

Alameda Museum

Quarterly

FORTY YEARS UNDER THE GUNN

by Dennis Evanosky

MORE THAN EIGHTY OF ALAMEDA MUSEUM CURATOR GEORGE GUNN'S closest friends recently feted him at a dinner at Alameda's Pier 29 restaurant. They planned an evening to thank him for his forty years of service as curator. As he usually does, however, Gunn turned the tables and feted the guests for all they've done for the museum. "It's not about me," Gunn told the diners. Walking around the room, with the usual gleam in his eye and microphone in hand, he handed unsuspecting (and some suspecting) guests the microphone, giving them the chance to add some color to an already bright evening.

March 20, 1971, was the day Gunn began his task as curator, taking over the job of managing the city's collective memory, the Alameda Museum and its collections. Some recalled Gunn's attempt to mask his real age by claiming more than once that he was just six years old when he took the helm. Inheriting an organization founded on September 15, 1948 "City assessor Fred J. Croll played an important role in starting the association," Gunn said in an interview after the party. In 1951, the museum found its first home in the basement of the city's main library in the Carnegie building across from City Hall. "This was an important spot for the museum because it set a precedent for the city's supporting the museum in a prominent location," Gunn said.

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Curator George Gunn amongst treasures displayed in the recently renovated Meyers House basement. Photo: Valerie Turpen





Under the Gunn. . .Continued from page 1

After 30 years in the Carnegie Library building, the librarian decided that she needed the basement to store books, forcing the museum to move. It found a new home on Oak Street in the building that had served old Alameda High School as its auto shop. There it stayed for the next ten years. The third move in 1991 brought the collection to its current location on the ground floor of the New Masonic Temple building on Alameda Avenue between Park and Oak streets. "The larger space in the new location gave us room for more displays, and people began to donate large items, such as furniture, Gunn said. "Each move gave the museum a new look of professionalism." Gunn points out that the New Masonic Temple is a museum in itself. The attractive building went up in 1926 to replace architect Charles Mau's 1890 brick "Old Masonic Temple" next door.

When asked about his accomplishments these past 40 years, Gunn is quick to point out that his role was part of a larger effort involving the museum's volunteers. "I feel that we gave the museum direction," he said. "A museum that generalizes and just focuses on history is not taken seriously." He said in the early 1970s the museum began to focus on Alameda's history. Gunn also points to the rapport that he and the volunteers established with the city. He remembers a call from the city that cemented the relationship. "They offered us the assessment records that we keep in the museum today for the public to use."

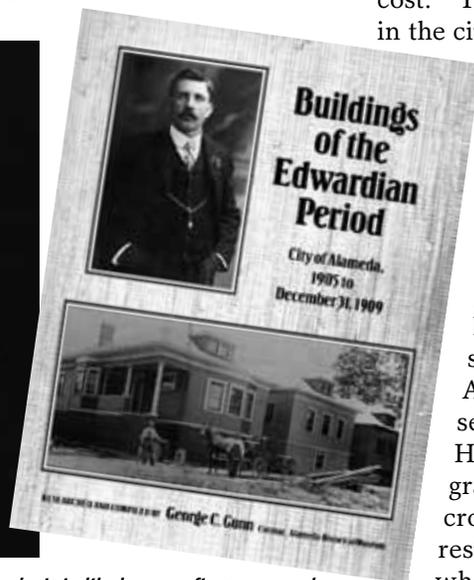
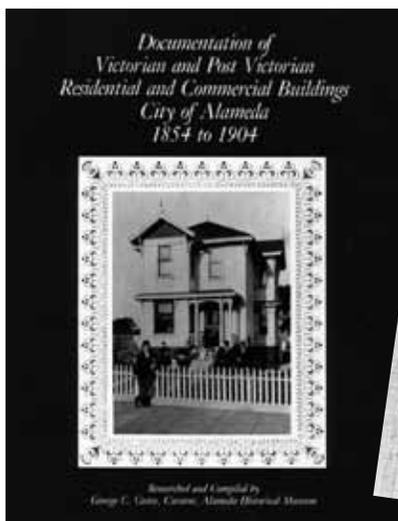
Gunn also said that the museum created a venue for artists with its east wing gallery. He pointed out that the



George Gunn and Wanda Thatcher, past docent chair, at the opening of the Meyers House for its 100 year celebration in July 1997.

Frank Bette Center and the museum are the only two major art venues in the city. The city does not support an art gallery, but does so indirectly by helping subsidize the museum's rent. Gunn also spoke about his two books that document all the residential and commercial buildings in town from the 1854 Webster House to homes built through December 1909. "About 25 percent of the questions the volunteers get at the museum have to do with individual homes and families," he said. These books, which list residences and businesses by street, reveal details like the architectural style, the architect and builder; the original owner and the building's original cost. "The books also help establish architects' patterns in the city and shed light on itinerant builders who ordinarily get no press."

Gunn reserves his most "pleasant" accomplishment for Gideon Aughinbaugh, who founded Alameda with William Worthington Chipman. "The man died here with no surviving relatives," Gunn said. His wife, Elizabeth, died in the 1850s and rests in an unmarked grave somewhere in the old town of Alameda. His daughter did not survive him, dying of a stroke after being locked in St. Joseph's Church. Aughinbaugh was laid to rest in an unendowed section of Mountain View Cemetery in Oakland. He may have had a wooden cross to mark his grave, who knows?" Gunn said. Over time the cross, if there was one, disappeared. Aughinbaugh rested in an overgrown unmarked grave until 1980, when the Alameda Historical Society, the original name for the museum, graced the founder's resting place with a red granite stone that stands today. "I was



If you own a historic home in Alameda it is likely your first research was done with one of George Gunn's books. These books, list residences and businesses by street and reveal details about their construction and original owner.

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pleased when they named a major street on Bay Farm Island "Aughinbaugh Way," Gunn said. Gunn also played a role in having Bay Farm streets named for Alameda pioneers like early landowner Jack Hays (Hays Court) and Patrick Britt, who put up the building we know as "Crolls" (Britt Court). Bay Farm streets also bear the names of Alameda's architects and builders like Denis Straub (Straub Court) and Felix Remmel (Remmel Court).

Looking to the future, Gunn said that he would like to see the museum become a permanent part of the city's budget. The City helps with part of the rent, providing less than half of what it takes to run the museum with a volunteer staff. Years ago, the museum found out that just to store the collection would cost the same as the current rent. Cataloging, conserving, and storing the collection, plus having the doors open to display art exhibits and tell the history of Alameda are something the city should willingly support. "No more going back, justifying our subsidy every two to four years," Gunn said. He pointed out that the museum has been a part of the community for some sixty years, and after all this time it remains a line item, something easily struck from the city's budget. "Let's not forget that the museum includes the Meyers House," he said. Things need to be done to keep this jewel sparkling. "It's the city's only house museum. It needs public restrooms so folks can

use the grounds for events," he said. "It's also overdue for a paint job." "Interest in all this must begin at the top," Gunn said. "We must convince someone with authority in the city that the museum and the Meyers House are worth it."

Gunn hopes to cement the museum's longevity in an attractive location. "A museum with a prominent location will always attract prominent donations," he said. He realizes that other organizations in the city also need support. "Everybody's scrambling for the same dollar," but Gunn said that he hopes to see the museum and its collection with an established home as a permanent part of the community. So where is that ideal spot?

Gunn has his eyes on the building that currently houses the city's Parks and Recreation Department on Santa Clara Avenue. "It's architecturally attractive, has no barriers for the handicapped or any need for an elevator," he said. "And it has a garage that the museum could use for storage."

And what of George Gunn's future at the museum? When asked if the 40th anniversary celebration was a retirement party in disguise, Gunn pointed out that his two predecessors, Dr. Harry Smith and Myrtle Richards "died in office." If the Grim Reaper is the person it takes to remove Gunn from office, a slight twist on a phrase from Leonard Nimoy's *Star Trek* character, Mr. Spock, comes to mind "Live long and prosper, Mr. Gunn."

Left to right: Charlie Howell, Chuck Millar, Robbie Dileo, and Dennis Evanosky were among the well wishers at the dinner celebration on July 16.

Photo: Nancy Gordon





Excerpts from the Memory Book Presented to George Gunn

You were such a tremendous help and inspiration to us when we moved into our wrecked wonder on Taylor Avenue. Our ugly duckling went on to be on a home tour and also featured in a national magazine – on the cover no less!... Thanks for everything!

Lisa and David Baker

We appreciate your being there for all of those “old houses” in this town!

Kathy and Brian Schumacher

You are a Wonderman!

Best wishes, Elmer Anderson

I appreciate his quips and his evident joy in the job he has done for well over 40 years. Well done, my friend.

Ellen Chesnut

It’s difficult to choose what I’m more proud of – the main museum or the house museum. But neither would be anything without your vision and dedication. You are one of a kind and a true Alameda legend. Others have come to help – because of you. From trials by water, by people, or by building improvements (or lack of them), there has been a lot of paint, pain, and progress over our 20 years, my friend. It’s been the journey of a lifetime – my kids are grown – where did the time go? Now they don’t call it “My House” and do you remember Becky taking her first steps in the Meyers Gardens and being in the playpen when I was stripping the woodwork upstairs? But we are not done yet! Yes George, I’ll meet you tomorrow. Is after lunch OK? I’ll bring my paintbrushes.

Robbie Dileo

“Ross, we need to move this item out of here (usually very large or heavy). Do you know anybody with a truck that can get this stuff?” asks George. Of course he knows perfectly well that I have a truck, and once again, I’m roped into another task. I have known you for 38 years, it’s been interesting and a joy to help on the many projects – Happy Anniversary George.

Ross Dileo

“I decided that spending almost three weeks lugging newspapers was important enough to interrupt my other work. I felt we were doing something that will outlast us all, something bigger than any of the individuals involved.”

Bill Galli

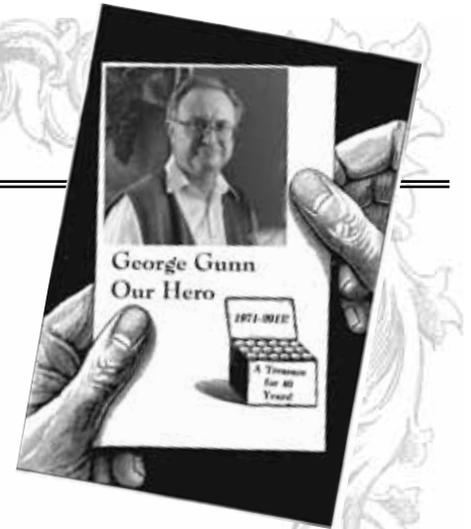
on the enormous task of drayage when George asked him to lug old bound newspapers from Oakland to the Museum.

In addition to your wonderfully impressive forty years, you continue to lead and inspire so many from school age to the golden years. With love and best wishes from another George Gunn fan.

Carrie Erickson

(George’s recruitment motto is “don’t tell them too much or they will never agree to do it!!!”) So, like so many others, I said “sure, I can do that!” How crazy was I? This is now my 5th year as the Meyers House docent coordinator, but who is counting?

Jane Burgelin



As a reward for his efforts in curating the Phyllis Diller display, George was awarded a personally autographed copy of Miss Diller’s autobiography entitled “Like a Lampshade in a Whorehouse.” He was a little reluctant to accept his award, since I referred to it as his “Whorehouse Book” but he graciously accepted it, although he has kept it hidden out of sight ever since.

Ron Ucovich

I am sure we would not have our Museum, except for the dedication of George and the wonderful volunteers and docents.

Eleanor Stallman

The first time I met George was at the Meyers House. He was there working on the new basement exhibit. The new exhibit was still in its early stages of development, and already you could see how passionate he was about the new project. With months of work ahead of him, and the daunting task of painting the basement, George walked us through his vision and explained what would go where, what still needed to be done, and how it would improve the overall Meyers House tour experience.

**Freesia Pearson,
newest board member**



BE A MUSEUM DOCENT

Make some new friends.

Please contact Ellen Chesnut

510-865-1204 for details.

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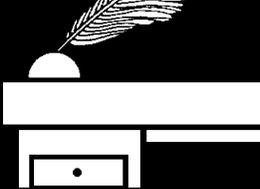
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THANKS TO OUR CORPORATE SPONSORS

From the Curator's Desk

by George C. Gunn

*M*y column is sometimes used as a vehicle for me to acknowledge and express my profound thanks to our devoted cadre of volunteers who give so much of their time and skills to make the museum what it is today. There is no better use of this column than to acknowledge the individuals whose efforts made such a wonderful event as was presented on July 16th.

Jane Burgelin and her committee (Eugenie, Barbara, Diane, Stephanie, Joe, Lavonne, Claire, Judith and Robbie), created a memorable event in honor of my 40th year with the Museum that I won't soon forget. They made what could have been a dreary and tiring recount of past deeds into a vital and joyous event. Every detail was thought out and executed perfectly. The talents and expertise of her committee was justly illustrated.

I was profoundly touched by the event and the many well wishers who attended. It was nice to be in their company and receive their support. With a membership such as ours, I know we have the stability needed to continue our sacred duty of preserving Alameda's rich history and objects associated with it.

Curator, Alameda Museum



Legacy Society

THE COMPLETE FLYER IS AVAILABLE AT THE MUSEUM. 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 about donations, please call Robbie at 510-865-1767.**





From the President's Desk

by Robbie Dileo

Alameda's beautiful weather with a cooling breeze graced the July 4th Mayor's Parade. The Museum's entry was a fantastic restored 1924 Depot Hack owned and driven by the charming and funny Tom Jasper. He chauffeured us in our period inspired attire while we waved and shouted to the cheering crowd the virtues of Alameda Museum, the Alameda Legacy Home Tour, the Meyers House, and that George was celebrating his 40th year as Curator. Valerie Turpen Graphic Design (valerieturpen.com) created the banners while Liz Rush, realtor, serving on the home tour committee, arranged for the antique truck. We added flags, crepe swags, and flowers to swish out the wood paneled truck. Our efforts were recognized, winning a third place trophy in the vehicle category.

Imagine me – speechless – as Mayor Marie Gilmore came running out to us on Webster Street, saying, "you won" with the huge trophy in her hand! Tom was thrilled to be in the parade supporting the museum, but getting the trophy was an extra special

Parade photo: Ken Peterson



treat. The museum will have it on display for a few weeks and then give it to Tom for his office, Jasper Construction on Clement Avenue, where he sometimes parks his antique truck.

Fun, food, fanfare, but not farewell. Some people may have thought George Gunn was retiring after 40 years, but NO, we were celebrating his past efforts and a look forward to the next 40 years. The 40th Anniversary Dinner Party was a lighthearted affair for the 80+ people getting a chance to share stories about the guest of honor and how important George's vision and the museum's legacy have been in the community. Held at Pier 29 Waterfront Restaurant with wonderful food and weather, we mingled in the banquet room while a memory book and slide show presentation depicted some "this is your life" moments in George's career.

A gorgeous money tree, festooned with colorful shiny origami cranes, hand crafted by St. Joseph's students as a summer project, represented funds donated for the Archival Fund, which is what George requested in lieu of gifts. Each guest's \$40 per plate meal included a \$10 donation toward preserving the collection. People that could not attend also sent donations, raising about \$1,500 in total. Additionally, a Waterford bowl, donated by Jane Burgelin was filled with M&Ms imprinted with congratulations for George, "Happy 40th", and the Alameda Museum logo. Jane's committee counted them for the raffle held to come closest but not over the quantity. John Scruggs guessed within nine the correct count of 3,360, pleasing wife Gail with the elegant bowl, but sharing the five pounds of M&Ms with guests. Table centerpieces filled with hydrangeas from the





Jane Burgelin beside the money tree adorned with origami cranes. The cranes represented money donated for the Archival Fund. Photo: Robbie Dileo.

Meyers House Gardens were given away at the end of the evening to people sitting in specially marked chairs. Handcrafted nametags and keepsake bookmarks were the product of talented Eugenie Thomson who also handled guest reservations.

Kudos to the fantastic committee for a wonderful event and Judith Lynch for creating the memory book. Thank you members and directors for making a memorable night and supporting George's efforts. We are truly fortunate to have a membership dedicated to our City's history, the artifacts in the collection, and the unprecedented legacy of having a curator for 40 years. As several said, "George Gunn IS the museum" and thankfully he has no plans to retire!

Don't miss news in this issue about the upcoming August 21st grand opening of our new exhibit in the Meyers House basement and the Alameda Legacy Home Tour September 25th. Handouts about these events were given out at the Park Street Art and Wine Fair July 30 & 31 and will be at the museum to give to friends or drop off at your favorite Alameda sandwich shop.

Anybody wanting to help volunteer at any museum sponsored special event or wishing to make arrangements for group tours should contact me, 510-865-1767 or damsel_d@pacbell.net. Want to advertise in the Alameda Legacy Guidebook? Contact LizRush@lizrush.com not later than August 15th for the form with sizes and costs.

President, Alameda Museum



Historical Cruise on the USS Potomac Thursday, September 29

by Ron Ucovich

FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES from 1932 to 1945, is an Alameda legend for many reasons. He was the first president to deliver a state-of-the-nation address every single week. He called them his Fireside Chats, in which he would discuss the pressing issues of the day, such as Prohibition, the Depression, and foreign relations.

On Webster Street, between Santa Clara and Taylor, there is a bar and grill called The Fireside Lounge, built in 1942, and designed to recall the days when Roosevelt addressed the Nation extolling the value of hard work and the power of sticking together. Many Alameda landmarks remain from Roosevelt's WPA projects of the Depression years: the Naval Air Station, the Park Street Bridge, the High Street Bridge, the Veterans' Memorial Building, and the West End Library.

Thursday, September 29, the *USS Potomac*, Franklin Roosevelt's private yacht, will be offering a very special cruise on the Bay to local residents. We will depart from Jack London Square at 10:30 for a two-hour tour of the Estuary and the Bay. We will tell stories, hear legends, and learn little-known facts about Alameda, all narrated by Ron Ucovich.

Tickets are \$45 for adults, with special rates for seniors or groups of 20 or more. For information visit our website at www.usspotomac.org or call (510) 627-1215.



FDR waves from the Potomac.





A Closer Look at Chocolate

by Ron Ucovich

IN 1851 A SAN FRANCISCO MAN NAMED DOMINGO GHIRARDELLI opened a small sweet shop to sell confections and food supplies to transient miners. The store was successful for several years. One day in 1862, some ground cocoa beans were left in a bag hanging on a hook in the kitchen. The next morning, he found a puddle of cocoa butter on the floor and dry cocoa powder in the cloth bag. This fat-free powder would easily mix with other ingredients to make various cocoa products. From this discovery, Mr. Ghirardelli invented a cocoa bean press, which could produce the same product quickly. We know this product today as **baker's chocolate**, and it was sold as a flavoring for cookies and cakes.

In 1875 Mr. Henry Nestlé, producer of evaporated milk, combined Mr. Ghirardelli's cocoa powder with sugar and evaporated milk. He had created a soft confection which he called **milk chocolate**. This could be used as a flavoring or topping, but it was too soft to be eaten alone. In 1894 at the World's Fair in Chicago, Milton Hershey, a caramel manufacturer, combined milk chocolate with caramel, and he used shortening as an emulsifier and thickener. He had created the world's first chocolate candy bar.

Soon, shortening became a popular ingredient in chocolate confections. The white filling in an Oreo cookie, for example, is just shortening mixed with sugar. The texture was good, but the candy bar had an unpleasant aftertaste. A new type of thickener was needed.

Paraffin is a waxy petroleum bi-product which has no nutritional value. It was used to preserve fruits, vegetables and cheeses. Eating small amounts of it is not harmful, so candy manufacturers started to use it to keep chocolate candy from melting and to give the chocolate a glossy sheen. Because it is a petroleum derivative, however, it is flammable when overheated. This is why recipes calling for melted chocolate ask you to warm it gently in a double-boiler. Paraffin was added to chocolate routinely until World War II. At that time, soldiers overseas needed to find a way to carry chocolate candy in their food rations. Because of the melting problem, carrying pieces of chocolate was impossible.

Mr. Forrest Mars, a food distributor from Hayward, developed a method of coating chocolate morsels in sugar so they wouldn't melt in the heat. During the war,

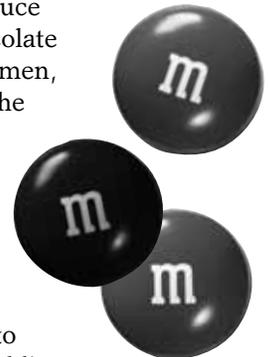
chocolate was rationed here at home, but it was standard issue for the troops overseas. Mr. Mars needed a supplier of chocolate, so he partnered with Bruce Murrie, director at the Hershey Chocolate Company in Pennsylvania. The two men, Mars and Murrie, manufactured all the chocolate candy consumed by our troops during the war. The candies were brown in color, and they were packaged in cardboard tubes.

When the war was over, and chocolate was no longer a controlled substance, the two partners decided to market their product to the general public. Instead of the cardboard tube, they sold the candies in little brown pouches, and to make them more attractive, they were produced in two colors, light brown and dark. In 1960, they added red, green and yellow to the original brown ones. Their slogan was, "They melt in your mouth, not in your hands," and today we call them as simply **M&Ms**.

If you walked down Park Street about 50 years ago, at the corner of Encinal where the Arco Service Station is today, you could have peered into the window of the Miss Saylor's Candy Factory and watched them wrap and box their famous chocolate confections. They proudly advertised that only fresh, natural ingredients went into their products. Butterfat was used instead of paraffin to keep the chocolate firm. If you toured the factory, you could watch the workers laboriously dip each piece into the liquid chocolate by hand. After it cooled, another worker would write a code on each piece to indicate what was inside (V - vanilla, C - butter cream, O - orange, P - pineapple, R - raspberry, W - walnut, etc). To speed up production, the major candy companies decided to standardize the shapes of the candies so they didn't have to write on each one. They decided that all creams should be circular, cherries should be domed, chews should be square, etc. Whitman, Sees, Hooper's, and Saylor's all agreed upon the shape and pattern of each flavor. These same shapes and patterns are still used today, so you might say that a tiny bit of the old Saylor's Chocolate Factory still lives on.

Chocolate chips were invented in 1937 by a woman named Ruth Wakefield. She owned a restaurant called the Toll House Inn in Massachusetts. She added small chunks of Nestlé chocolate to her cookie recipe. Her cookies were an instant success. As a stroke of genius,

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A Closer Look . . . Continued from page 8

Mrs. Wakefield made an agreement with the Nestlé Company to put her recipe on the package of semi-sweet chocolate bars in exchange for a lifetime supply of chocolate. This turned out to be a very lucrative deal for both parties.

The World's Fair on Treasure Island was looking for a drink to sell to their thousands of visitors. At that time, beverages were sold in glass bottles. The planners wanted to avoid the problem of tons of empty glass containers. The solution was to sell milk in small cardboard cartons. But how can you make milk appealing to children?... Make it chocolate, of course. Previously, chocolate powder was sold which you could add to milk, but 1939 was the first year you could buy pre-mixed **chocolate milk** in a cardboard carton.

As a marketing device, the Borden Company created a kid-friendly cartoon family consisting of Elsie the Cow, Elmer the Bull, and their offspring, Beulah and Beauregard. Elmer the Bull was used as a mascot for the Borden Company until the 1950s, when his name and image was transferred to one of the company's non-dairy products ...**Elmer's Glue**.



This Queen Anne home was designed by Percy & Hamilton, the architects for Alameda City Hall. Photo: Paul Duchscherer

Homage to the Queen

by Judith Lynch

NEXT UP IN THE MUSEUM'S TENTH YEAR of offering edifying, inspiring, and maddening lectures is Paul Duchscherer with mouth-watering slides from *Victorian Glory* published by Penguin Books. Paul's volume includes both heart-stopping exteriors and sock-shrinking interiors of Victorian and Edwardian homes, from Italianate to Colonial Revival. He focuses on properties that are open to the public, including our own Meyers House.

Paul is a veteran of the lecture circuit. Under the spell of Bruce Bradbury, he spent nine years as Director of Design Services for Bradbury & Bradbury Art Wallpapers in Benicia, California. In a slide extravaganza presented during his reign at B & B, Paul flung down a gauntlet in the path of Pasadena author and historian Robert Winter and challenged him to a debate called "The Battle of the Styles." The two experts dueled with slides instead of pistols. Paul was at his over-the-top best, defending the moral superiority of delirious Victorian excess over the conservative, dull, and overly refined Arts & Crafts style.

For awhile, he presided over his own salon on Fillmore Street in San Francisco in rooms crammed with B & B wallpapers. He called the lectures "Final Fridays" and it was really a chance for the Bay Area History Group, as we called ourselves, to understand each other's newest obsessions. Share his fascination with Victorians Thursday, August 25 at 7:00 p.m. in the Art Gallery. Smart members get there early and bring cushions! Thanks to Harbor Bay Realtors Erik and Ginger Schuler for sponsoring this talk.

DID YOU SEE...

...the new historic Train Station sign at Lincoln & Willow? A new Alameda business, CompoClay, recreated the sign in a composite material that looked exactly like the wooden sign when it was new some 20 years ago.

The Acapulco Restaurant supplied appetizers to go with the wine at the Greater Alameda Business Association unveiling on July 28th. Look for the other six station signs to be replaced over the next few months.



The Power of Marketing

by Ron Ucovich

NEW PRODUCTS COME ON

THE MARKET on a daily basis, but the successful ones are those which have a clever twist to their marketing strategy. Richard Harris, for example, was the first person to offer a home permanent for the ladies. He called it Noma because it used "no machines." It was a miserable failure until he changed the name to Toni, a slang word for "classy." He listed instructions on how to give a permanent to your best friend, and he wrote the slogan "new and improved" on the box. Housewives across the nation formed Toni Clubs, and they held hairdressing parties. Ten years later Mr. Harris sold Toni to Gillette for \$20 million, and he is remembered for turning hairdressing into a social event.

Henry Crowell was the owner of the Quaker Mill, and he had a fierce competitor who could process oats faster and cheaper than anyone else. Henry knew he couldn't out-produce the competition, so he decided to out-market him. Instead of selling his oats in bulk form out of a 200-pound barrel, Henry sold his oats in small two-pound boxes with a re-sealable lid to keep out dirt and insects. He was the first person to use four colors on his label, and the first to print recipes on the box. Henry was the first one to offer free samples in small envelopes, and he was also the first marketer to print coupons on the box top which could be redeemed for kitchen utensils. Henry left the competition in the dust.

William Coleman developed a kerosene lantern which used air pressure to keep the flame burning, even in the wind. His



lanterns were expensive to produce, so sales were poor until he devised a new marketing strategy. He decided to rent the lanterns for one dollar per month, and he promised that any lamp which didn't work properly would be replaced immediately. He could barely keep up with the demand. He had invented the nation's first service contract.

On a trip to Europe, Ward Cosgrove of the Minnesota Valley Canning Company discovered a new

variety of garden pea which was larger and sweeter than regular peas. He knew that people would assume that large peas would be tough and dry, so he devised a trademark to dispel this idea. He called the peas Green Giants, and the logo on the can was a large drawing of the Jolly Green Giant. The idea was a success, and soon the Green Giant Company was a leader in the industry.

Dr. Thomas Welch believed that fermented wine was inappropriate for church sacraments, so the good doctor invented what he called "Unfermented Wine." The churches were not interested in changing their communion ritual, and they wanted no part of his phony wine. He changed the name to Welch's Grape Juice, and he marketed it as a health food. During Prohibition he used the slogan, "Lips that touch Welch's are all that touch mine." As sales soared, Dr. Welch started producing grape jelly and other grape products and he outsold all his competitors.

When Yoplait yogurt came out in competition with Dannon, they decided to hit people with snob appeal. People tend to regard French cuisine as the world's best, so they decided to play off its French origins. To make sure that everyone got the point, they printed the label in English on one side and French on the other. The idea worked like a charm.

Balto was the name of the Alaskan Huskie who delivered diphtheria serum to Nome, Alaska during a blizzard. Sam Hornstein invented a rich dog food made of fish bi-products, and he adopted the name Balto. It turned out that the formula was too rich, and it was making the dogs sick. Mr. Hornstein decided that his product was better suited for cats, so he packed it in smaller cans and changed the name to Puss'n Boots. Sales skyrocketed.



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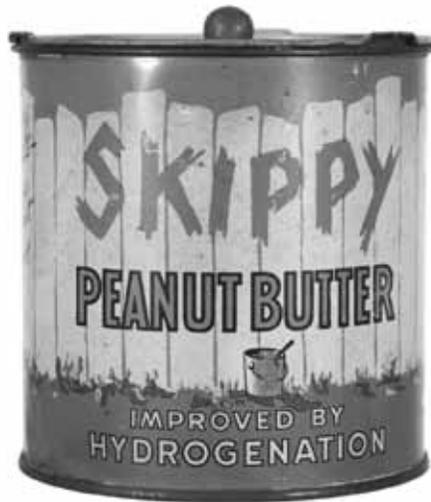


Marketing . . .Continued from page 10

In 1934, Vladimire Smirnoff set up the nation's first vodka distillery. America had never heard of vodka before, and people were suspicious of its Russian name. As a stroke of genius, Mr. Smirnoff advertised, "Smirnoff's White Whiskey. No taste. No smell." Sales took off like crazy because everyone knew what whiskey was, and they were dying to know what it would be like with no taste and no color.

A hundred years ago, marketing was never directed toward children. They had no buying power. Today we see every type of sugary snack food packaged and advertised to catch the imagination of kids: Twinkies, Ho Ho's, Ding Dongs, Coco Puffs, Skittles, Cheese Puffs, Gummy Bears, Doodles, Lunchables...the list is endless. A hundred years ago, there were few processed foods, and dessert was

a special treat reserved for Sunday dinner. Regarding food, kids had two choices: "take it or leave it," and sometimes they didn't have the option of leaving it.



Skippy Peanut Butter made in Alameda.

An Alameda food packer, Joseph Rosefield, perfected an emulsifying process to keep peanut butter from separating in the jar, and in 1933 he began production of his new product. His marketing strategy was unique... he advertised toward children. Instead of calling his product "Joseph Rosefield's Peanut Butter," he named it after a children's cartoon character, Skippy. In the 1950s, when television became popular, Skippy sponsored children's shows, like Mickey Mouse Club, and Dennis the Menace. The ad showed a small boy eating peanuts, and the slogan read: "If you like peanuts, you'll like Skippy."

The Skippy factory prospered well at the corner of Webster Street and Atlantic until 1955 when they sold to Best Foods and moved to Texas. Today, a plaque on the sidewalk in front of Walgreens is all that remains of this historic enterprise.



"Victorian Alliance House Tour 2009" by artist Kit Haskell

THE VICTORIAN ALLIANCE 2011 FALL HOUSE TOUR

The Victorian Alliance will showcase homes of Cole Valley on **Sunday, October 16, 2011**, from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM, featuring four lovingly restored homes and an historic church on a self-guided, walkable route, with three bonus residences accessible by complimentary shuttle bus service.

Ticket Pricing Schedule

Victorian Alliance members:

\$25.00 purchased by October 10, 2011

General Public:

\$30.00 purchased by October 10, 2011

Group of ten or more:

\$25.00 purchased by October 10, 2011

*(Note: Group Sales by pre-paid check only. Call: 415-567-7474)
After October 10, and day-of-tour, all tickets will be \$35.00.*

**More information is available online at
victorianalliance.org/house-tour
or contact (415) 824-2666.**



A line of beauties with Anna Held the center of attention, shown in the middle with her curvaceous figure, arm raised and hatless. This photo hangs on the "Servant's Bedroom" at the Meyers House.

Another Woman of Renown at the Meyers House: Anna Held

By Jane Burgelin

VISITORS TO THE MEYERS HOUSE FREQUENTLY ASK THE DOCENTS about two pictures featuring very beautiful women who happened to have been involved in scandalous love stories. In a previous issue was the story of Florence Evelyn Nesbitt whose affair involved murder. This story is about Helene Anna Held, known as Anna, (March 18, 1873 – August 12, 1918). Her "picture of interest" is located in the "Servants Bedroom" on the second floor, that depicts thirteen beautiful young "Gibson Girls" attired in lavish Victorian gowns and hats. She is in the very center, looking as if she might treat us to a chorus line of "high kicks"! A "no, no" for ladies of this time!

Although Held later insisted that she was a native Parisian, Anna was born in Warsaw, Poland, the daughter of a German Jewish glove maker and a French wife. The family fled to Paris when the anti-Semitic programs swept Poland in 1881. Her father's poor health and early death in 1884 forced Anna and her mother to support themselves as sweat shop seamstresses. Occasionally, Anna sang in the streets to earn extra pennies. Upon moving to London to live with relatives after her father's death, Anna made her

professional stage debut in the title role of a production entitled "Shulamith" in the legendary Yiddish theatre company of Abraham Goldfaden & actor-manager Jacob Adler. Her vivacious and animated personality proved popular, and her career as a stage performer began to gain momentum. She was soon known for her risqué songs, flirtatious nature, and willingness to show her legs on stage. She returned to Paris where her rolling eyes, eighteen inch waist and naughty songs made her a major star in the finest cafes. She was one of the first women to ride astride a horse (rather than side-saddle) and to ride the newly invented bicycle and motorcar.

Around 1885, Anna married a wealthy South American gambler, Maximo Carrera, just in time to legitimize the birth of their daughter, Liane. The child was raised in a convent and they went back to living their separate lives. The primary benefit from this marriage was that it gave Anna an excuse to convert to Catholicism to escape the stigma faced by Jews in most of Europe and for her to perpetuate the myth that she was a native born French woman. In 1896, while touring Germany and England, she appeared at London's Palace Music Hall and met the brash American producer, Florenz (Flo) Ziegfeld Jr., who bribed his way into her dressing room and wanted her to appear in an upcoming Broadway production.

Anxious to get away from her husband's mounting gambling debts, she willingly made the trip to New York. Ziegfeld's masterful publicity and his selective bribery of the press made her a ready-made celebrity. Her charming, suggestive delivery and outrageous French accent made her a



{ Anna Held posing in stylish attire circa 1902. }



tremendous hit. She was the talk of New York! Whenever she was photographed, Anna preferred poses that showcased her petite waistline.

Over the next twelve years, Ziegfeld featured Held in seven Broadway musicals tailored to showcase her charms. She enjoyed several Broadway successes, which apart from bolstering Ziegfeld's fortune, made her a millionaire in her own right. It would be impossible to discuss Ziegfeld, Jr.'s development as a showman without considering Anna Held's contribution to his life and career.

Ziegfeld got his taste in clothes, knowledge of stage presentation, and even the ideas for the famous Ziegfeld Follies in 1907 from Anna. It was she who helped Ziegfeld establish the most lucrative phase of his career. After living with Ziegfeld for over a year, Held finally secured a divorce from Maximo Carrera, and in 1897, Flo and Anna announced at a dinner party that they hereby considered themselves to be "married". Although they never bothered with a formal ceremony, their longstanding cohabitation made them common law spouses as of 1904. This spared Anna any wrangling with the Catholic Church (which forbade divorce and remarriage without costly dispensation), and made it easier for Ziegfeld to keep his options open—options he would exercise before long.



A Ziegfeld Follies poster of 1912.

Anna was unable to perform in the first Follies in 1908 as she had become pregnant with Ziegfeld's child, which she later miscarried or had an abortion. In 1909, Ziegfeld began an affair with the actress Lillian Lorraine, which Anna ignored in hopes that his fascination would pass and he would return to her, but instead, he turned his attentions to another actress, Billie Burke, whom he would actually marry in 1914.

Anna spent the World War I years working in vaudeville, touring France, performing for French soldiers, and raising money for the war effort. She came to be known as a war heroine for her contributions and was highly regarded for her courage in traveling to the frontline to be where she could

do the most good. After she returned to the United States in 1916, her health began to fail. She collapsed on stage in 1918 and died a few months later from multiple myeloma at the age of 45. She is interred at the Cemetery of the Gate of Heaven in Hawthorne, New York. Ziegfeld was castigated by the media he had so studiously courted for his mistreatment of Anna and apparent indifference to her illness and his notable absence from her funeral. The movie film "The Great Ziegfeld (1936)" tells a sanitized version of the story of the Ziegfeld-Held relationship. However, in 1978 Columbia Pictures released a made-for-television film, "Ziegfeld: The Man & His Women," on NBC. This was a much more open, and perhaps truthfully told, movie about Ziegfeld and the women in his life than the 1936 film. The American poet, Carl Sandburg wrote a memorial poem for Anna Held after her death, "An Electric Sign Goes Dark" in his collection "Smoke and Steel".

In 1976, Anna Held's daughter, Liane Carrera, who died in 1988, opened a museum of her mother's personal and stage items in San Jacinto, California. Sadly, a few years after the museum opened, it was looted by robbers and all the displayed material stolen. Anna Held was one of the first celebrities to win transatlantic fame and become a leading musical star for more than two decades. It is no exaggeration to say that she was one of the most remarkable women of her time.



ALAMEDA LEGACY HOME TOUR

Sunday, September 25, 2011 • 11:00 am to 5:00 pm

FREE ADMISSION to the tour in exchange for being a docent at either the early or late shift. 11:00 am – 2:00 pm or 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm.

For information contact Robbie Dileo at 510-865-1767 or e-mail alamedahometour@netscape.net



Fashion & Accessory Exhibit

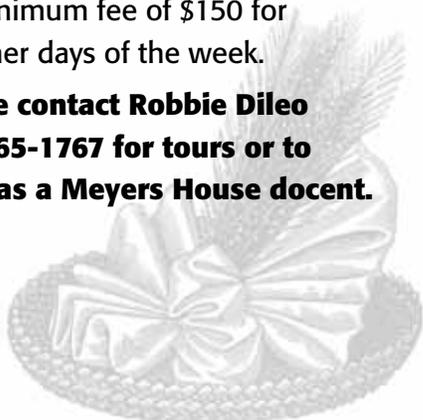
..... *Opens in August*



The regularly scheduled 4th Saturday opening from August 27th onward will include the full house tour, **plus the new basement exhibit from 1:00 to 4:00 pm.**

Special tours by groups may be made with several weeks notice and a minimum fee of \$150 for other days of the week.

Please contact Robbie Dileo 510-865-1767 for tours or to volunteer as a Meyers House docent.



The Meyers House basement has been transformed over several months into a new exhibit showcasing the clothing of the three Meyers sisters, their mother and grandmother. Formal and Day Dresses made from silk, chiffon, lace, beads, fur, plus shoes, purses and hats, date from the 1880s to 1960s. The family traveled the world, so items were made from premier clothing makers from Europe, Egypt, China and Hawaii.

Creating the Fashion & Accessory Exhibit was no simple task because the location was damp and in dire need of paint. The dehumidifier worked wonders so that fresh paint could transform the interior and floors. New display cases replaced old basement shelving. The laundry area was transformed into a kitchen tableau. George Gunn and his team are mostly the same people who do the estate sales; they added lighting, wallpaper, colored curtains and window film. All the clothes were cleaned and pressed. Curio cabinets got glass shelves and objects added. Display panels showcase the framed portrait artwork. We amazed ourselves and are very excited to add this wonderful exhibit to the Meyers House.

To celebrate the opening, we will have a special reception with light refreshments on Sunday August 21st from 2:00 to 4:00 pm at the Meyers House. Guild members, who join with an annual membership of \$25, attend for free. The public is also invited but will be asked to pay a \$5 admission charge. We'd like to see all of you there. Your contributions funded much of this exhibit.

The main house will be closed for this event. Only the Fashion & Accessory Exhibit will be open with access via the garden doorway in back of the house. The Architectural Exhibit and the Meyers Studio will be open for all to enjoy and a slide show of the house and previous wedding gown exhibit will be playing. Reservations are not required, but come early to make sure you get something to nibble and drink.



MEYERS HOUSE GUILD

is a separate membership and donation category from Alameda Museum. Funds are used for the sole purpose of maintaining this gorgeous property. Guild members get invitations to MHG special events.

For more information call Robbie 510-865-1767.

Renewals after September continue your membership through the entire following year.



Thank you for your support!

Make check payable to Meyers House Guild.

Mail to: **Alameda Museum**

2324 Alameda Avenue, Alameda CA 94501

Annual Guild Membership \$25

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I would like to:

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Garden

Clean & Maintain Artifacts

Help with Special Events

Other _____

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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 main museum
 Ellen Chesnut, 510-865-1204**

**Docent coordinator for Meyers House
 Robbie Dileo, 510-865-1767**



Hey, Don't Forget Me!

by Ron Ucovich

OUR SOCIETY TODAY HONORS POLITICIANS

and financial magnates by naming bridges, freeways and tunnels after them. A hundred years ago, prominent leaders of society had to create their own legacy by bequeathing monuments or endowments to society, much like the Henry Meyers Family donated their home and country estate for everyone to enjoy.

Not all donations, however, were motivated by a spirit of altruism. Many millionaires attained their fortunes through fraud, deceit, and cheating. Their religious upbringing dictated that if their sins were not properly atoned, they would spend eternity regretting it, so as an act of self-justification, they would leave generous donations to society, thereby ensuring their eternal salvation.

Elihu Yale was the Nation's first American-born millionaire. He imported pepper seeds from India, but in the process of developing his pepper empire, he made many enemies due to his ruthless business practices. When Mr. Yale died in 1732, he left his fortune to a small Connecticut school. This school became a university and was re-named in his honor.



Leland Stanford

Similarly, Leland Stanford, the railroad tycoon, was equally unpopular. He set himself up as president of the Central Pacific Railroad, then he and his partners charged their investors exorbitant prices for supplies and services, thereby making themselves very wealthy and leaving shareholders with little profit. He died with a clear conscience, knowing that he had bequeathed to society a university, ostensibly to commemorate the name of his son who had died at age 15.



Anthony Chabot

Anthony Chabot established his fortune the same way that Stanford did. He bought a lumber mill, paper mill, blacksmith shop, pipe factory, hose factory, and horse ranch, all in his own name. He then incorporated a water company and sold shares to investors. He built reservoirs, and as a business expense, he charged confiscatory prices for the supplies that he provided. He was an obdurate business-

man, and he was not very well liked, but his reputation was redeemed through two great gifts to society: an elegant telescope and observatory in Oakland, and the Veterans' Home in Yountville.



Michael de Young

Michael de Young was the publisher of a tabloid newspaper specializing in yellow journalism. He was hated by many influential people because of his salacious exposés. Mr. de Young was shot by Adolph Spreckles for exposing some misdeeds involving the Spreckles Sugar Plantation in Hawaii. He survived the assault. Later, Spreckles was acquitted of attempted murder on the grounds of "reasonable cause." Realizing that his reputation was besmirched, Mr. de Young bequeathed to the City of San Francisco a large museum in Golden Gate Park.

The fastest way to make enemies in society is to be a newspaper reporter. Their job is to root out dirt about public figures, and make it known to the readers. Thus began the literary career of Samuel Clemens. Following unsuccessful attempts at being a miner, Mr. Clemens became a reporter in San Francisco. After exposing corruption among the city's politicians, the police literally drove him out of town with threats of violence. He took refuge in a mining town called Angel's Camp. He captivated audiences with his gift of gab, and he decided to write a book entitled *The Jumping Frog* of Calaveras County. It is probably a good thing that Mr. Clemens was unpopular. It launched him into a writing career. We remember Mr. Clemens by his pen name, Mark Twain.

Elias "Lucky" Baldwin was a very wealthy man, but his wealth came not from luck, but rather from being a skillful flimflam artist. One day, for example, Lucky decided he would like to buy the Pacific Hotel in San Francisco. The owner wanted \$6,000. Lucky offered \$5,000. The two men dickered for a week, after which the owner reluctantly agreed to accept the \$5,000. Lucky wrote out a check for \$5,000, but then requested that the check and bill of sale be dated a week earlier to impress his friends about what a speedy transaction he made. The proprietor agreed. No sooner was the signing completed when Lucky said, "Now, there's a little matter of a week of board and lodging." "Oh, yes," said the hotel man. "You do owe me a week's worth of lodging." "On the contrary," said Lucky. "You owe me. According to this check and agreement, I have owned the hotel for the past week, and all the income for this week is mine." Lucky's legacy to society is today's Santa Anita Racetrack.

The most elegant hotel ever built in San Francisco was built in 1861 at the corner of Montgomery and Sutter Streets. It was modeled after the Palace of Versailles, and



400 diners could be seated in a single room. It was called the Lick House, and it was the center of high society until it was leveled by the 1906 earthquake.



James Lick was the wealthiest man in California with vast land holdings, orchards, mills, factories, and warehouses. Although he was extravagantly wealthy, he led a very penurious existence. Even his wife and son abandoned him because of his Spartan lifestyle. When he died, he wanted to leave a spectacular monument to himself. His first idea was to build the largest pyramid in the world right in downtown San Francisco. It was George Davidson, President of the Academy of Sciences, who persuaded Lick to leave a monument which would benefit science. Lick agreed to build the largest telescope in the world, and the observatory would be constructed at the top of Mount Hamilton. The road to the construction site was completed in 1876, just one month before Lick died. He never saw the completion of his beautiful observatory, but following Mr. Lick's final wishes, his observatory is owned and operated by the University of California, and it remains open for public enjoyment absolutely free of charge.

HOSTED BY: The Alameda Museum &
The Alameda Architectural Preservation Society
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ALAMEDA LEGACY HOME TOUR

Sunday, September 25, 2011
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www.alameda-home-tour.org (tickets available via PayPal)
For information call (510) 523-5907



A Country Cousin

by Ron Ucovich

IN 1869 THE CENTRAL PACIFIC RAILROAD

completed the final link connecting the East and West Coasts. For several years they held a monopoly on East Bay railroad service. During that time, a Comstock Lode millionaire named James Fair tried to open a rail line from San Francisco to Santa Cruz. He tried to skirt the coast, but confronted insurmountable problems at the infamous Devil's Slide, just south of Pacifica. Mr. Fair's South Pacific Coast Railroad would have to be routed through the East Bay, but Central Pacific controlled the right-of-way in Oakland. His only alternative was to run his railroad through the sleepy little farming town called Alameda.

On June 1, 1878 the first train from San Francisco to Santa Cruz crossed the bay via ferry. It travelled down Pacific Avenue, Central, and Encinal carrying freight and passengers. A trestle was built to cross San Leandro Bay, and a levy was constructed over marshland. This levy is now part of Doolittle Drive. The track continued southward through swamps and tidelands on terrain that was mostly unfit for agriculture.

Alameda, however, had plenty of agriculture, and the new railroad offered a cheap and easy way to get the produce to market. It also provided passenger transportation between Alameda and San Francisco. Property values soared. Over 25 subdivisions were laid out between 1876 and 1880, and Alameda's population rose from 1,500 residents to more than 5,700. A string of weekend bathing resorts sprung up along the south shore. A warm summer day would draw thousands of vacationers to Alameda's sunny beaches.

In the salt marshes west of what is now Fremont, the train passed through another sleepy little town called Station Island. This town had no agriculture because it had no arable soil. Its only industry was boat building, but the town did have one big attraction...duck hunting. To accommodate the tourists, hotels and restaurants sprouted up. As in Alameda, Station Island was on its way to becoming a booming resort town.

In 1872, three small townships incorporated into the city of Alameda. As they were drafting their new Municipal Code, the issue of saloons came into hot debate. The sale of liquor brought much-needed revenue to the new city, but at the same time it attracted hoodlums and ruffians who stressed the limits of law enforcement. As a compromise, Alameda decided to allow the sale of alcohol, but to severely restrict the number of saloons which could be built.

Meanwhile, Station Island (later known as Drawbridge) never incorporated into a city. It had no Municipal Code,



All that remains of Station Island or Drawbridge are a few wood buildings sinking into the salt marshes.

no police department, and no law enforcement of any kind. They didn't need law enforcement because the main occupation of this town was duck hunting, and the residents of Drawbridge had more guns than any police department. Dozens of hoodlums came to Drawbridge to drink and party, but they knew that if they ever got out of line, they would quickly be looking down the wrong end of a shotgun.

During the Civil War, an army general named Joseph Hooker developed an interesting way of bolstering troop morale. He allowed ladies of the night access to his encampment. These ladies became known as Hooker's girls. When a section of Washington D.C. was set aside for bordellos, it became known as Hooker's Division, and the ladies themselves became known as "hookers." In response to the economics of supply and demand, the enterprising town of Drawbridge adopted General Hooker's philosophy toward "customer morale." Hotels, saloons, brothels, and gambling casinos prospered, and the tourist industry flourished.

By the 1920s there were over 100 families living in Drawbridge in addition to hundreds of tourists, but the town had no infrastructure to support such a population. Sewage lines flowed directly into their waterways, and soon the waters were unfit for wildlife. The houses had drawn so much fresh water from underground aquifers that the land had settled, and there was no longer dry land at high tide. The residents moved away as their homes sank slowly into the mud. Then, in 1926, the Leslie Salt Company bought the surrounding marsh lands to put in salt evaporators. Vandals invaded the town to plunder some buildings and burn down others. The train station was vandalized, so Southern Pacific decided to tear down the building and discontinue all train service. Drawbridge became a ghost town.

Today, the rooftops of the few remaining buildings can be seen protruding from the mud, and only old newspapers and history books are around today to recount the legends of Drawbridge...Alameda's wild country cousin.



JOIN ALAMEDA MUSEUM

Preserving the Past for the Future
for over 60 Years

A Vicarious Ride

by Judith Lynch

ALAMEDA FERRY FAN AND PHOTO ARCHIVIST GRANT UTE and the late Western Railroad Museum trolley operator Bruce Singer were introduced at a West End Chinese eatery awhile back. They became instant colleagues and dove headfirst into research on the history of Alameda transportation. Their elephantine amount of material became two Museum lectures, first "Trains, Ferries, and Trolleys" and second, "A Trip on the Red Cars." Those presentations became the basis for a book by Arcadia, *Alameda By Rail*, for sale in the Gift Shop for only one Jackson, quite a bargain for well over one hundred images, many new to local transportation hounds.

The Red Trains were inaugurated in 1911, and Ute will present "Celebrate the Centennial of the Red Trains: Vintage Transportation on the Island," including train lore, local legends and many images Thursday September 29, at 7:00 p.m. This Museum talk is underwritten by Peter Fletcher, Real Estate Broker, Prudential California Realty.



From the cover of *Red Trains in the East Bay* by Robert S. Ford

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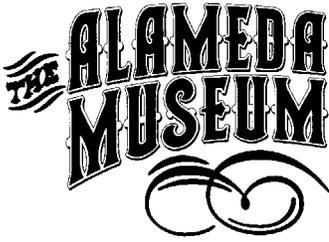
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ALAMEDA MUSEUM LECTURES 2011

❖ THURSDAY, AUGUST 25

Victoria's Legacy in Alameda

Designer and author Paul Duscherer.
Underwritten by Erik and Ginger Schuler,
Realtors, Harbor Bay.

❖ THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

The Centennial of the Red Train: Vintage Transportation on the Island

Grant Ute, coauthor of *Alameda by Rail*.
Underwritten by Peter Fletcher, Real Estate
Broker, Prudential California Realty.

NOTE: All lectures start at 7:00 p.m. at the Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Avenue near Park Street. No reserved seats; come early to save a place and enjoy the exhibits in the History Hall and the Art Gallery. Admission is free for Museum members and \$10 for others. Topics may change without notice. For lecture information leave a message at 510-748-0796 or check www.alamedamuseum.org.

Guild members get to visit the Meyers House FREE and attend opening celebrations.

We'll keep you up-to-date with progress on the museum's web site or via FACEBOOK. If you'd like to join the Guild, annual memberships are \$25 – see form page 15.

**The house is open on the 4th Saturday of each month
from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Cost is \$5.00 per person**

