



**ALAMEDA
ARCHITECTURAL
PRESERVATION
SOCIETY**

P.O. Box 1677
Alameda, CA 94501

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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printed on recycled paper.



**Calling All
Docents!**

Costumes
admired but
not required

**ALAMEDA LEGACY
HOME TOUR**

September 28, 2014
 Free admission to the tour
 in exchange for being a docent at
 either the early or late shift.
 2 shifts:
 11:00 am – 2:00 pm
 or 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm



For more information visit
alameda-home-tour.org

AAPS SCHEDULE of EVENTS 2014

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**SUNDAY, AUGUST 24
1:00 PM**

*Woody Walk: Gold Coast Glimmers
with Historian Woody Minor*
MEET IN FRANKLIN PARK

•

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28
11:00 AM – 5:00 PM**

Alameda Legacy Home Tour
alameda-home-tour.org

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**OCTOBER
DATE & LOCATION TBD**
City Council Candidates Forum

•

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9
7:00 PM**
*American Decorative Tile
From its 19th Century Roots
to the Present*
Joseph A. Taylor
IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH



Alameda PRESERVATION Press

NEWSLETTER OF THE ALAMEDA
ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Woody Walk Gold Coast Glimmers

Join historian Woody Minor on a tour showcasing the architecture of Alameda's premier historic neighborhood.



Sunday, August 24, 2014 at 1:00 pm

Meet at Franklin Park, Morton Street & San Antonio Avenue, Alameda, CA

Free for AAPS members; \$5 for non-members

Nuggets by the Bay

Story by Woody Minor

A rich repository of houses dating back to the 1870s, the Gold Coast is Alameda's most impressive neighborhood—an architectural icon of the era of commuter trains and ferries. The oak groves along the southern shore became the setting for dozens, then hundreds, of fine homes and gardens arrayed along tree-lined streets. This year's Woody Walk will take in a century's worth of styles, from Italianate, Stick, and Queen Anne, through Colonial Revival and Craftsman, to Spanish, Ranch, and Modernism.

This lovely neighborhood extends some eight blocks west from the vicinity of Grand Street, along Dayton, Clinton, San Jose, and San Antonio Avenues. Cross-streets like Paru, Sherman, Bay, St. Charles, and Weber run south from Encinal and Central to bulkheads and bluffs on the original shoreline. In the 1950s the splendid bay frontage gave way to the
continued on page 2...



Built in 1909-10 for San Francisco food exporter Joseph Durney, the shingled mansion at 1325 Dayton Avenue displays elegant Arts and Crafts styling with neo-medieval details. It was the work of Hamilton Murdock, an Alameda architect who designed over a dozen houses in the Gold Coast.

Gold Coast...*continued from page 1.*

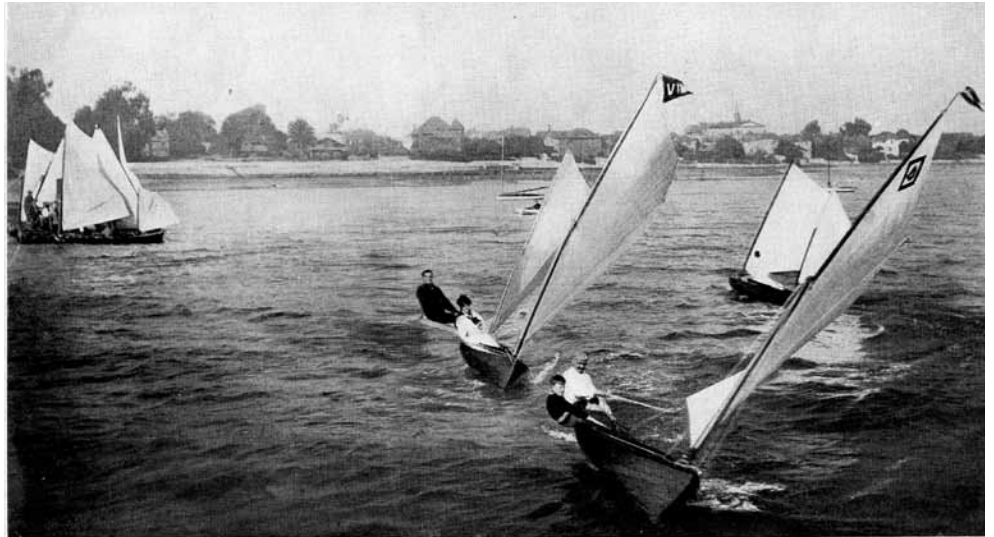
landlocked lagoons of the South Shore fill, but otherwise the neighborhood is largely intact.

The Gold Coast is an amalgam of tracts that began with Oak Park. Platted in 1876 by a group of railroad executives, with Central Avenue and Grand Street as its principal axes, Oak Park launched the first wave of homebuilding. These early houses, which included works by celebrated architects like Seth Babson and the Newsom Brothers, set the tone for coming years. The protracted second wave of construction, extending 25 years from the late 1880s to the outset of World War I, spread across various other tracts, leaving in its wake memorable houses by A.W. Pattiani, Henry H. Meyers, Charles W. McCall, A.W. Smith, Hamilton Murdock, Carl Werner, Andrew T. Hass, and Julia Morgan, to name a few of the dozens of architects who contributed to the ensemble.

The walk will begin at Franklin Park, dating to the 1920s like its namesake school across the street. The park is the public heart of the Gold Coast and



Thompson & West, Historical Atlas Map of Alameda County, 1878.



Established in 1890 by Gold Coast residents, the Encinal Yacht Club sat on a pier at the south end of Grand Street for nearly seven decades, until displaced by the South Shore fill. The club, now in its 124th year, flourishes today on Alameda's north shore. In this early 20th century view, sailing canoes cavort on the bay with houses in the distance. (From "Alameda, California." Sunset Magazine Homeseekers' Bureau, 1911)

the site of its first permanent dwelling—the 1860s home of Russian fur trader Charles Baum and his reclusive Mexican wife, Eliza—now an expanse of manicured lawns, oaks, and sequoias. The tour will take in the blocks around the park as well as the broad vista of Grand Street and bay-shore homes ranging from Palmera Court to Sherman Street.

Along the way we will have occasion to see several surviving Oak Park mansions from the late 1870s and early 1880s, including an impressive work by Seth Babson. Houses by A.W. Pattiani, an innovator who excelled at Queen Anne and Colonial Revival, will be on ample display. We will also see fine Queen Annes by Alameda architect Charles S. Shaner and Oakland architect J.C. Mathews.

The Gold Coast exhibits with particular clarity the emergence of the Colonial Revival style in the 1890s. Along with the work of Pattiani and other East Bay architects, there are notable houses by the San Francisco firms of W.H. Lillie, J.H. Littlefield, Copeland & Pierce, and Cunningham & Politeo.

At the same time we will see excellent examples of twentieth century design, including Craftsman houses by A.W. Smith, A.W. Cornelius, Charles W. McCall, and Julia Morgan; revivalist houses by William Schirmer, Sidney & Noble Newsom, and Kent & Hass; and a 1960s Bay Tradition nugget by John M. Payne. And yes, there will be stories about the folks who lived there.



Looking across the lagoon from Grand Street to the old shoreline, with the 1904 mansion of terra-cotta manufacturer A.V. Clark partly visible under the palms (right). Located at 700 Paru Street, this Colonial Revival landmark by Cunningham & Politeo will be one of many memorable Gold Coast homes featured on this year's walk.



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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Mail to: AAPS P.O. Box 1677, Alameda, CA 94501
 Credit cards accepted online. www.alameda-preservation.org

CELEBRATE...

the restoration of the family flagpole at the Meyers House with Jim Smallman and Scout Troop 78.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 17
2:00 – 3:30 pm

Flag raising ceremony at 2:30 pm, light refreshments. If it pleases you, wear vintage clothing.

For information:
judithal@comcast.net
510-521-1247

Meyers House and Garden
2021 Alameda Avenue

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Your Home Tour Dollars at Work: 1978 –79 Photo Scanning Project

by Jim Smallman

In 1978 and 1979 The City of Alameda photographed all buildings on the main island, except for the NAS and Northern Waterfront. The photographs were part of a Citywide “windshield” historical and architectural survey that led to creation of the Historic Building Study List. That photo survey created more than ten thousand 35 mm black and white negatives, which have been stored in Alameda’s Planning Department for some thirty-five years along with cards for each surveyed building containing a contact print of the negative. These images are a potential treasure trove for authors, researchers, individual building owners, and City staff. But until now, they have not been easily accessible in quantity. They are also very fragile and some have been lost.

That’s about to change, thanks to an ambitious AAPS-sponsored project to digitize these images and make them available on-line. In June, the AAPS Board of Directors approved an \$8,000 contract to Aberscan Imaging for the first phase of the project. This will be funded by AAPS membership dues and Alameda Legacy Home Tour revenue.

Creating a digital archive: The first major task requires making high-resolution scans of the negatives, and then indexing and storing the images on one or more hard drives. This step creates a tiff format digital archive, from which high-quality photographic prints may be obtained. The high resolution images will then be copied onto a second drive as conventional jpeg images. Aberscan Imaging has acquired specialized equipment for this project and initial setup and test runs are underway. The scanned images, stored in a second location, ensure that these irreplaceable images would not be lost in a fire or other catastrophe at City Hall.

Providing retrieval mechanisms: The second major task is to provide on-line users a facility to retrieve and examine images. Detailed specifications for this phase are being prepared now. Objectives include:

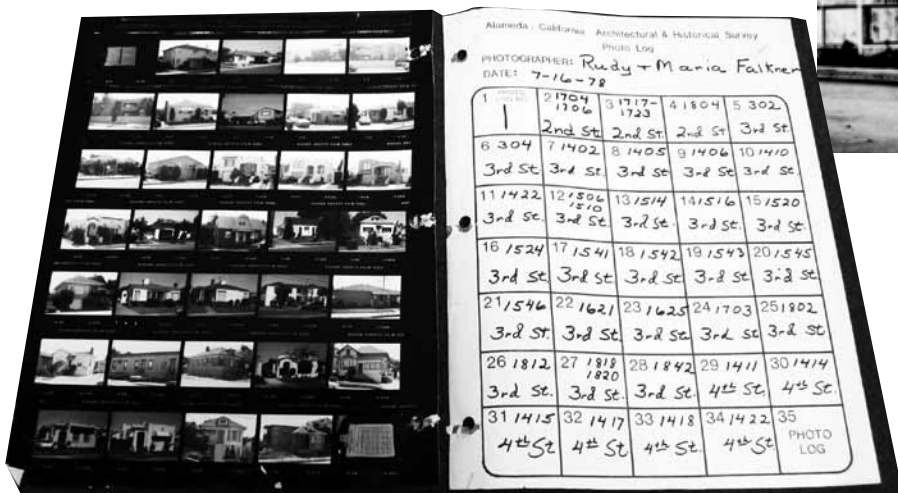
- To retrieve, examine, and print a jpeg image of a particular address online
- To retrieve and display jpeg images for a consecutive string of addresses online
- To request hard-copy printout of archive quality images online (There will be a fee for this service.)

The schedule calls for Aberscan to process approximately a thousand images a month, beginning in August. With ten thousand images in the collection, it will be June 2015 before the full collection is digitized. However, once the first batch of one thousand is complete, retrieval and display mechanisms can be devised. The projection is that by January 2015 from one-third to one-half of the collection will be available online, with additions each month afterward.



Left: This folder with thumbnail prints and handwritten addresses are where the negatives are stored at Alameda City Hall. Photo: Kevin Frederick.

Above: These prints of 1623 Sherman Street and 1017 San Antonio Avenue are typical images in the file. They supply a record of architectural details that may have deteriorated, been removed, or covered by alteration to the structure. At the same time, they give a glimpse back to streetscenes and lifestyle of the late 1970s.



Alameda Artist Spotlight

by Johanna Hall

Samantha McNally

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

Samantha McNally, our first artist in the series, came to our attention when her watercolor of the 1897 Colonial Revival “Meyers House” at 2021 Alameda Avenue (Alameda Historic Monument) was featured in Frank Bette Center for the Arts 2013 calendar.

Samantha McNally is a San Francisco Bay Area watercolor artist who paints both in the studio and outdoors, en Plein Air. She studied Art at Ramapo College in Mahwah, NJ; Ridgewood School of Art in Ridgewood, NJ and The School of Visual Arts in New York City.

Among Samantha’s several awards are the Grumbacher gold medal and special award ribbon for her painting, “Dogwood” at the Mount St. Mary Art Show, Newburgh, NY (1999); honorable mention for “Flowers” (2001) and third place for “Two Roses” (2004) in the CWA Blackhawk Gallery; third place for “Victoria’s Roses and “Sea VI” at the CWA Gallery (2006); and honorable mention for “Columbine” at Gallery Concord (2008).



Meyers House

Ms. McNally is a member of The California Watercolor Association (CWA) and the East Bay Artist Guild. Her paintings are on display at the Valley Art Gallery in Walnut Creek, as well as at various CWA shows in the Bay Area. In addition to painting, Samantha creates websites for other artists and organizes art vacations.



Contact Samantha:
Email: sam@samanthamcnally.com
Online: samanthamcnally.com
artistgetaway.com

Left: Hidden House

Right: Crab Cove Couple

Connections

by Jim Smallman

It's 1876. Alameda was just beginning to develop into a vibrant bedroom community for San Francisco. San Francisco Bay lapped at the foot of Grand Street. The Encinal Yacht Club pier and clubhouse wouldn't be built for another fifteen years. But Alameda was on its way. And the community was celebrating the first United States Centennial. A local dairy produced a bottle embossed "U. S. Centennial 1876". The contents were quickly consumed, of course, and the bottle discarded somewhere in the 1500 block of Grand Street.

Sometime between the 1876 Centennial celebrations and 1885, a Stick style high basement cottage was constructed for Arthur F. Green, a time keeper for the Pacific Mail Steamship Company in San Francisco at 1520 Grand Street. This house was not a mansion, constructed for a moderate \$3,500, but it was a stylish and efficient home. The builder was A. R. Denke, probably using a design of his own. The style, floor arrangement and construction techniques were typical of the period. In particular, the foundation was brick, with a mud sill bedded in mortar. The head height from the ground level to the bottom of the first floor joists was about six feet six inches. The ground floor provided storage, not living space.

Over the years, Grand Street indeed became grand. In 1893, a large Unitarian Church was constructed next door for \$8,430. This church changed ownership over the years, and underwent massive changes. By 1976, the church building was owned by the Calvary Christian Church which acquired the Victorian-era house next door. The active church's location in the middle of a residential neighborhood created a parking problem, and in 1976 the church applied to the City of Alameda for a demolition permit so they could build a parking lot. It appeared the historic structure would be lost.

However, the Historical Advisory Board put a six month hold on the demolition and contacted The Alameda Victorian Preservation Society (AVPS, the earlier name of the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society) to see if the house could be relocated and saved. The church sold the house to AVPS for one dollar, and AVPS set about trying to save it. AVPS raised and saved about \$22,000 from their annual Victorian Home Tour and other events. A suitable lot was soon found at 418 Santa Clara, in the west end. The house on that site had burned, and AVPS bought the lot for \$9,000. Fisher House Movers designed a moving route: south on Grand to Central, west on Central past Webster, eventually back to 418 Santa Clara. AVPS member Bob Nicol, a prominent Alameda architect, donated plans for the foundation and restoration of the house in the new location, and the Alameda Building Department issued the moving permit.

Fisher House Movers was engaged for the move, and everything seemed to be progressing nicely. However, the Building Department threw AVPS a curve: They



This high basement cottage avoided demolition in 1976 when it was purchased and moved by the AVPS. Today it is an attribute to the 400 block of Santa Clara Avenue.

decided that the eaves on the sides of the house extended too far, and would require extensive tree trimming along the move route. Before allowing the move the City at the eleventh hour required AVPS to cut off the eaves on both sides. Without any choice, AVPS complied, having already committed virtually their entire treasury to this project. The move was completed in late June of 1976. AVPS designated the relocation their Bicentennial Project. It was a spectacular event which KTVU Channel 2 covered on the evening news.

The move cost \$12,000, including construction of the perimeter foundation to receive the house. One end of the foundation was left uncompleted to allow the mover to push the house onto its new site. The house was supported on cribbing, sitting directly above the new

foundation. With its side eaves shorn off, the unrestored house looked forlorn indeed. AVPS was also nearly broke, and funds were needed to return the house to a livable structure. AVPS president Jim Smallman turned to the Alameda Bank and Don Lindsay, a principal in Gallagher and Lindsay and a board member of the bank. With Don's support, AVPS obtained construction financing to finish the project. Over the next year, dozens of AVPS members contributed their skill and thousands of hours of labor to reconstruct the foundation support structure and the missing eaves. The interior was rewired completely, new plumbing installed, and the interior restored to the original floor plan. The supporting foundation crib wall was made slightly higher, allowing for a future owner to use the ground level as living space.

After a year of intense volunteer effort, the house – though by no means cosmetically restored – was issued an occupancy permit by the City. AVPS sold the house, recovering its investment and paying back the bank. The new owner continued the project, installing landscaping, painting and decorating and doing the hundreds of those little tasks a proper restoration demands. Today, the fully restored house sits proudly at 418 Santa Clara Avenue, looking as though it has been there from its beginning.

Epilogue: This story began with a discarded 1876 centennial celebration milk bottle along Grand Street, and the story ends with that same bottle. After the house was moved from 1520 Grand Street, the brick foundation remained. Several AVPS members were putting brick paths in their gardens, including Bob Brewer, a local dentist. As he retrieved bricks for his paths, he found, beneath the last layer, the centennial milk bottle discarded a century prior. So the Alameda centennial in 1876 was connected almost mystically with Alameda's bi-centennial in 1976, and with the Alameda Victorian Preservation Society's bi-centennial project. With any luck at all, perhaps the leading character in this drama, the Victorian house now at 418 Santa Clara Avenue will celebrate Alameda's tri-centennial.

Hosted by: the Alameda Museum & the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society



ALAMEDA LEGACY HOME TOUR

Sunday,
September 28, 2014
11:00 am to 5:00 pm

A Self-guided Tour
of Seven Historic Homes
in the Gold Coast and
the West End. Plus,
Refreshments in the
Meyers House Garden.



A FOCUS ON THE GOLD COAST

Tickets: \$30 in Advance • \$35 Tour Day

Advance ticket vouchers available at:

Daisy's – 1347 Park Street • Wescafe – 1536 Webster Street
Thomsen's Garden Center – 1113 Lincoln Avenue

Tour day tickets available at:

Franklin Park – Morton Street & San Antonio Avenue

**Tickets online: alameda-home-tour.org
Information: 510-523-5907**