

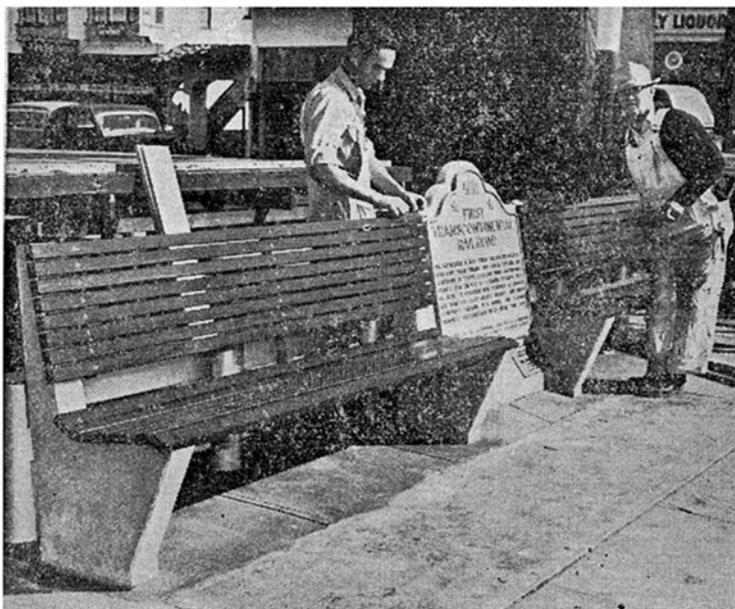
The Alameda Museum

Quarterly Newsletter

Winter Issue, 2009-2010

Volume XLXI

Number 4



FINISHING TOUCHES—Paul Lenschmidt, carpenter, and W. R. Francis, city engineering foreman, finishing the waiting passenger bench in time for dedication ceremonies

at 2 p. m. Sunday. The memorial benches have been located at Lincoln Ave. and Webster St.

10/27/51

(Times-Star photo)

City of Alameda reconstructs monument **History repeats February 2010**

Featured Articles Inside:

Cover Story – Déjà vu, Preservation “Season” Proclaimed,
Oral History, 1998 – Important Beginnings,
California’s Last Lynching, Don’t call me Lefty,
Membership Luncheon March 27th, Meyers House closed March 27th

2010 Directors

Robbie Dileo, President	Chuck Millar, Vice President
Bob Risley, Treasurer	Adam Koltun, Recording Secretary
Curator, George Gunn	Ginger Schuler
Judith Lynch	Dewey St. Germaine
Dennis Reno	Sharron Tymn

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The Alameda Museum Quarterly Newsletter

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by the Communications Staff of the Alameda Museum,

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Museum Hours

Wednesday - Friday	1:30 pm - 4:00 pm
Saturday	11:00 am - 4:00 pm
Sunday	1:30 pm - 4:00 pm

Communications Staff

Contributors	George Gunn, Diane Coler-Dark, Judith Lynch, J. Copperwaite, Ron Ucovich, Robbie Dileo
Editor - Ron Ucovich	Proofreader - formatting Robbie Dileo



From the Curator's Desk

by George Gunn

I want to thank all those who helped in our recent estate sale that took place in the Museum on January 2, 2010. It was a great success. I also want to give extra acknowledgements to Joe Young for pricing and organizing the book section, Robbie Dileo for her excellent photographic work used in the publicity, and Ross Dileo for pricing and displaying the hand tools in the Museum window. They extracted a lot of attention from the public that added additional revenue to the total sales.



No one could have better help in this area of fund raising than I. Out-going President Diane Coler-Dark helmed the cashier's desk with Director Sharron Tynn, and Meyers House docent Margy Silver. Jane Burgelin and husband Jim, worked with Virgil Silver, Chuck Millar, Adam Koltan and Blake Francis to facilitate each sale.



With Gift Shop items also available, besides consignment items, the Museum had a fantastic sale, with something of interest for every customer. At closing time, we reorganized the few remaining items and cleaned out the gallery for the incoming January artist. It was almost as if it had never been full of merchandise. Robbie pulled out some refreshments and we all marveled at our accomplishment. The commitment and expertise of all those involved is a credit to our organization; the success of which I could never take credit for.

Note from the editor: George's expertise is legendary – items are priced to sell and if somebody hesitates when considering an item, he makes sure they understand any provenance, and then closes the deal. There was hardly a thing left at days end. Call Diane at 523-5907 if you want us to consider doing your estate sale or to consign items.

From The President's Desk

by *Robbie Dileo*



I am excited to be your new President. Diane Coler-Dark has decided to step down after 12 momentous years. We have been fortunate to have such dedication. She's still going to help us with office duties, taking some of the more routine calls, helping with banking and gift shop/estate sales, and especially dealing with calls and ticket orders by mail for the Alameda Legacy Home Tour (ALHT), which is next September 26th. I will work closely with her for a smooth transition of duties. If you need to bring something to my attention, please call me at home 865-1767 or better yet, use email, damsel_d@pacbell.net. I will continue to do the guided docent tours of the Museum during non-business hours. I just had a women's group from **San Francisco's Mission District YWCA**. In March our own **Mastic Center** seniors visit. **Jane Burgelin** and her staff will have the Meyers House open for 32 paying members of the **Cupertino Adult Center** February 23rd as well as having it open the regular 4th Saturday on the 27th. Guess word is getting out that Alameda is a great destination for heritage tourism. **Historical Preservation Season 2010** starts in March, too!

My history with the Museum began in 1991 and I've served in many capacities, including President. I am delighted to have a loyal Board of Directors to assist me. New to our Board is **Dewey St. Germaine** who created the very successful **Sports Exhibit** last summer with his friend **Brian McDonald** and will do it again this year. Dewey will also bring fresh ideas and new approaches to old ones. The Executive team includes **Chuck Millar** as VP and Chair of ALHT committee, plus the creator of the **Permanent Neptune Beach Exhibit** that opens March 20th. **Bob Risley** continues as Treasurer (and for ALHT) with hopes to create a five-year plan once the budgets are approved. **Adam Koltun** has taken on the duties of Recording Secretary for our meetings. All other directors assist on various committees, but I especially want to mention **Judith Lynch's** promotion and organization of activities featured on pages 6 through 9 and 12.

Long my dream, and first major change under my administration, is our new and improved website, launched February 10th, redesigned by **Robb Detlefs**, with some help from me. Besides a cleaner look and easier navigation, you can now purchase most NEW Gift Shop items (Books, DVDs), make contributions and renew your membership online using our PayPal® shopping cart. Everything we had on the site before is there, just under new headings and tabs. We added new pictures and items mentioned in this issue of the *Quarterly*. Older Quarterly issues are under Periodicals. The **Calendar**, under **EVENTS** has dates for lectures, meetings, gallery shows and then under **EVENTS/EPHEMERA** you'll find the Neptune Beach video from the **Oral History Project** (page 9) at Alameda Library and links to extra newspaper clippings about the Transcontinental Rail Monument story on page 10-11. We will continue adding features. See something we should fix or suggest something new to add, let me know, 865-1767. Visit soon, www.alamedamuseum.org

Onward & Farewell

By Diane Coler-Dark

It's been a 12-year roller coaster ride for me and your Museum. Can you believe it's been 12 years, I can't? It started with low bank account funds and fights to regain city funding. The Masons offered a matching grant and we were off on a fundraising frenzy. Every year we took our tin cup, a ton of paperwork, and crossed our fingers to keep City funding. We stashed every dime we could get, were blessed with being remembered in wills, and managed to build up some interest income that kept us going when the city cut back our rent subsidy. Along the way we started the gift shop, estate, and consignment sales. George says we are a gift shop with a Museum. Like the phoenix from the ashes, we treaded water during the great flood and refreshed the place from the carpet upwards with everyone rolling up their sleeves, armed with hammers and paintbrushes. I'm getting tired just thinking about it all.

My time with the Museum provided me with a big high. All the above stuff was only possible because of loyal members and friends of the Museum. When we asked for help or did fundraising, you responded. Museum doors stay open because of our volunteers and the gift shop relies on donated merchandise.

I've always told George the Museum has good karma. My stint has fortified my belief that Alameda is a unique and caring community. It's one of the reasons I love this town so much and you couldn't dynamite me out of it. The other belief, "of what goes around, comes around", is bolstered by the many members who don't live in Alameda who support our lecture series, free art gallery, help preserve local history, and have responded with their donations in our times of need.

You now have a new President, Robbie Dileo, who has dedicated more years to the Museum than I have. She is younger and has more energy than I have and I know you will all support her. Thank you for the great ride and experience. I'll still be here to help with stuff and events, just not at the helm.

Diane Coler-Dark

**Historic Preservation “Season” 2010
Declared in Alameda
by Judith Lynch**

Devotees of vintage buildings on the Island are invited to activities reveling in the preservation of our architectural heritage. So many events are scheduled that the City Council is declaring March through June “Historic Preservation Season!” With more than 10,000 vintage structures, Alameda has a lot to show off. From those gingerbread Victorians, those delirious Queen Annes, those comfy Craftsman homes, and those sturdy Bungalows to the Art Deco of the Alameda Theater and the Art Moderne out at Alameda Point, these rich and varied styles of architecture enrich and enliven our Island hometown.

Three organizations that thrive on history--the City Historic Advisory Board, the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society (AAPS) and the Alameda Museum --have organized all manner of presentations, walks, lectures, and tours to help people understand, recognize, and enjoy evidence of our past. The business community is also involved, and co sponsors include the Alameda Association of Realtors, the Alameda Sun, the Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Alameda Business Association (GABA), the Park Street Business Association (PSBA), and the West Alameda Business Association (WABA)

Vintage buildings are tangible evidence of history readily available to us all. Local author Woody Minor describes Alameda as an open air museum, “Want to see history? Just walk outside and look around!” You can join architect-raconteur Richard Rutter in a “Fernside Ramble,” a guided walk through that special but mysterious neighborhood. A sojourner from the ethereal zone will appear May 1, when Queen Victoria inspects the artwork of elementary students who are studying the history, homes, and culture of Alameda. Dynamic slide lectures by local experts include Paul Roberts on Victorian styles, author Paul Duchsherer on Bungalow offspring, and Ken Matthias on Alameda’s colorful antique windows. Historic Preservation Season 2010 culminates with the 13th annual AAPS Historic Preservation Awards, highlighted by dramatic before and after images of acclaimed restoration projects.

Celebrate the legacy of historic preservation and restoration in Alameda! For additional information, visit these websites: alameda-home-tour.org; alamedamuseum.org; and alameda-preservation.org. Or leave a message at 748.0796 to receive a leaflet with dates and times.

[Celebrate Historic Preservation Season 2010 in Alameda](#)

🌀 Tuesday March 2, 7:30 p.m.: City Council proclaims **Historic Preservation Season 2010.**

🌀 Thursday March 11, 7:00 p.m.: Researcher-architecture buff Paul Roberts, “**What is a Stick? A Guide to Victorian Styles,**” sponsored by the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society (AAPS), Immanuel Lutheran Church, Santa Clara Avenue and Lafayette Street. Free for AAPS members; \$5 for others. Information: 479.6489.

🦋 Thursday March 25, 2010: Author-designer Paul Duchsherer: **“Beyond the Bungalow.”** Sponsored by Michael Studebaker and Cynthia Audet, owners, Gallagher & Lindsey, Inc., Realtors. Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Avenue. Free for Museum members; \$5 for others. Information: 748.0796.

🦋 Saturday, April 24, 1:00-4:00 p.m.: **“Where History Lives,”** Meyers House Museum, 2021 Alameda Avenue, admission \$5. For information call 523.5907.

🦋 Thursday April 29, 7:00 p.m.: **“History of the Alameda Naval Air Station,”** a slide lecture by Richard Rutter. Sponsored by Judith Lynch, member, Historical Advisory Board. Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Avenue. Free for Museum members; \$5 for others. Information: 748.0796.

🦋 Saturday May 1, 11:00 a.m.-noon: **“Kids & Queen Victoria,”** thirteenth annual art show with work from Alameda elementary students; opening reception featuring Queen Victoria herself. (Practice your bow or curtsy!) Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Avenue. Sponsored by the Historical Advisory Board and the Alameda Museum. Free. Information: 748.0796.

🦋 Saturday, May 15, 11:00 a.m., place TBA: **“Fernside Ramble,”** a walk led by architect Richard Rutter. Sponsored by the Historical Advisory Board. Free. Information: 748.0796.

🦋 Saturday, May 22, 1:00-4:00 p.m.: **“Where History Lives,”** Meyers House Museum, 2021 Alameda Avenue, admission \$5. Information: 523.5907.

🦋 Thursday May 28: **“Glorious Glass of Alameda”** a slide lecture by Ken Matthias. Sponsored by Ginger Schuler, member, Alameda Museum Board; Realtor, Harbor Bay. Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Avenue. Free for members, \$5 for others. Information: 748.0796.

🦋 Date and location TBA, 7:00 p.m.: Thirteenth Annual **“Historic Preservation Awards,”** sponsored by the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society (AAPS). Free. Information: 479.6489. **Page 7**

HISTORIC PRESERVATION SEASON 2010

WHEREAS, historic preservation of vintage buildings revitalizes neighborhoods, fosters local pride, and maintains community character; and

WHEREAS, the City of Alameda is rich in historic architecture; and

WHEREAS, this legacy will be proudly celebrated with slide shows, walks, awards, a rejuvenated Neptune Beach exhibit at the Alameda Museum, and tours of the Meyers House; and

WHEREAS, two of season events are “only in Alameda,” the 13th annual Kids & Queen Victoria exhibit at the Alameda Museum and the 13th Annual Historic Preservation Awards presented by the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society; and

WHEREAS, the fame of Alameda’s 19th century architecture—known as Victorian—has encouraged Queen Victoria herself to visit the Island, where she reviews the work of elementary students studying the history and homes of the era named in her honor; and

WHEREAS, Historic Preservation Season is sponsored by the City of Alameda Historical Advisory Board and co sponsored by the Alameda Association of Realtors, the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society, the Alameda Museum, the Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Alameda Business Association, the Park Street Business Association, and the West Alameda Business Association;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that, I, Beverly Johnson, Mayor of the City of Alameda, California do hereby proclaim March through June 2010, as

HISTORIC PRESERVATION SEASON

(signed)

Beverly J. Johnson

Mayor



Checked out the Oral History Project at the Alameda Free Library yet?

Jeannette Copperwaite, (jcopperwaite@comcast.net), is ready to film your story! You, the speaker, come up with a 3-5 minute story illustrating Alameda history from your own experience - not a whole life story, but an aspect or specific time or event related to local history. Once you know what you'd want to say and have gathered accompanying images or letters, make an appointment with David Hall at the Alameda Free Library at Oak & Santa Clara to be taped using the "Digital Story Station", which is a camera attached to a computer. Images are scanned and returned that same day. Jeannette edits the story and creates a DVD and cover for the storyteller. Then it is added onto the website (www.alamedastories.org), becoming part of the Library's permanent collection. Subjects that she and David Hall (510) 747- 7730 would like to cover soon are: *Alameda aviation history, Italians in Alameda, the old Navy Base, founding of the Alameda pools, and Alamedans who were instrumental in developing sports programs and/or went on to become stars in their sport.* This is a wonderful opportunity to highlight something unique in your family history and it'd make an outstanding gift that will "help preserve history for the future".

1998: Important Beginnings

AAPS and the Alameda Museum share a significant anniversary. Thirteen years ago each organization initiated an event that spotlights historic preservation, vintage architecture, and history here. AAPS inaugurated the Historic Preservation Awards, and the Museum began the "Kids & Queen Victoria" exhibit. Now both events are going strong at thirteen years of age, and they have been incorporated into the official Historic Preservation Season in Alameda. (We have to call it a season because too many events are scheduled to fit into one month.)

"Kids & Queen Victoria" originated at the Alameda Museum in 1998. It is the only show throughout the land devoted to writing, art, crafts, and sculpture produced by students in kindergarten through 5th grade studying the Victorian era in Alameda. Local luminaries preside over the opening reception, including the late Mayor Ralph Appezato, Mayor Beverly Johnson, Council members Frank Matarrese and Doug deHaan, and Superintendent of Schools Ardella Dailey.

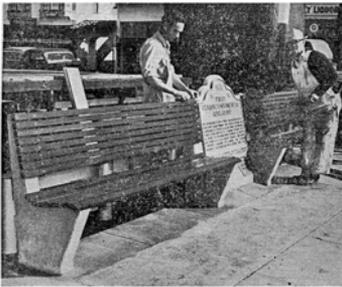


Image: Queen Victoria (played by Edison School teacher Connie Turner) greets Otis School student Marcy Jackson. Credit: Richard Knight

Somehow Queen Victoria herself learned about this display named in her honor, and each spring she assumes the body and attends the show. The children serenade her with *God Save the Queen* and *The Alameda Anthem*; they bow or curtsy in proper greeting, and then she makes her progress through the Museum to review their art. The opening reception this year is Saturday, May 1, 2010, 11:00 until noon. City Council member Marie Gilmore will open the event. Practice your bow or curtsy; then greet the Queen with a dignified "Good morning, Your Majesty." The show is co-sponsored by the Historical Advisory Board, the Alameda Museum, and the Alameda Education Foundation. For information leave a message at 748.0796.

Déjà vu, or History repeats itself.

By Robbie Dileo with help from Kevin Frederick



FINISHING TOUCHES—Paul Lenzschmidt, carpenter, and W. E. Francis, city engineering foreman, finishing the waiting passenger bench in time for dedication ceremonies at 2 p. m. Sunday. The memorial benches have been located at Lincoln Ave. and Webster St. (Times-Star photo)

City of Alameda reconstructs monument
History repeats February 2010

Well, sort of repeats. It's 61 years ago, in Alameda, May 18, 1949 to be exact. As the 80th anniversary approached of the First Transcontinental Railroad that arrived in Alameda, the California Centennial Commission had finally approved the Alameda Historical Society's (now Alameda Museum) bronze plaque language. Like today, it's never easy to please everybody, and the debate over the official placement of this September 6th, 1869 memorial was underway.

Let's digress a bit.

It was Oakland's problem that led to Alameda's railroad glory. Sacramento had been the end of the line via rail from the east. Passengers were then transferred to river steamers on the Sacramento River and finally to San Francisco via ferry. The Western Pacific Railroad was being built from Sacramento, via Altamont Pass and into Oakland via Niles Canyon. A.A. Cohen's railroad was already operational in 1864, thus it was he and his partners that received the first train, when Oakland's terminus wasn't completed in time.

So where was I, oh yes, City Council approved the concept of a memorial, subject to City Manager approval, following a request by the Alameda Gold Rush Centennial Committee and the Alameda Historical Society that the plaque be erected at the extreme west end of Pacific Avenue some 3,429 feet west of Pacific and Main Street, in what was then, the Naval Air Station's turning basin (lagoon). Most people agreed that the placement should be where it could best be appreciated, so the intersection at Lincoln and Webster was selected.

But by October 5, 1950, a year and a half later, Judge Daniel H. Knox, chairman of the Alameda Historical Society plaque committee, appeared before City Council to suggest a new design, as placement in the intersection or sidewalk at the NW corner of Lincoln and Webster had been rejected by the Centennial Commission. The concept of a plaque combined with a bench was approved, but Councilman Leland Sweeney doubted the bench addition. By August 1951, the 12-foot bench with center plaque was under construction. October 24, 1951 was selected to commemorate the bench and coincide with the centennial purchase of the original town site from the Peralta Estate. Several dignitaries participated, including Joseph R. Knowland and remembrances by Mrs. Matilda Anway, whose mother had been one of the 11 persons on that first train.

So where does the *déjà vu* come in? Last November, while driving to Encinal High with my daughter, I saw a mini van that had only moments before, crashed into the bench/plaque. Police were present, nobody appeared hurt, but the car was smashed with concrete everywhere due to the bench supports breaking on all ends. It looked like an explosion. I returned with my camera, thinking to add to the Museum's photo collection someday. Thankfully, the plaque was unharmed.

The City placed caution tape but in January, after the holiday break, I saw everything gone, like it had never been there! I immediately contacted Chris Buckley of AAPS and was assured that a replacement was in the works. There ensued an email debate over exact replacement or a monument with separate new metal benches like those found on Webster. Even the idea of placement into the sidewalk surfaced (pun intended). It was Kevin Frederick from AAPS that researched the old newspapers that contributed greatly to the process of today versus yesterday's relevance. Yes, how to do the monument was a hot topic, *déjà vu*.



Thanks to my photos of how the bench looked before complete removal, Kevin's research and photos, and AAPS being consulted by the City, replacement, as close to original as possible is underway. It mattered that our ancestors put great effort and thought into creating this monument. As President of Alameda Museum, I thank the City Public Works department for doing their best and honoring the Museum predecessors. The



center monument was poured in January and then shaped. In early February the bench leg supports were formed. It should be completed soon. Maybe we can do a small re-dedication event as part of

Preservation Season.

Call me if you want to volunteer, 865-1767. To see the pictures or the

newspaper clippings that include the 10th anniversary re-dedication, visit the Museum website and the EPHEMERA tab. www.alamedamuseum.org

Alameda Museum Lectures 2010

◆ **Thursday March 25, 2010:** Author-designer Paul Duchsherer: "Beyond the Bungalow." Underwritten by Michael Studebaker and Cynthia Audet, owners, Gallagher & Lindsey, Inc., Realtors.

◆ **Thursday April 29, 2010:** Architect-preservationist Richard Rutter: "History of the Alameda Naval Air Station." Underwritten by Judith Lynch, member, Historical Advisory Board.

◆ **Thursday May 27, 2010:** Glassmaster Ken Matthias: "Taking Panes: Glorious Glass in Alameda." Underwritten by Ginger Schuler, member, Alameda Museum Board; Realtor, Harbor Bay.

◆ **Thursday June 24, 2010:** Authors-*Alameda Sun* executives Dennis Evanosky and Eric Kos: "The Oakland Estuary: Its Role in Alameda History." Underwritten by Dennis Reno, Vice-President, Oracle; member, Alameda Museum Board.

◆ **Thursday July 29, 2010:** Art historian Colette Colleter: "Van Gogh and his Encounter with France," just in time for the big show opening at the DeYoung featuring French Impressionist paintings on the loose from the d'Orsay Museum in Paris. Underwritten by Peter Fletcher, Real Estate Broker, Windermere Real Estate.

◆ **Thursday August 26, 2010:** Author-historian-gadfly Gray Brechin: "A New Deal for the East Bay: Excavating the Buried Civilization of the Great Depression." Underwritten by Janelle Spatz, Realtor, Bayside Real Estate.

◆ **Thursday September 30, 2010:** Author-historian Richard Schwartz with a new edition of *Berkeley 1900* featuring many new images. Underwritten by Diane Coler-Dark, Past President, Alameda Museum.

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 \$5 for others. Topics may change without notice. For lecture information leave a message at 748.0796 or check alamedamuseum.org.

California's Last Lynching

by Ron Ucovich

The tradition of lynching outlaws is as old as America. The word *lynch* traces back to the Revolutionary War when Judge Charles Lynch locked up any loyalist who supported the British Crown and threatened the colonists' independence. The practice was banned on the East Coast after the Civil War when citizens would routinely lynch any slave who tried to exercise his newly granted liberty.

The West Coast, however, had a different code of law. The Gold Rush attracted droves of greedy miners intent on finding wealth at any risk. Justice lay in the hands of the victims. Claim jumpers and horse thieves ran the risk meeting revenge at the end of a rope.



In England, during the Elizabethan era, public executions were done by gallows. Their notorious executioner was Thomas Derrick. (This is why boom cranes in our country are often called *derricks*.) Hangings in England were a precise science. The victim was carefully weighed, and the rope was cut to the precise length. The rope was then soaked in water, then stretched and dried to remove its elasticity. If the prisoner was too light, his neck wouldn't break, and he would choke to death slowly. This was considered cruel. If he was too heavy, his head would snap off, and this was considered inhumane.



In the Wild West, outlaws were choked to death slowly. It was a public spectacle. People came from miles around to witness firm and swift justice. They took solace in the feeling of closure when the prisoner stopped flailing and kicking the air. By the way, the expression *to kick the bucket* originally meant to *commit suicide*. An effective way to kill yourself was to go into the dairy barn, tie a rope around your neck, and jump off a tall milk pail. The expression is a graphic portrayal of the paroxysms caused by oxygen deprivation.

There is no record of a lynching in Alameda, but there were several in Oakland. They stemmed from cattle rustling in the 1850s. But, believe it or not, there was a lynching in 1934 in downtown San Jose. Two confessed murderers had kidnapped a store owner, Brooke Hart, and held him for ransom, then killed him and dumped his body off the San Mateo Bridge. When an angry lynch mob gathered at the courthouse, the San Jose police requested that Governor Jim Rolph send the National Guard to disperse the crowd.

The governor refused to send out the National Guard, and instead praised the angry mob for their actions, and he promised to pardon everyone involved in the lynching. The crowd broke into the jail, removed the prisoner, dragged him across the street to St. James Park, and hanged him on a cork oak tree.

In 1936 a movie was made based upon this incident. It was called *FURY*. The film was a phenomenal success, but the beloved governor, Sunny Jim Rolph, would thereafter be called **Governor Lynch**.

JUST DON'T CALL ME *LEFTY!*

by Ron Ucovich



When I was little, kids were not allowed to be left-handed. If the teacher saw you writing with your left hand, she would whack your knuckles with a ruler. You see, we write from left to right, and if you write with your left hand, you smear the wet ink with your fist as you awkwardly push your quill over the paper.

But historically, more than being awkward, left-handed people were thought to be evil. The Latin word for *left* is **sinister** (sneaky or underhanded). On the other hand, the Latin word for *right* is **dexter** (skillful or proficient). Even today, the words **sinister** and **dexterous** carry that same connotation.

An old superstition states that if you spill salt, you need to toss a pinch of it over your left shoulder. Spilled salt was thought to summon the devil (the idea goes back to the Bible when Lot's wife looked back on Sodom and Gomorrah and was turned into a pillar of salt). The belief was that you wanted to throw some salt behind you to blind the devil while you clean up the mess. But, why your left shoulder? Because good people are right-handed, and the only way you can toss salt behind you with your right hand is over your left shoulder.



In French, the way you say *to the right* is **a droit**, and *to the left* is **a gauche**. Today, the English word **adroit** means *skillful* or *expert*, and the word **gauche** means *awkward* or *clumsy*. It may seem strange, then, that the French eat with their fork in their left hand. It was King Louis XIV who, in 1669, decreed that people of culture eat with their forks in their left hand.

Until 1669, hunting knives were used to cut food. Large chunks of meat, cheese and bread were placed on the table, and the diners would pick up their knife and whack off whatever they wanted, then spear it with their pointed knife and plop it onto their plate. King Louis decreed that the food should be sliced by the chef in the kitchen. Table knives, then, did not have to be sharp and pointed. They should be dull and have a blunt tip. (The blunt tip would deter diners from grooming their teeth with their knife). He further decreed that once a diner used his knife, he could not place it again on the table. He had to hold it in his hand until he was finished eating, then rest the knife on his plate to indicate that he had finished.

Now, if you have your knife in your right hand during the whole meal, you must use your left hand to hold your fork. The fork is held upside down, and the food is pushed onto it with the knife. Meanwhile, in America we maintained the custom of eating with hunting knives and fingers. By the time European silverware was introduced, we were firmly committed to picking up food with our right hand, as was our custom.

So, any idea of one country being left-handed and the other right-handed is a gross misconception. Everyone was right-handed. And even though we eat with our fork in our right hand, proper etiquette dictates that we set our tables with the fork on the left and the knife on the right, just as they do in France.



Maybe I'm gauche, but just don't call me Lefty. I'd give my right arm to be ambidextrous.

Luncheon, Donations, & Guild



The Annual Membership Luncheon with Silent Auction and Raffle is March 27th

Look for your invitation in the mail with Ruckus Raffle tickets to purchase for a chance to win up to \$300. Call Diane 523-5907 if you want to guarantee a place, entire table, or donate an auction item. Price is \$25 per person, docents are guests of directors. Open to the public, bring your friends & let them bid on wonderful auction items. Reservations required by March 20th.



In 2009 we reached our goal to exceed the 2006 level of donations for our matching grant with the City, aka **“Double the Bang for Your Bucks!”** Let’s keep it going in 2010! You may still send in donations where \$50 becomes \$100. \$500 becomes \$1000. – it’s also tax deductible. Maybe your company can match it too. OK to use the form on inside back cover. USE line called Voluntary Contribution and write Bang for Buck in the blank space & on check. You may also visit our website to donate to this, or any of our other funds – ARCHIVAL FUND, WOODY FUND, and GENERAL / OTHER. Thank you for helping us *“preserve the past for the future”*.

Mail Donations to: Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Avenue, Alameda, CA 94501

🌀 Meyers House Guild 🌀

The 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. To help, fill in the coupon below.

Make check payable to Meyers House Guild.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

I would like to Be a docent Garden Clean
& maintain artifacts Help with special events
 Other _____

Annual Guild Membership \$25

Additional donation: \$ _____ Total enclosed \$ _____

Information: Call Jane @ 865-3402

Mail to: Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Avenue, Alameda, CA 94501



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Ross Dileo	Jim McGrogan	Ellen Tilden
Marilyn Dodge	Joanne McKay	Ron Ucovich
Roni Dodson	DeAnn Mosbey	Henry Villareal
Joan Dykema	Trish Nelson	Mark White
Carolyn Erickson	Stephanie Paula	Joe Young
Pamela Ferrero	Susan Potter	Gail Howell

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, 865-1204
 Docent coordinator for Meyers House – Jane Burgelin, 865-3402

How come ice cream used to be called *hokey pokey?* by Ron Ucovich



To answer this question, we need to go back to the dark ages before the Renaissance. At that time, science was limited to the study of alchemy. Today, *science* is the study of the laws of nature, and *magic* is the violation of the laws of nature, but at that time, there was no distinction between science and magic.

At Christmastime, the word *Magi* is often translated as *Wise Men*. In fact, *magi* is simply the plural form of *magus*, the Latin word for *priest*. Priests were the ones who had magical powers, because they knew all the magic words, spells, and incantations. This is why *priest* and *magic* are the same word.

Minstrels, on the other hand, were entertainers. They would travel around singing, juggling, and satirizing the clergy. They would perform acts of slight of hand while imitating the words of the priests. *Presto changeo* (I will change it fast), for example became *presto change o*, an expression used by magicians today. When a person died, the priest would say *abre cadaver* (open body) to exhort the spirit out of the body and into the heavens. *Abre cadaver* became the modern expression *abracadabra*.

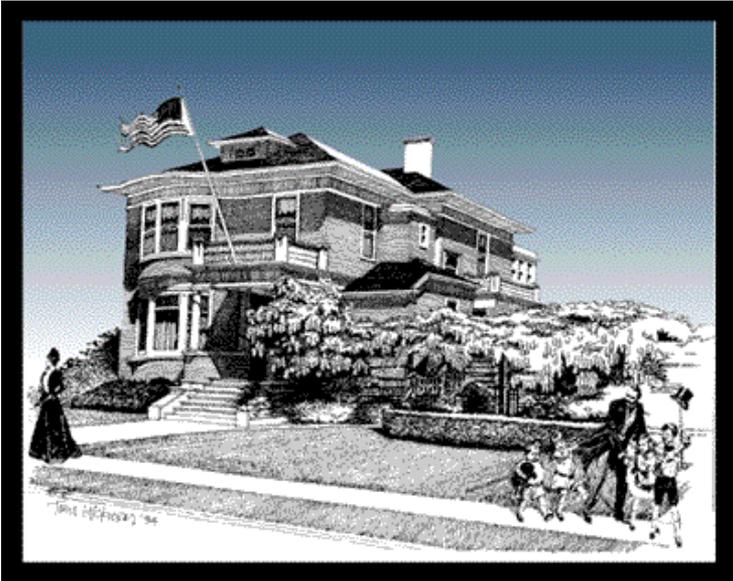


In the ceremony of transubstantiation, bread and wine was transformed by the magic words *hoc est corpus meum* (this is my body). *Hoc est corpus* became *hocus pocus*. The troubadour would perform his magic acts reciting “hokey pokey, hokey pokey.” *Hokey pokey* came to mean *trickery* or *foolishness*.

During the 19th Century, iced milk was sold in the streets of England by vendors who would attract attention by dancing and chanting, “Hokey pokey, a penny a lump.” Before cones were invented, ice cream was sold as a lump wrapped in waxed paper. It was called *hokey pokey*.



This catchy little dance was imitated here in America. A ski resort in Sun Valley, Idaho developed it into a novelty dance for their guests. In 1949 some composers wrote words to accompany the dance: “... *put your right foot in, put your right foot out, give your foot a shake, and turn yourself about...*” During the 1950s, the Hokey Pokey song and dance routine was popular across the entire nation.



**The Meyers House is OPEN Saturday February 27th
2021 Alameda Avenue, near Chestnut Street.**

From 1pm – 4pm

Admission is \$5 per person. Free to Guild Members.
Visit the Studio, Architectural Exhibit, and GIFT SHOP too.



The Meyers House is CLOSED Saturday March 27th
due to the Annual Membership Luncheon, Masonic Hall 4th floor.
Join us there instead. Reservations 523-5907 Cost \$25 each.



The Meyers House is OPEN Saturday April 27th



ALAMEDA MUSEUM closes at NOON March 27th

due to Membership Luncheon.

Donations for Silent Auction, call Diane 523-5907



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member to use the service. Contact Museum President Robbie Dileo, 865-1767
damsel_d@pacbell.net if you experience any problems purchasing online. It's new for us
as well and we want it to be easy for everybody. Thanks.

Alameda Museum Annual Dues Schedule

Regular Adult \$30	Senior (over 65) \$20
Associate Adult* \$20	Lifetime \$500 (only one payment, ever!)
Docent or Volunteer \$15	Business (non-voting) \$250

**An Associate Adult is any person who resides in the same household as a Regular Adult member; includes voting privileges.*

Special Offer - If you give a gift membership, your friend or loved one will receive TWO additional bonus gifts: a pass to visit the Meyers House & Gardens, and a copy of *Victoria's Legacy*, featuring historic neighborhood walking tours throughout the Bay Area - six in Alameda. Four issues of the *Museum Quarterly* and admission to all lectures are also free with their membership. You may also purchase online alamedamuseum.org

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NEPTUNE BEACH PERMANENT EXHIBIT
OPENS MARCH 20TH AT 11:00 A.M.



FOUNDED IN 1948

Alameda Museum

2324 Alameda Avenue
Alameda, CA 94501

Telephone: 510.521.1233

Museum Hours:

Wed.-Fri, Sunday: 1:30pm - 4:00 pm

Saturday: 11:00 am - 4:00 pm

Meyers House - 4th Saturdays, 1-4 pm, Fee

Website:

www.alamedamuseum.org

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