

The ALAMEDA ARCHITECTURAL Preservation Society

JANUARY, 2005

Editor: Ruth Tillman

General Membership Meeting

Sunday, January 23, 2005 – 7:00 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church at the corner of Santa Clara Ave. and Chestnut St.
Additional parking available next to and behind Haight Elementary School

“Stained Glass Restoration and Conservation”

Joan Di Stefano Ruiz, proprietress of Di Stefano Ruiz Studio in Oakland specializing in Mosaics, Architectural Art Glass and Stained Glass Conservation. She is an affiliate member of the Stained Glass Association of America.

AAPS is pleased to welcome Joan Di Stefano Ruiz, the artist who brought life back to the windows at the First Presbyterian Church. Her work was honored by AAPS last spring with a Preservation Award.

Joan holds a Masters Degree in Environmental Art from the New York University, Venice Italy program after completing her BFA of Fine Arts at San Francisco Art Institute. She studied under the tutelage of glass masters such as Narcissus Quagliata. Her training lead to her theory that we must keep “living things historically intact and glass pieces authentic to their origins until they really fail to preserve their historic integrity.” She says, “ we must treat old glass like a fragile jewel and revere the old world craftsmanship.”

Joan will tell us about her ongoing efforts to preserve the windows at First Presbyterian Church and other projects she has conserved stained glass treasures in Europe, Africa, and the United States.

The windows at First Presbyterian Church had varying degrees of restoration needs. With Q-Tips, dental tools and gentle solvents in hand, Joan spent months on scaffolding cleaning, remolding lead and cataloging each pane of glass. Some had lead failure that needed to be replaced and some had to be re-worked to extend the life of the windows. Joan will describe the processes she uses to repair cracks, lead restoration, protective covering, painting and cleaning techniques. She will also describe constant maintenance and retouches as time goes on.

Joan is also an expert in architectural mosaic art and has been commissioned to create custom designed items such as facades, stepping stones, floors, walls and murals. She will add a touch of contemporary to her historical presentation by discussing this medium.



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Welcome to a new year and to new opportunities. 2004 was a very good year for preservation in Alameda and I look forward to building upon that success.

When I first joined this organization in 1979, it was known as the Alameda Victorian Preservation Society (AVPS). It had been formed in 1971 by Alamedans concerned about the widespread destruction of mostly Victorian homes and the subsequent replacement with large-scale apartment buildings. AVPS joined forces with other Alamedans concerned about the amazing rapid growth occurring and the increasing density on the island. The result of this union was the creation of what is referred to as "Measure A", a charter amendment approved by the voters and designed to preserve the quality of life in this small town. This landmark piece of legislation served well to also protect and preserve our historic structures. Several years ago I suggested that we change our name to reflect the broader scope that our organization represented. The new name, the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society, was adopted.

Alameda has many wonderful features, but I think that one of those at the top of the list would be our diverse, rich architecture. We've got it all: Victorian, Colonial Revival, Craftsman, Art Deco to Streamline Moderne. We have a treasure trove: from single houses to entire neighborhoods and districts. AAPS is committed to preserving these treasures.

Within our organization there are various committees that focus on specific tasks that are important to our goals. These committees include the Preservation Action, the Legacy Home Tour, the Preservation Awards, Publicity and others. Over the years I have been involved with all of these and have found it to be very rewarding. I learned a great deal from each and also realized how much we have accomplished.

AAPS is here to serve its members and the public. We are a resource to provide guidance and encouragement to anyone interested in preserving historic structures in our community. We are also very involved with the often-daunting task of monitoring city government and policies affecting preservation. There are some major changes on the horizon for Alameda. The development of the former Naval Air Station and what will happen to the historic buildings there. Recent discussions regarding changing or amending Measure A. These are very complex issues and we need to be following them ever so closely. I encourage you to become involved, or, at the very least, to voice your opinion.

There are two main goals that I have for this year: Educating the public about who we really are as well as why preservation of our historic resources is so vital and how it benefits our community. The other has to do with re-visiting our Historic Study List. When the Study was first conducted in 1978, many properties were not included for various reasons. Since that time, public awareness has increased regarding what properties should now be considered historic. Also, (I am delighted to say) many property owners

have completed renovations of "remuddled" homes and commercial buildings that were not included on the original list. It seems appropriate to re-evaluate our inventory.

The strength of AAPS is derived from the dedication of our members and from the efforts made to further our goals. We have accomplished many great things over the years, although not without a lot of hard work. I know that you care about the historic character of our city. I am grateful to you for your membership and for any participation that you might have in our events or projects this year.

Sincerely,

Denise Brady

Preservation Action Committee

Whither Alameda's Historic Naval Air Station?

By Beth Kruse

It's hard to underestimate the tremendous impact that the Navy had on our island city during World War II. Major plans for redevelopment of a 700-acre portion of the former Naval Air Station Alameda are now under way. These plans have the potential to affect Alameda's legacy of World War II-period buildings.

Covering roughly one-third of Alameda's current land mass, the former Naval Air Station Alameda (NAS) was constructed starting in 1938 and was essentially complete by 1945. The NAS Alameda Historic District was identified in 1992 as historically significant and therefore eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. A core area of the NAS Alameda, the historic district is comprised of a central complex of reinforced concrete administrative buildings distinguished by their Art Deco/ Moderne design details, as well as residential structures (barracks, single family houses), hangars, and repair shops. The historic district designation also recognizes that district's spatial planning—street patterns, open space, and landscaping/layout of buildings—is significant. Only a portion of the former NAS is included in the historic district, and within the district, 86 buildings contribute to its historical significance, and 35 do not. The City has also designated the historic district a City Monument (this is a more restrictive designation than mere placement on the Historical Building List, in that applications for alteration require HAB approval).

By 1997, when the Navy closed the NAS, the City had adopted the NAS Alameda Community Reuse Plan. The reuse plan calls for integrating the former military base into the general framework of the City when the base is transferred by the Navy to the City. There have been delays with implementation of the plan due to lack of funding available to the Navy for environmental remediation. A master developer for the project, Alameda Point Community Partners LLP, has been selected by the City to prepare a Preliminary Development Concept (PDC), a land use plan for the redevelopment and reuse of Alameda Point. Two workshops have been held to date to gather public input on the PDC; three more are planned for March 3 (at City Council chambers), April, and June 2005. The PDC is targeted for completion by mid-2005. The following website has information on the progress of redevelopment plans: www.alameda-point.com.

At the workshop held in December 2004, two reuse options were presented to the public. The "Adaptive Reuse Option" would reuse many of the historic district's contributing buildings, although



work/live units or senior housing, but such a multiple housing use would not be permitted under Measure A. (For the next workshop, City staff and consultants are preparing an option for potential consideration which would allow some level of modification of Measure A for Alameda Point only, in order to enable preservation of more of the district's large contributing buildings. Any decision about a non-Measure A alternative would need to be brought back to the voters of Alameda because Measure A was originally adopted by the voters.) The hangars, by their size alone, also pose challenges for successful adaptive reuse. The potential for flooding in the area of the Senior Officers Housing ("Big Whites") has raised the question of whether these buildings could be retained.

Now is the opportunity for AAPS members to guide the City and its developers on how this significant part of Alameda's history can best be preserved and reused. If it proves infeasible to preserve all of the buildings which contribute to the historic district, which buildings are expendable? How much, if any, new construction should be permitted within the bounds of the historic district? How will new residential developments—potentially denser than Fernside, with smaller lots—affect the quality of life in Alameda?

AAPS is planning a bus tour, tentatively scheduled for Saturday, January 22, 2005, with Andrew Thomas, the City's supervising planner assigned to the project, and Stephen Proud, Project Manager for Alameda Reuse and Redevelopment Agency. The purpose of the tour is for AAPS members to become familiar both with the NAS historic district and with the planning constraints of the project. Attendance on the bus tour will be limited due to the size of the bus.

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!

Alameda Museum Lecture

2324 Alameda Avenue near Park Street. Admission is free for members of the Museum; \$5 for others. For information, leave a message at 510.748.0796 or check alamedamusuem.org.

Thursday, March 31, 2005, 7 pm: "The East Bay Then and Now" based on a new book of photographs compiled by Eric Kos of the Alameda Sun and Dennis Evanosky. Underwritten by Janelle Spatz, board member of the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society (AAPS).

Thursday, April 28, 2005, 7 pm: "Nineteenth Century California Interiors" by architect and historian Hank Dunlop. In the gallery, see the eighth annual "Kids & Queen Victoria," a show by elementary students studying Alameda history and architecture.

Thursday, May 26, 2005, 7 pm: "Topic to be Announced," by raconteur, author, and local historian Woody Minor.

Thursday, June 30, 2005, 7 pm: "Preservation Power: Tales of the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society and its Preservation Action Committee,"

some could be demolished. The "Residential Emphasis Option" could remove more historic buildings to create a denser urban neighborhood, with a significant amount of new construction within the historic district. Both plans call for creating a minimum of 615 affordable housing units, market-rate housing, and the addition of commercial, retail, and light industrial or R & D uses. The current economic situation in the San Francisco Bay area has led the developer to focus on providing a greater proportion of residential units (than industrial or commercial opportunities) than originally planned in 1996.

The Alameda Point project faces significant challenges, some of which have implications for preservation. The City's goal is to make the redevelopment of Alameda Point pay for itself rather than imposing a drain on City finances. It is possible that transfer of land from the Navy and resulting redevelopment would occur in stages, with real estate sales of earlier phases helping pay for later development phases. Further complicating the plans for the future, Alameda Point is classified as a federal Superfund site, and environmental cleanup of contaminated areas must be undertaken. Replacement of existing infrastructure (utility pipelines) is necessary for any future use. In addition, Measure A would prevent the adaptive reuse of certain historic buildings within the district. For instance, very large structures such as the Bachelor Officer's Quarters and Bachelor Enlisted Quarters would seem ideal for reuse as

AAPS Calendar

Sunday, January 23, 2005 at 7 pm: General Membership Meeting, "Stained Glass Restoration and Conservation," Joan Di Stefano Ruiz

Wednesday, January 12, 2005 at 7:30 pm: AAPS Board Meeting

Monday, February 7, 2005 at 7 pm: Preservation Action Committee

Wednesday, February 16, 2005 at 7:30 pm: AAPS Board Meeting

March 13, 2005 at 7 pm: "Julia Morgan", by Betty Marvin.

May 15, 2005 at 7 pm: Annual Preservation Awards



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Society



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