

Alameda Museum Quarterly

THE MUSEUM AND THE SEARCH FOR THE "LOST" ARK *by Ron Mackrodt*

ONE BRIGHT FALL AFTER-NOON LAST YEAR I was visiting with my friends Roy and Darrow and their three small children. I couldn't help but remark on the contrast of their scene with my own tranquil, well ordered bachelor life. Roy and Darrow are home-schooling their children, and their house reflects their commitment to a well-rounded education. The main room, though small, was dominated by a massive hand-made table. Surely the scene of many a lively (vegan) family meal, today it was pressed into service as a workbench. It was covered with laptops, art projects, and woodworking tools. The surrounding shelves groaned under books, recording equipment, and sculpture. One corner of the room was filled with musical instruments; a trapeze hung from a ceiling beam. A wall was covered by a whiteboard that tracked the status of various family projects. They truly live in a 21st century version of the one-room school house.

Education was, in fact, the object of my visit. Roy and Darrow had asked me to work on a research project with their oldest daughter Raziah, then nine years old. I was honored (and maybe a little flattered) by the request, but unsure of my



Ron Mackrodt (right) helps the Robles family (Roy, Raziah, Darrow) review archival photographs at the Museum. Raziah and her family live in an "ark," originally a houseboat on the estuary. With the help of Museum resources and assistance from our photo archivist Joe Young, the Robles are preparing a major research project on their home and other Alameda arks. Image: Judith Lynch.

qualifications. Graduate school was a long way behind me, and the intervening years had been filled by my work as a cabinetmaker. Her parents were more confident and suggested we do a local history project that

would help Raziah understand her connection to her own community.

When the family moved into their new home, a neighbor said the house

Continued on page 2...



Ark . . . Continued from page 1

had long been in her own family and had been moved to its current lot from the shoreline of the Alameda estuary. In short, the structure had been an ark, also called a houseboat. Much of my own childhood had been spent on the beaches of Alameda, and I remembered those ramshackle homes and the folks who had lived there.

The arks of Alameda: now here was a subject with a connection for all of us. Raziah seemed interested, so how to proceed? A preliminary internet search suggested that the houseboat community of Alameda had been largely forgotten, so we would need help from the community around us.

Prowling the stacks at the Alameda Main Library, I came upon the writings of local historian Woody Minor, whom I knew from walks and lectures. He was interested in our project and, as ever, generous with his time. We walked to the site of Raziah's house, and standing at curbside Woody agreed that it could very well be a transplanted ark. While he had no information on that particular site, he referred me to articles he had written for the *Alameda Journal* (Heritage, Dec. 6, 1991 thru Feb. 7, 1992). Luckily for us, his more than one thousand newspaper stories have been carefully indexed, so finding the series on arks was easy with help from reference librarian Jill Russell. The articles were classic Woody: impeccable scholarship, fascinating anecdotes. The stories focused as much on the ark dwellers as on the vessels themselves. It was an exemplary body of work for the budding historian.

On my next visit, I found that the family whiteboard hosted a time line of the Alameda ark community. At one end was a sketch of Prophet Smith, fishing from his scow in the 1890s. At the other was a rendering of Raziah and her family. Woody's articles formed the basis of a family story-telling project; each segment was read aloud and discussed. Raziah and her father also started a Facebook



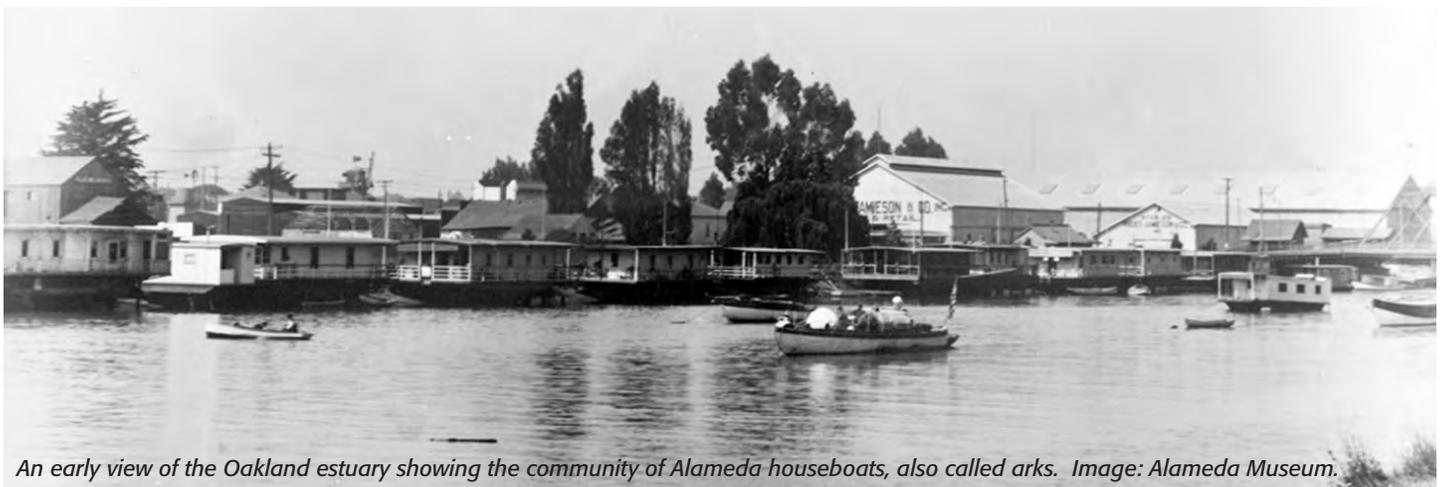
Youthful museum researcher Raziah Robles in front of her Alameda home, which began life as an ark in the waters of the estuary. Image: Joe Samberg.

page and are currently developing a website, the future home for her own research.

Using Woody's last article in the series ("What's left?") as a guide, we planned a field trip to the remaining arks, so Raziah could photograph and post the sites on her website. She stepped out in full regalia: flowing scarf, beret, with camera equipment 'round her neck, and we began our journey in her parents' van. Had I been alone, hanging around the perimeter of a stranger's house, I might have aroused suspicion. Not the case with a ten year old photographer in the lead. The day was sunny, and we found many home-owners working in their yards. We were invited to explore and hear what stories they knew about the history of their homes. All the while, Roy was video-taping our adventures.

Our next big break came from Judith Lynch, president of the Alameda Museum, who invited us to spend a Saturday

Continued on page 3 . . .



An early view of the Oakland estuary showing the community of Alameda houseboats, also called arks. Image: Alameda Museum.



Ark . . . Continued from page 2

perusing the Museum's photo archives. Therein we might catch a glimpse of Raziah's house in its previous incarnation as an ark. Her neighbor said the house had been located somewhere adjacent to Blanding Avenue; we hoped to find a photo of that shoreline with arks in place. The Museum's volunteer photo archivist, Joe Young, had combed the archives for images relevant to our quest. We were shown to a work table, and Raziah set to work with great enthusiasm, scrutinizing background details to figure out the location of each shot. The signs visible on some of the commercial structures may well guide future efforts to narrow our research from the general to the particular.

We are planning our next moves. An interview with Raziah's next door neighbor is in the works. Raziah is preparing questions for her informant: What memories does she have of her grandmother, one of the original occupants of the house? What stories did she tell? Does she have any family photographs or documents that will help us? The interview will be filmed by Roy and posted on the website. Beyond that, we will continue our course, looking to the members of our community for guidance on the project, exploring our own connections with the arks of Alameda. Visit the Facebook page (facebook.com/arks_of_alameda) and contact us if you have memories, stories, pictures or ideas about the arks!

MQ Note: Raziah and her family will present a Museum lecture about the arks of Alameda during 2015. This project is a fine example of how the Museum provides inspiration, advice, and images for many articles, class reports, books and presentations. The Museum is the premier place to search archived photographs related to Alameda history. The images are currently being scanned, a lengthy process now underway that will make these thousands of photographs available in digital format.



From the Curator's Desk

by George C. Gunn

*A*s you might have noticed, I use my column principally as a way to recognize others. I want to thank outgoing President Robbie Dileo for her past services and years of devotion to the Museum. Another individual, when asked to compose a list of her duties in relation to the Museum, modestly recorded only half of them. Diane Coler-Dark, always busy in the background, does a myriad of tasks, not to mention that she served as president for many years. Thanks too, Diane, for insisting that we select the very best houses for the annual Alameda Legacy Home Tour that we co-sponsor with the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society. (See page 4 for information about being a home tour docent in September.) I also want to thank Judith Lynch, our fledgling President, for taking on that formidable task. I know she will be successful as she has the complete support of our board of directors and of me as Curator.

Thank you to Lois Francis for donating your mother's bountiful set of Royal Doulton dinnerware for the dining room table of the Meyers House. Everything Lois donates is elegant, and this beautiful set in the Coventry pattern will help make the Meyers House the showplace of our city.

Thanks also to Dora and Gene Calhoun for their own contributions to the Meyers House. Given bolts of fabric, Dora created lovely drapes for both the library and the grandmother's room. Gene calmly completed the frustrating tasks of hanging the drapes, along with many pictures.

In ending, much gratitude to my longtime neighbors Shirley and Carl Ramos. Your experience and work in the Meyers House garden add much to the grounds, and Carl has completed restored the flagpole there. He tackled this project in place, and the flagpole will be installed in a special dedication ceremony. Watch the *Alameda Museum Quarterly* for information!


Curator, Alameda Museum

LEGACY SOCIETY

Gifts from your estate must be \$1,000 or more to be a part of the program. Lesser amounts may be donations to a specific project or archival fund. Perhaps a \$500 Lifetime Membership would be appropriate? **For questions call 510-523-5907. Download the flyer from our website AlamedaMuseum.org**



Me and the Museum

by Joe Young, Curatorial Assistant

"WHATEVER POSSESSED YOU TO VOLUNTEER WITH THE ALAMEDA MUSEUM?" is sometimes asked of me. Oddly enough, it is a question that I often ask of myself. The salary is nil, of course—but the vacation time allowed is most generous. Other factors are at play that make my time spent on the museum both enjoyable and challenging.

Among my pre-museum careers were as merchandising executive for Montgomery Ward and as a supervisor at the Immigration and Naturalization Services district office in San Francisco. In 1995, newly retired and visiting the museum for the first time, I noticed exhibits of photographs made by famous San Francisco artists of the early 1900s. I commented upon them to a man seated at the docent desk who, it turns out, was Curator George Gunn. Little did I realize that the course of my retirement life was about to change. George learned from me that I had been an avid collector of vintage photos since the 1960. He came by my home to check out my collection of about 2,000 images, ranging from daguerreotypes to pictures from the 1960s. George was also there (I suspect) to check on my house-keeping; he quickly approved of the picture collection, but I'm still on probation regarding the latter.

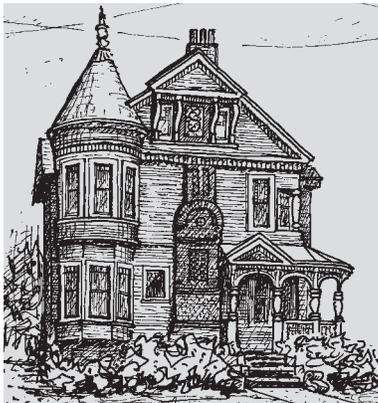
I took on the task of organizing, evaluating and archivally preserving the museum collection of 5,000 plus photographs. It took over five years to complete this project but it has paid off. For example: I found a folder labeled "Businesses of Alameda" that was bursting with 200 plus images, and I found therein photos of every kind of business from butcher shops to dry cleaners to livery stables. Now each type of business has its own folder, which obviously simplifies research work.

In recent years I spend my time helping to merchandise the gift shop and printing display signs for it. I developed an "Old and Rare Books" section that has generated sales.



Photo curator Joe Young in his bailiwick, conserving, identifying and archiving our treasured photographs, vivid reminders of Alameda history and culture. Image: Judith Lynch.

Lest I become spoiled by too much free time, I assist with estate sale pricing, often using the Internet for pricing guidance, and I purchase our archival supplies, such as acid free folders and sleeves to preserve and protect our precious materials from dust, sunlight, and time. And, as my title of Curatorial Assistant might imply, George tosses a lot of other tasks my way—and I'm rarely successful in tossing them back to him! Volunteering here has truly been worthwhile, for it is interesting and challenging work, I've made many friends and, if nothing else, it has kept me off the streets for nearly 20 years.



ALAMEDA LEGACY HOME TOUR Sunday, September 28th, 11:00 am – 5:00 pm

If you would like to be a docent for the first three hours (morning shift) or the last three (afternoon shift), you can tour the homes for free and be our guest at a thank you party that afternoon starting at 5:30 pm. Information about the homes is provided for docents, and while we encourage vintage clothing, it is not required. The tour is sponsored by the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society and the Alameda Museum. **Potential docents, please contact Jim Smallman at smallman_james@hotmail.com.**

Image: Richard Knight.



BE A
MUSEUM DOCENT

Make some new friends.

*Alameda Museum contact
Ellen Chesnut 510-865-1204.*

*Meyers House contact
George Gunn 510-521-1233.*

Alameda Museum Quarterly is published in the spring, summer, fall, and winter of each year and is available in electronic form on the museum website.

Alameda Museum
2324 Alameda Avenue
Alameda, CA 94501
www.alamedamuseum.org
510-521-1233

COMMUNICATIONS STAFF

Contributors: Dennis Evanosky, Adam Gillitt, George Gunn, Charlie Howell, Judith Lynch, Ron Mackrodt, and Joe Young

Designer: Valerie Turpen
Web: Adam Gillitt

MUSEUM DIRECTORS 2014

Judith Lynch, President
Johanna Hall, Vice-President
Dennis Evanosky, Secretary
Bob Risley, Treasurer
Adam Gillitt
Charlie Howell
Adam Koltun
Jim Smallman

THANKS TO OUR CORPORATE SPONSORS

Alameda Sun

Alameda's only locally owned and operated newspaper

Alameda
MAGAZINE

Historic Preservation Season in Alameda 2014

- ◆ **Saturday, April 12, 2014, 11:00 am – Noon:** *Kids & Queen Victoria*, the 17th annual show featuring the art of elementary students studying 19th century architecture, history, and culture. Special guest: Queen Victoria herself! Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Avenue. Free.
- ◆ **Thursday, April 24, 2014, 7:00 pm:** *Bay Area Copper 1900–1950, Dirk van Erp & His Influence* by author Gus Bostrom, proprietor of the Craftsman mecca California Historical Design store in Berkeley. Sponsor: Judith Lynch, City of Alameda Historical Advisory Board. Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Avenue. Free for Museum members, \$10 for others.
- ◆ **Sunday, May 18, 2014, details TBA:** *AAPS Historic Preservation Awards*, 17th annual. Free.
- ◆ **Thursday, May 29, 2014, 7:00 pm:** *Old Alameda*, Dennis Evanosky and Eric Kos, a slide lecture about the original three small towns consolidated into the City of Alameda. Sponsor: Peter Fletcher, Broker, Windermere Real Estate. Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Avenue. Free for Museum members, \$10 for others.
- ◆ **Saturday, June 14, 2014:** *3rd Annual Trolley Tour*, a benefit for the Alameda Museum. Curious about “Old Alameda,” the early days of our former peninsula, only an island since 1902? Narrated by *Alameda Sun* publishers and authors Dennis Evanosky and Eric Kos. \$50 ticket includes a two hour journey aboard a motorized cable car and a repast at the Naval Air Museum. Two flights, 10:00 am and 1:00 pm. Sponsor: Peter Fletcher, Broker, Windermere Real Estate. To reserve your seat, call 510-521-1177 or email judithal@comcast.net.

Museum Lectures @ 7:00 pm

Alameda Museum 2324 Alameda Avenue near Park Street

- ◆ **Thursday, March 27**
Twenty-seven Years Aglow by architect Richard Rutter, who designed lighting celebrating the 50th birthday of the Golden Gate Bridge. Sponsors: Law offices of Susan Jeffries & the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society.
- ◆ **Thursday, April 24**
Bay Area Copper 1900 – 1950 Dirk van Erp & His Influence by author Gus Bostrom, proprietor of the Craftsman mecca California Historical Design store in Berkeley. Sponsor: Judith Lynch, City of Alameda Historical Advisory Board.
- ◆ **Thursday, May 29**
Old Alameda with Dennis Evanosky & Eric Kos, a slide lecture to entice people to the June 14 trolley tour of three small towns later consolidated into the City of Alameda. Sponsor: Peter Fletcher, Broker, Windermere Real Estate.
- ◆ **Thursday, June 26**
Museum Tales: Preserving Our History Exhibits and talks on Alameda Naval Air Museum, Pacific Pinball Museum, USS Hornet, Meyers House, and Alameda Museum. Speakers: George Gunn, Charlie Howell, Larry Pirack, Michael Schiess, and Sieg Wroebel.
- ◆ **Thursday, March 27**
Sponsor: Debra Hilding, docents, Alameda Museum.
- ◆ **Thursday, July 31**
Living in a Brown Shingle Home by Lucia Howard, architect and coauthor of the new book *Shingle Style: Living in a Brown Shingle Home*. Sponsor Janelle Spatz, Realtor, Bayside Real Estate.
- ◆ **Thursday, August 28**
Topic TBA. Local historian and author Woody Minor. Sponsor Evelyn Kennedy, Realtor, Gallagher & Lindsey, Inc.
- ◆ **Thursday, September 25**
1868 Hayward Fault Earthquake by Author Richard Schwartz. A mild precursor to what will happen here in the future. Includes accounts of people who lived through the devastating 1868 trembler. Sponsor: Johanna Hall, Alameda Museum Board of Directors.
- ◆ **Thursday, October 30**
Six Short Blocks That Are Long on History: A Century on Post Street from the Gold Rush to the 1950s Robin Seeley talks about the history and architecture of her Alameda neighborhood. Sponsor: Robbie Dileo, former President, Alameda Museum.

GET COMMITTEED!

Please consider joining one of our committees.

Have fun, learn lots, meet different people, and get the satisfaction of helping out the Museum and the Meyers House! We have listed the chair of each committee, followed by his or her email and phone number.

Please use email if you can, as most of us prefer it.



■ Budget and Fund Raising:

Dennis Evanosky
evanosky@gmail.com
510-263-1470

■ Collections, Events & Exhibits:

Adam Gillitt
adam@gilli.com
415-225-5858

■ Membership, Docent & Volunteer Recruitment:

Adam Koltun
fettrecovery@gmail.com
510-205-6509

■ Merchandising & Estate Sales:

Johanna Hall
thejohannahall@gmail.com
510-701-9392

■ Meyers House & Garden:

Charlie Howell
info@alamedamuseum.org
510-521-1247

■ Publicity & Communications:

Dennis Evanosky,
evanosky@gmail.com
510-263-1470

Docent Dossiers

Who's aboard, what are they doing, and why?



Mary Lou Kurtz

"My neighbor Lois Singley is a docent at the Museum, and she took me to the membership luncheon as her guest . . . and the rest is history," laughed Mary Lou Kurtz. "I have been a volunteer here four years, and what I like best is working with Curator George Gunn and photo archivist Joe Young. They are knowledgeable, and they just love this place! Some of my jobs here? I get to price and arrange items for the gift shop, and George is always finding tasks for me so I keep busy." Mary Lou's favorite exhibit in the history gallery is the kitchen because it is so homey.

◀
Docent Mary Lou in the vintage kitchen, the part of the Museum she enjoys most. Image: Judith Lynch.

Diane Coler-Dark

Always active in the community, Diane Coler-Dark talked to us in between collecting signatures to put the Crab Cove rezoning initiative on the ballot. "I have been part of the Museum for so many years, I can't even remember when I started! But I do know one number, I served as President for twelve years. I am on call as a docent, too." She got intensely involved during the early 1990s, when the very existence of the Museum was threatened. "They tried to tear down the historic high school, and we saved that. They wanted to replace the Alameda Theatre with a parking lot, and we still have the old theater. Then they wanted to close up the Museum, which to me was the heart and core of our history. It was just too much, so instead of rescuing a dog from the shelter, I decided to take on the Museum and help save that!" Diane has no special favorite among the many exhibits in the history gallery, although she does have a suggestion for Curator George; she would like to see a display of underwear from the Victorian era.



▶
Former Museum President Diane contemplates an entry in the Kids & Queen Victoria display. Image: Richard Knight.





Twenty-seven Years Aglow

by Museum Staff

HOW MANY OF US REMEMBER walking on the Golden Gate Bridge when it was turned into a temporary mall as a celebration of its fiftieth birthday? That event was then memorialized at the Oakland Museum in an enormous color print that seemingly showed a picture of every person who ventured there, estimated at half a million.

Turns out that anniversary had a special Alameda connection. Local architect Richard Rutter spent most of the 1980s working for Bolles Associates in San Francisco. The Bolles firm was productive and wide-ranging, designing Candlestick Park, the General Motors Plant in Fremont, the San Jose Campus of IBM, Macys, Dayton Hudson, as well as Gallo and Paul Masson Wineries.

Around 1966, the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway, and Transportation District hired John Bolles to plan the lighting of the Golden Gate Bridge towers. During the Great Depression when the bridge was completed, they had never been lit, due to two lacks, money and lighting technology. After the Bolles study, the project was shelved due to sparse funding, and twenty more years went by. Since 1987 would mark the 50th anniversary of the span, Bolles Associates was asked by the Bridge District to dust off their plans and to design a modern tower

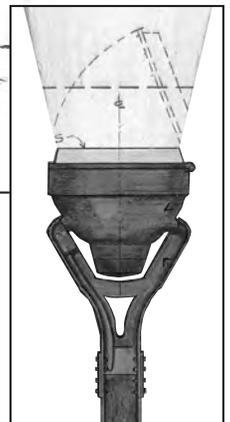


One of Richard Rutter's working drawings for the tower lighting project and a section of the lighting plan. Images: Richard Rutter.

lighting scheme. Richard was assigned to manage the project from plans to completion.

The tower lighting has now been in place for twenty-seven years and was the topic of the kickoff museum lecture for 2014. In keeping with the antiquity of the bridge, Richard used an antiquated Kodak Carousel projector to show original 35 mm. color slides taken during the design and construction of the lighting project. Those of us at the presentation wondered

nervously whether a forty year old projector bulb would explode in a sparked blaze of glory, but of course it lasted until the end of the show! His talk was also highlighted by a display of original architectural models long in storage. Richard has certainly earned his affectionate nickname of "Dickpedia!"



Upcoming Exhibits at the Museum Art Gallery

Exhibits generally open on the first weekend of the month and close on the last. Check local newspapers for exact dates.

APRIL

17th Annual Kids & Queen Victoria Show

Reception Saturday, April 12
11:00 am - Noon

Opening featuring Queen Victoria with art by elementary students.

MAY

Alameda Photo Society Reception Saturday, May 17

1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Show of best printed and framed work.

JUNE

Five Museum Alliance

Exhibits and presentations about the Alameda Naval Air Museum, Pacific Pinball Museum, USS Hornet, Meyers House, and Alameda Museum.



Back in Time: A Trip Through Alameda's Three Towns

by Dennis Evanosky

BEFORE 1872, VISITORS FOUND THREE INDEPENDENT TOWNS—Alameda, Encinal and Woodstock—on the Alameda peninsula. William Worthington Chipman and Gideon Aughinbaugh, who purchased the peninsula from Don Antonio Peralta in 1851, laid out the town of Alameda with its heart near today's Peach and Washington streets on the East End.

That same year J.F. Hibbard signed a promissory note for \$4,666.66 to purchase 656.6 acres in the center of the peninsula. He created the town of Encinal with its hub at today's Union Street and Pacific Avenue. In 1864 A.A. Cohen had the town of Woodstock surveyed primarily to accommodate workers on his San Francisco & Alameda Railroad. The center of the peninsula's third town stood at modern-day Third Street and Pacific Avenue.

In 1872, *Daily Evening Encinal* publisher Frederick Keller Krauth spearheaded a drive that united these three small towns into the city of Alameda. Krauth was a 49er who had tried his luck on the American River's Mormon Bar. With no gold dust to show for his efforts, he moved to Placerville, where he worked for the *Placerville Democrat*



Frederick Krauth arrived in Alameda and started a newspaper. Three years later he was instrumental in creating the city of Alameda from three separate towns. Image: San Francisco Daily Call.

newspaper. In 1869 he brought his skills to Alameda, where he started his own newspaper.

The three towns had stood as one for eleven years in 1883 when Myron W. Wood published the *History of Alameda County, California*. His historian, J.P. Monro-Fraser, sat across the table with Alameda co-founder Gideon Aughinbaugh and interviewed him for the book.

Aughinbaugh told Monro-Fraser that when he arrived in San Francisco, he decided not to pursue his trade as a carpenter. Instead Gideon and his wife, Elizabeth, decided to go into the more lucrative grocery business; they opened a store near today's First and Mission streets. As they sold foodstuffs to their neighbors, the Aughinbaughs noticed a vein of gold that they hoped to mine. This gold was not in the far-away Sierra Nevada, but right in front of them on their grocery store shelves: fresh fruit. The Aughinbaughs were astonished at how much money people were willing to pay for fruits like peaches, apples and cherries. They dreamed of a way to raise their own fruit, but knew they needed land to do this.

Perhaps Gideon and Elizabeth had visited the reading room and "intelligence office" on Clay Street just a block down from Portsmouth Plaza. They could keep up on news in the east by reading the newspapers that Vermont native William Worthington Chipman kept there. Historian Imelda Merlin tells us that the Aughinbaughs would have found "newspapers from the chief towns in the United States and a 'Miners' and Strangers' Register'" at Chipman's office. Chipman headed west early in life, first to Ohio where he worked

a school principal and studied law. He came to San Francisco in 1850. In September of that year he and Aughinbaugh first set foot on the Bolas de Encinal (as the Alameda peninsula was known).

Aughinbaugh recalled that he and his partner "subleased from Depachier and Le Maitre 160 acres fronting on San Francisco Bay." (The men Aughinbaugh remembered as Depachier and Le Maitre were Joseph Depassier and Balthazar Maitre who had leased a portion of the Bolsa de Encinal from Don Antonio Peralta.)

In 1895, two years before his death, Aughinbaugh granted a second interview; this one to the *Alameda Daily Argus*. In that discussion Aughinbaugh recalled ordering 1,000 fruit trees, which arrived in May 1851 in an express shipment. By July the partners had their first peaches; in September they were ready to bring fruit to market.

The town of Alameda: One month later on October 22, 1851, they purchased the peninsula from Don Antonio Peralta. In order to raise the money to pay for their venture, the partners sold portions of their land to other enterprising Yankees, but kept the East End for themselves. In 1853, they hired surveyor J.F. Stratton to survey the town of Alameda. They teamed up with Stratton to lay out streets. They named the byways running east-west for famous Americans like George Washington and Henry Clay; names for the north-south streets reflected the pair's enterprises: Peach, Market and Post to name just three. Chipman and Aughinbaugh set up a prefabricated home near today's Post and Adam streets.

An Alameda County commission visited the town in 1854. The commissioners were pleased to see not just an artesian well, but a plank road (High Street), a shell road and C. Halloway's home (apparently the only structure covered with plaster).

Continued on page 9...

Three Towns . . . Continued from page 8



Governor Henry Haight lived in this grand home on the West End not far from the town of Woodstock. Image: Alameda Museum.

The town of Encinal: James Hibbard, a man the 1852 California census listed as 35-year-old physician "J.F. Hebrid," stepped up and promised to pay Chipman and Aughinbaugh \$4,666.66 for 656.6 acres in the center of the peninsula. Later court records revealed, however, that the good doctor reneged and failed to pay for his property, which was first known as "Hibbard's Third" and later "Lands Adjacent to the Town of Encinal."

In 1854 Hibbard laid out that town along the peninsula's northern shore at the foot of today's Grand Street and near the 3,000-foot-long wharf that Charles Minturn already had in place. Besides the wharf the town also had a tannery and strawberry fields. Perhaps to escape the smell emanating from the tannery, Hibbard fished redwood logs out of today's Oakland Estuary and build himself a house on his property's south shore.

Hibbard named his property's east-west streets for birds—Condor, Falcon and Quail, for example, underwent name changes to Clement,

Buena Vista and Santa Clara avenues, respectively. Hibbard gave the north-south byways names that reflected creatures of the sea: among them Leviathan, Pike and Minnow, which thankfully morphed into Grand, Union and Chestnut streets. Two streets survive from Hibbard's naming scheme: Eagle and Paru.

The town of Woodstock: Many Alamedans associate Woodstock with the Alameda Housing Authority's 1941 housing project on the West End. The area has a richer history that stretches back to 1851 or early 1852, when Charles Bowman received a deed from Chipman and Aughinbaugh for land here. The Town of Woodstock was the 1864 creation of A.A. Cohen and his partner J.D. Farwell.

A young Jack London once lived nearby; terra cotta, borax and oil industries all thrived here, and an early California governor made his home here.

Bowman purchased 144 acres on today's West End from Chipman and Aughinbaugh. Instead of a fence,

Bowman chose to build a ditch to define his eastern property boundary. Quickly dubbed "Bowman's Ditch," it ran in a north-south direction from the marshlands to San Francisco Bay. The ditch ran through today's Woodstock Park, through about where Marshall Way and Pacific Avenue intersect and then just east of today's Fourth Avenue.

George Bird arrived, purchased land and built a hotel, a resort for hunters. Painter Joseph Lee has left us a wonderful likeness of the hotel and its owner. Cohen commissioned the painting in 1868, four years after he founded the town of Woodstock and named it for Bird's hometown in England. Some of the street names in the town are still in use today, monikers like Spruce and Cypress. Names that Cohen chose to commemorate his partner Farwell and his patron J.G. Kellogg have disappeared.

Henry Haight chose the West End for his estate. He is best remembered as the governor who signed the documents that breathed life into today's University of California. Jack London live here, too. He moved to the West End with his family. He attended the West End Primary School, which later morphed into Longfellow School.

Although the nineteenth-century towns of Alameda, Encinal and Woodstock have long disappeared, their vestiges remain. You just have to know where to look.

Join authors and *Alameda Sun* publishers Dennis Evanosky and Eric J. Kos, 7:00 pm, Thursday, May 29, at Alameda Museum for a lecture on the towns of Alameda, Encinal and Woodstock. Admission: Free for museum members, \$10 for others.

Saturday, June 14, Dennis and Eric will take you on a trolley tour of these three towns. The tour benefits the Alameda Museum; to reserve tickets at \$50 each, email judithal@comcast.net or leave a message at 510-748-0796. Sponsor: Peter Fletcher, broker at Windermere Real Estate.



Who put the Queen in Queen Victoria?

FOR THE PAST MANY YEARS QUEEN VICTORIA has assumed the body and visited the museum, where she has been alternatively charmed and gobsmacked by all manner of art prepared by children in her honor. This year, anticipating the 17th annual Kids & Queen Victoria show April 12, people have been curious about the visit of the royal personage.

All will be revealed! The museum began offering 12 hour professional development workshops to Alameda teachers, where they learned about the history, architecture and culture of the reign of the Queen, who ruled England from 1834-1901. Homes and other structures built during her throne squat are called "Victorian" in her honor, and in Alameda we still boast more than 4,000 such buildings. West End branch librarian Aida Merriweather read about this nascent program and presented us with a seminal book that launched a fantasy. It was a picture book for grades K-3 published in England, written by Margaret Wild. Sweetly illustrated by



Sue O'Loughlin, *The Queen's Holiday* is fraught with delightful details about her journey to the beach, complete with butler, footman, pageboy, maids and much paraphernalia, her dogs, her jewelry, four suitcases, and of course the royal potty as toilets were not yet in wide use. After a series of naughty misdeeds, they end their day with afternoon tea at a highly decorated hotel. So we decided to pretend the book was about her visit with her entourage to the beach in Alameda. To show the size and style of hotels during the era, we show students and teachers the Kohlmoos Hotel using an image from the museum gift shop. Students also discuss and draw

19th century inventions and gadgets and actual redwood details plucked from Victorian houses.

From the ethereal zone emerged the idea that the queen could visit and enjoy the display in her honor. The first visiting monarch and her consort Prince Albert were grandly portrayed by Denise and Scott Brady who danced at the show complete with costumed courtiers. The next year the faux royal duo were pressed into service as wedding attendants, and they regretfully declined to visit the museum show.

In stepped veteran teacher Connie Turner, who inhabited the role from 2002-2013. She rented authentic 19th century costumes, and her daughter Laura tailored a new version of the monarch's signature detail blue velvet sash, embellished with hand sewn jewels, antique medals, patches, and other vintage memorabilia. Artist Richard Knight completed the royal couture with a preposterous crown of foamcore, mock ermine, party store jewels and disco balls.

The queen always listens attentively as the children serenade her; their songs include the *Alameda Anthem* to teach her a bit about our island city. Each show included a display to celebrate her queendom: one year students prepared a life sized effigy in papier mache, hair coifed from a mop refill from Pagano's Hardware. Another year she was rapt as 3rd graders performed a snippet of a history pageant they were writing about the founders of Alameda. Part of their opening lyrics: "Oh Mr. Chipman, Mr. Auginbaugh, file your plans in Sacramento, don't stash them

Continued on page 11 . . .



Alamedans Denise and Scott Brady as Queen Victoria and Prince Albert; those two royals were avid dancers, and they choreographed this waltz themselves. Image: Richard Knight.

Queen Victoria . . . Continued from page 10



Connie Turner as Queen Victoria examining the artwork with several of her "honorary" subjects. Image: Judith Lynch.

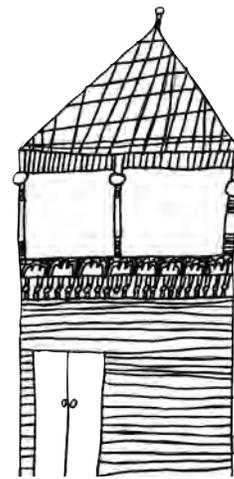
in your sock!" The chorus was accompanied by a band of kazoo players, honking the catchy tune on their combs and waxed paper. Another year she reviewed a book listing where students would take her to discover

contemporary Alameda. In a display on the museum wall, she read letters between Alameda students and Prince Charles, her great-great-great grandson. One of her favorites was a tribute by Woodstock students who prepared a life size portrait of Her Majesty, using kidney and garbanzo beans with bulging google eyes and a perky crown of aluminum foil.

Ms. Turner is retiring as our queen and stepping onto the dais is Judy Jaber, whose daughters Audrey and Katie attend Otis School. Again this event will be convened by Alameda City manager John Russo, who has graciously presided for the past three years; his positive spirit sets a happy tone that elevates the occasion.

Should you like to see the queen and review the student artwork, please join us at the opening reception Saturday, April 12 from 11:00 am until noon-thirty in the art gallery of the museum. (By the way should you meet the Queen, you say "Good morning Your Majesty," then gents bow or nod and ladies curtsy.)

Otis student Houston experiments with an antique apple peeler, while learning about inventions during the Victorian era. Image: Judith Lynch.



Washington School student Isis Wilson showed off her drawing of the Jackson Park bandstand by displaying it for the Queen.



To prepare the 17th annual Kids & Queen Victoria show at the Museum, Maya Lin teacher Terry Eichel took her first graders to study a nest of Victorian homes in the 900 block of Santa Clara Avenue. Image: Judith Lynch.



A New Beginning at the Meyers House & Garden

by Charles Howell

"Referring to what?" you may ask. The Meyers House and Garden, that's what. "But they are old, mostly from the time of Queen Victoria!" you reply. That is true, they are old, but their circumstances are new. Construction on the property was started in the late 1890s; the last major building, the architectural studio of Henry and Mildred Meyers, was finished in the early 1930s. In the early 1990s the property passed from the Meyers estate to the City of Alameda and the Museum jointly. The City took care of maintenance of the buildings and grounds, and the Museum was responsible for furnishing the house and managing tours with the help of dedicated docents under the direction of Curator George Gunn.

Now the new part: last year ownership of the property was transferred to the Museum to be managed by the Curator and the Board of Directors. To take on these new responsibilities, the Board established a Meyers House Committee. Its members are developing plans and procedures to host events in the garden to earn money to help maintain the property. We are united in the wish that the place will survive intact for future generations to learn from, admire, and enjoy.

I have volunteered to chair the new committee. I thought that with my stint on the Museum Board and my time as a docent at both the Museum and Meyers House, I might be able to help. "But" . . . as I have heard them say on many pledge breaks lately . . . "We can't do it alone". We could use more help from you, the members. Some possibilities: Join the committee. Act as a docent on one of the two days a month the Meyers House is open. Help George clean, vacuum, polish and dust the antiques. In addition we are going to need help with publicity, special tours, and events stemming from the rental of the garden. If you are interested in helping in any way, call me at the Meyers House number 510-521-1247 or email me at info@alamedamuseum.org



Prolific architect Henry Meyers was featured in "The Men Who Made San Francisco." For years after the 1906 earthquake, his was the busiest architectural office in the Bay Area.



Miss Phyllis Diller, movie star, comedienne, Alameda resident, and confidante to Museum docent Ron Ucovich will be celebrated in a Saturday afternoon gala this summer. Her local fan club call themselves "Dames Aux Gateaux," said organizer Dorinda von Stroheim, "because when we go out together, we always order and eat our dessert first."

The triggering event for this occasion was their purchase at auction of a key to the City of Alameda that had been presented to Miss Diller. "Her fans will use the Museum's capacious art gallery for a variety of activities related to Miss Diller. We will set up a craft table so people can make hats in the Diller fashion, we will organize a photo booth where people can have their picture taken with her key to the city," Dorinda said. Vintage clothing will be for sale, and a light repast will be available for the fans and their guests. This event to be held Saturday, July 19, noon - 3:30 pm is free and open to all.



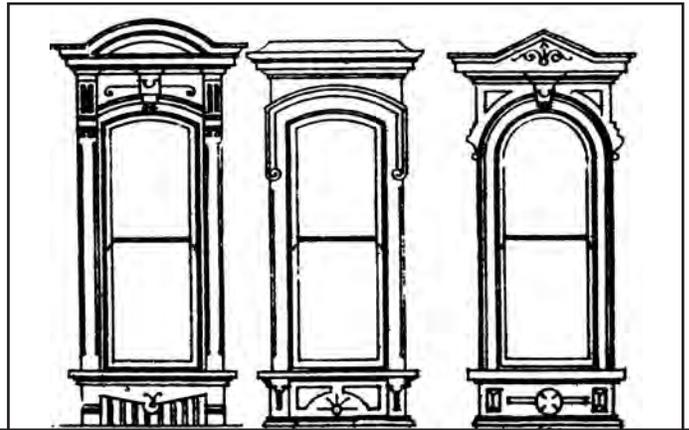
VOLUNTEERS: ALAMEDA MUSEUM & MEYERS HOUSE & GARDEN

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Steve Aced | Julie Kennedy |
| Chad Barr | Carole King |
| Yvonne Blackburn | Adam Koltun |
| Gene & Dora Calhoun | Mary Lou Kurtz |
| Janine Carr | Gayle Macaitis |
| Katherine Cavanaugh | Kate McAnaney |
| Ellen Chesnut | Jeannie McCaffery |
| Barbara Coapman | Jim & Carla McGrogan |
| Catherine Coleman | Joanne McKay |
| Diane Coler-Dark | Arlene Nash |
| Cathy Conley | Lloyd Novakowski |
| Charles Daly | Susan Potter |
| Reid Davis | Carl & Shirley Ramos |
| Ross & Robbie Dileo | Patricia Rios |
| Marilyn Dodge | Virginia Rivera |
| Linda Domholt | Betty Saunders |
| Joanne Dykema | Holly Schmalenberger-Haugen |
| Robbie Erion | Margy & Virgil Silver |
| Pamela Ferrero | Lois Singley |
| Barbara Gibson | Marcy Skala |
| Adam Gillitt | Jim Smallman |
| George Gunn | Ellen Tilden |
| Leslie Hawksbee | Ron Ucovich |
| Debra Hilding | Gerry Warner |
| Lois J. Hoffman | Robert Welch |
| Charlie & Gail Howell | Joe Young |
| Virginia Jones | |

Volunteer docents are the folks who keep our doors open. An enthusiastic group, they help run the gift shop, and on occasion, do tasks like help with mailings. Training is available. Do you have 3 hours to make new friends? Come and spend it with us!

**Docent coordinator for Alameda Museum
Ellen Chesnut, 510-865-1204**

**Docent coordinator for Meyers House
George Gunn, 510-521-1233**



VICTORIA'S LEGACY IN ALAMEDA SUMMER 2014

Queen Victoria's heritage here in Alameda is legion, comprising more than 4,000 buildings still left from the time of her reign, 1834-1901. Because these buildings laden with architectural "gingerbread" were constructed during her time on the throne, they are dubbed Victorians in her honor.

Alameda youngsters know of her, because she assumes the body each spring and visits the museum to review the artwork of hundreds of elementary students studying the history and architecture of her era. Now it is time for you grownups to learn about the richly embellished styles that make Island streets such a delight to stroll. Think of it as bird-watching and start your Victorian life list!

A free class for Mastick members offers eight sessions on Victorian culture, highlighting the 19th century buildings of Alameda. Five slide shows and three walking tours will show you how to recognize architectural details and distinguish amongst the various styles of fancywork homes that abound here. As a bonus, prepare and enjoy Victorian high tea with chef Jacki Rosen and meet Queen Victoria herself! Taught by local author Judith Lynch, who serves on the City of Alameda Historical Advisory Board.

Slide sessions are held Tuesday and Thursday mornings at Mastick Center; the walks visit Bay Station, Outer Pacific, Leonardville and tour the Meyers House.

The high tea class is Saturday, July 12 and costs \$15. Space is limited in both classes; please call Mastick to reserve a slot: 510-747-7506.





From the President's Podium

by Judith Lynch

Ten thousand thanks! In the last issue we ran an ad for something significant that was donated to the museum, a niche in the historic Odd Fellows Columbarium, an official San Francisco landmark from the 1890s. We set the price at \$10,000 and sure enough, up stepped David C. Schweisguth and Penelope R. Chu, who saw our listing in the bulletin of the Victorian Alliance. We appreciate those of you who also inquired; let the donation give you ideas! Perhaps you have a cemetery plot, a columbarium niche, or some other major item that you do not need. Donate it to the museum and let us add to the much needed fund to improve and maintain both Museum and the Meyers House.

When new people join the Museum or when people do something significant for us, we show our gratitude by forking over a free pass to the Meyers House. The recently created passes are adorned with the image of a gorgeous water color by Samantha McNally, an artist associated with the Frank Bette Center on Lincoln Avenue. Asked for permission, Samantha graciously consented, and now her painting makes the new passes look sublime.

Oops. Well, even the New York Times makes errors. In the cover story of the last *Alameda Museum Quarterly*, we ought to have stated that the Meyers House docents were trained by curator Gunn instead of by "the Museum." Of course to many of us, he is the Museum!

The Museum Board is eager to learn from the antics, ideas and activities of other house museums, in particular those that rent their property and grounds for events. Thanks to Board member Dennis Evanovsky, we had a special tour of the Pardee Home in downtown Oakland and what an excursion! Next on our docket: the Camron-Stanford House near Lake Merritt. We have also gotten copies of various contracts and agreements from other places including the Haas-Lilienthal House in San Francisco to give us guidance in preparing our own documents.

This issue introduces a new column, "The Docent Dossiers," because our volunteers are the mainstay of both the Museum and the Meyers House. Each issue we will publish brief stories about two or three docents and volunteer staff as a way to thank you and showcase your dedication to both places.

Speaking of homes, one of the most special in Alameda is holding an open house Saturday May 3, from 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm. The Greenleaf House, 1724 Santa Clara Avenue, is special for many reasons. It is the home of Girls, Inc. which this year is celebrating

fifty years of inspiring girls to be "Strong, Smart, and Bold." The structure is one of only thirty-one historic Monuments designated by the Alameda City Council, and it was designed by pedigreed architect Ernest Coxhead. Many of the intricate and unusual interior details are still intact, making a visit a true treat for architecture and history buffs.

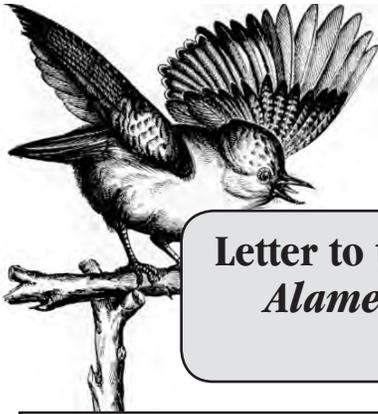
As we go to press, mobs are staging an eventful Museum membership meeting at the Masonic Hall. Many folks complete many tasks behind the scenes, everything from keeping track of reservations, "extracting" silent auction items, keyboarding the bid sheets, rounding up major items for the raffle, decorating the tables . . . Watch the next *Quarterly* for a feature on how this gala—our most important fundraiser of the year—gets itself done.

Some of you know that the day after I stepped up to be President I fell and broke my right hand. The accident meant I could keyboard only with extreme difficulty and could not drive my antique stick shift car at all! Luckily the Museum Board pulled together, and everybody took on new or extra assignments. For example we had a mailing party and most Board people came over the help label, tape, and sort almost 500 copies of the last *Quarterly*. Keeping the Museum looking good is a giant task. Thanks to Adam Koltun, his father Richard and his friend Christian Rotter, the art gallery was repainted, freshening it up for the current exhibit. Charlie Howell volunteered to take care of booking events at the garden of the Meyers House. Adam Gillitt not only thought up the idea of making a map of historic sites and museums on the Island, he went ahead and designed and produced one. Johanna Hall is helping distribute the maps; she bought a wad of them for her real estate clients and colleagues. Jim Smallman took charge of docents for the September home tour, a task requiring both diplomacy and skill. Dennis Evanovsky makes sure our events are covered in the *Alameda Sun*, and he and business partner Eric Kos lecture on local history for us. This year they are narrating our third annual trolley tour. Bob Risley continues the painstaking work of bird-dogging the finances of our enterprise and providing clear and thorough reports and budget analyses. Even though Robbie Dileo is no longer on the Board, she continues to help us understand and complete our jobs well, and she still provides labels that we need for mailing the *Quarterly*, invitations, and ballots. So at the Museum, instead of its "taking a village," it takes a Board and many thanks to you all!



Judith Lynch
President, Alameda Museum

Drawing of Judith by Otis School first grader Cassie Garcia.



Letter to the *Alameda Museum Quarterly*

My husband Thom Lafferty and I have always enjoyed the treasures in the Museum. Thom was fortunate to have two shows of his paintings and photographs in the art gallery there. His last show was organized by his daughters Deborah and Sue, as he was too ill to participate.

He did attend the reception, and this was one of his last trips out—he enjoyed it so much!—before he passed away last April. I have enclosed a small donation to the museum in his memory. My family and I are very grateful that he had this opportunity, and we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

*Sincerely,
Patricia Lafferty and family*



A New Map Featuring Local History

by Adam Gillitt

WHEN I FIRST VOLUNTEERED for the Museum, I wanted to learn as much as I could about our local history. We have lots of informative displays, an eminently knowledgeable curator, and an encyclopedic library of history books for sale. What we didn't have was any convenient, portable way to show and learn about Alameda's history while exploring the island.

I have been a professional graphic designer for the last twenty years and particularly appreciate maps. With help from several prominent local historians, I created a large folding map showing the locations of all thirty historical monuments and sites around Alameda, including a synopsis of local history, additional maps of the history of aviation and rail, and a list of further resources. It is intended to be portable, educational, and above all, useful.

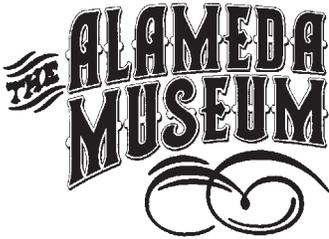
I used several publications freely available at the museum for research, and met with and received valuable contributions and suggestions from George Gunn, Woody Minor, Dennis Evanosky, Johanna Hall, and Judith Lynch. Without their help this map would not have been possible.

Please stop by the Alameda Museum and buy a copy (and one for a friend!) for \$3.00 each. You might also consider giving them to your employees, neighbors, and colleagues! If you operate a retail establishment and would like to sell copies, please contact Judith for wholesale rates and arrangements, judithal@comcast.net or 510-748-0796.

Thank You!



Museum Board member Adam Koltun, his father Richard (left), and his friend Christian Rotter (above), repainted the art gallery, freshening it up for the current exhibit. Images: Adam Koltun.



FOUNDED IN 1948

2324 Alameda Avenue
Alameda CA 94501

Return Address Requested

NON PROFIT ORG.

U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

PERMIT NO. 80

ALAMEDA, CA

94501

IN THIS ISSUE

- *The Museum and the Search for the "Lost" Ark*
- *From the Curator's Desk*
- *Me and the Museum*
- *Docent Dossiers*
- *Twenty-seven Years Aglow*
- *Back in Time: A Trip Through Alameda's Three Towns*
- *Who put the Queen in Queen Victoria?*
- *A New Beginning at the Meyers House*
- *From the President's Podium*

ALAMEDA MUSEUM

2324 Alameda Avenue

HOURS

Wed. – Fri., Sunday

1:30 pm – 4:00 pm

Saturday

11:00 am – 4:00 pm

510-521-1233

MEYERS HOUSE & GARDEN

2021 Alameda Avenue

HOURS

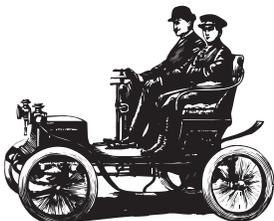
2nd & 4th Saturdays

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

(Last tour at 3:00 pm)

510-521-1247

www.alamedamuseum.org



ALAMEDA MUSEUM LECTURES 2014

- ❖ **THURSDAY, MARCH 27**
Twenty-seven Years Aglow By architect Richard Rutter, who designed lighting celebrating the 50th birthday of the Golden Gate Bridge in 1987.
 - ❖ **THURSDAY, APRIL 24**
Bay Area Copper 1900 – 1950
Dirk van Erp & His Influence By author Gus Bostrom, proprietor of the Craftsman mecca California Historical Design store in Berkeley.
 - ❖ **THURSDAY, MAY 29**
Old Alameda Dennis Evanosky & Eric Kos, a slide lecture to entice people to the June 14 trolley tour of three small towns later consolidated into the City of Alameda.
 - ❖ **THURSDAY, JUNE 26**
Museum Tales: Preserving Our History Exhibits and talks on Alameda Naval Air Museum, Pacific Pinball Museum, USS Hornet, Meyers House, and Alameda Museum. Speakers: George Gunn, Charlie Howell, Larry Pirack, Michael Schiess, and Sieg Wroebel.
 - ❖ **THURSDAY, JULY 31**
Living in a Brown Shingle Home By Lucia Howard, architect and coauthor of the new book *Shingle Style: Living in a Brown Shingle Home*.
 - ❖ **THURSDAY, AUGUST 28**
Topic TBA Local historian and author Woody Minor.
 - ❖ **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25**
1868 Hayward Fault Earthquake Author Richard Schwartz. A mild precursor to what will happen here in the future. Includes accounts of people who lived through the devastating 1868 trembler.
 - ❖ **THURSDAY, OCTOBER 30**
Six Short Blocks That Are Long on History: A Century on Post Street from the Gold Rush to the 1950s Robin Seeley talks about the history and architecture of her Alameda neighborhood.
- NOTE: Lectures take place at the Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Avenue off Park Street. Admission is free for museum members and \$10 for others. No reserved seats. We open at 6:30 pm on lecture nights. Come early to save a seat and enjoy the displays in the History and Art Galleries. For information leave a message at 510-748-0796 and check alamedamuseum.org.*