — or a three-minute walk from a station. There were multiple competing railroads serving Alameda at the turn of the century! So, I'm elated by the fact that the Webster shelter station is going to be preserved and glad that it's going to be around so that future generations can learn about this portion of Alameda's past. It's a way to have a connection that can make the written history so much more meaningful and richer."

"It's exciting that this building has survived and that it will be preserved," adds Chris Buckley. Many



An architectural drawing for the Webster Street Station restoration. The building will be lifted onto a truck and transported to its new location in the former Belt Line property dedicated to Jean Sweeney.

of us had assumed that these (waiting) stations had all disappeared! These non-descript looking buildings, that at first glance appear to be ordinary, can be a real revelation, and hopefully an inspiration to some developers who like taking on historic preservation projects. . . that they can see some potential here."

Who knows, you may be the next one to uncover another of Alameda's best kept historic secrets.

[1] P. 512; *A Field Guide to American Houses* by Virginia Savage McAlester

PAC

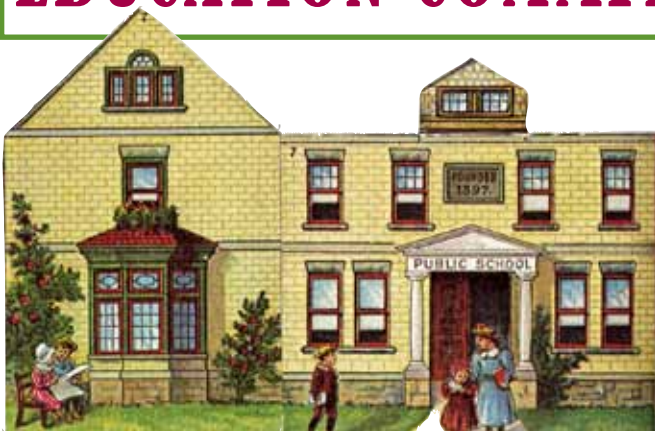
GET INVOLVED & MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

We maintain a Google Group list to advise AAPS members on ongoing issues that could affect historic properties and provide an opportunity to review and comment on draft AAPS position statements. If you would like to attend a meeting, be added to the Google Group list or would like obtain more information, please contact

**Christopher Buckley at
510-523-0411 or buckleyAICP@att.net**

We are making an impact within the community. It's informative and fun. We encourage all members to get involved in making decisions.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE Hosted by the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society



We need a hearty few to join a newly reconstituted AAPS Education Committee that will start meeting in January (meetings will be fun and swift, and refreshments will be on the agenda). Our aim is to help students and their families understand, appreciate, and become loving stewards of our architectural heritage. That legacy goes far beyond the realm of Queen Victoria, who reigned from 1834-1901, and now Alameda's architectural heritage includes structures from the 1960s--given that a vintage building is 50 years old, so we have a lot to celebrate and protect. One idea is a Family History Day based at the Reference Department at the Alameda Free Library.

For more information please email judithlynch7@gmail.com



MORE AAPS PLAQUES AROUND TOWN



◀◀◀◀◀

HISTORIC BUILDING

Virgil, Margy Silver and Penny with their new plaque. Their home was built and designed by the firm of Marcuse and Rummel in 1895. Although the duo designed numerous homes in Alameda, this is the first to be acknowledged with a commemorative plaque.



If you own a building that you think may be eligible for a plaque, find out how to order at alameda-preservation.org/programs/historical-plaque-program/ or email plaques@alameda-preservation.org or call 510-479-6489.

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

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.

Name _____

Date _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Would you like to receive your newsletter

☐ Electronically

☐ Regular mail

Please check one

☐ Renewal

☐ New member

Select your membership category

☐ Family \$35

☐ Student \$10 each

☐ Sponsor \$250

Number of family members _____

☐ Partner \$100

☐ Patron \$500

☐ Single \$30

☐ Senior \$20 each

☐ Donation \$_____

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

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



P.O. Box 1677
Alameda, CA 94501

In This Issue:

- *Ornamental Plaster Expert Lorna Kollmeyer*
- *Alameda Artist Spotlight: Mandar Wagholikar*
- *Quick Action Saves Railroad Landmark*
- *More AAPS Plaques Around Town*

♻️ printed on recycled paper.

Alameda Development and Architecture: *From the Era of Queen Victoria to the Magic of Storybook 1850s to 1920s*

Coming
in 2017
A FREE CLASS
AT MASTICK

Architectural heritage here in Alameda is legion, comprising more than 10,000 buildings built before 1940 and protected under the stewardship of the City Historical Advisory Board.

This free class for Mastick Center members offers twelve sessions highlighting the 19th and early 20th century buildings of Alameda. Six slide shows and six walking tours will help you enjoy and distinguish amongst the various architectural styles that abound here. Taught by local author and teacher Judith Lynch, who served ten years on the City of Alameda Historical Advisory Board.

Slide sessions are held Tuesday and Thursday mornings at Mastick Senior Center, 1155 Santa Clara Avenue, Alameda.

Walks visit Bay Station, Leonardville, a bungalow neighborhood, Fernside, and the Civic Center, with a finale that starts at Mastick.

The class starts Tuesday, March 28, 2017. Space is limited. Please call Mastick to reserve a slot: (510) 747-7506.

NOMINATIONS REQUESTED!

**Make sure your home is part of
the legacy Sunday, September 24th!**

AAPS and the Alameda Museum are now
taking house nominations for the
2017 Legacy Home Tour.

From 19th century through the
Craftsman's era, original or restored homes
are welcome to participate.

The deadline for submissions is **March 30th.**

Send your nomination(s) to
smallman_james@hotmail.com

AAPS SCHEDULE of EVENTS 2017

•
**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12
7:00 PM**

Ornamental Plaster Expert
Lorna Kollmeyer
IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

•
Visit
alameda-preservation.org
for additional event information
and preservation announcements.