

Alameda Museum

Quarterly

THREE PROMINENT FAMILIES CALLED LINCOLN PARK HOME

by Dennis Evanosky



Captain R. R. Thompson cashed out of the Oregon Steam Navigation Company and moved south: first to San Francisco, and then to Alameda, where he built this stately mansion in today's Lincoln Park. Image: Alameda Museum.

VIGILANTE JAMES FARWELL, Consul Frederik O'Hara Taaffe and Steamboat Captain Robert R. Thompson and their families once lived on an estate that became Lincoln Park.

Ship captain James D. Farwell arrived in San Francisco in the spring of 1850. He had safely captained the steamboat *Tehama* from Panama. Farwell, who hailed from Maine, opened a chandlery on Clay Street, as a Chandler he supplied the ships in port with their wares. Farwell served on San Francisco's First Vigilance Committee. As a member of the committee he was called to arms on June 10, 1851, when John Jenkins stood accused of stealing a safe. Farwell

witnessed the trial and Jenkins' hanging the next day. Farwell's signature appears on the document that supported a vigilance committee "jury" meting out "justice" in San Francisco.

Farwell played a key role when the vigilantes reorganized in 1856. His fellow members called on him to "procure" a cannon for the committee. He teamed up with Richard M. Jessup. Author James Putman tells us that "in less than an hour they returned with a brass field piece that had once been in service with the First California Guard."

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Lincoln Park . . . Continued from page 1

The 1860 census shows Farwell living in Alameda with his wife, Angelina, and a gardener, an Irishman named Jim Carroll. He had purchased property in today's Lincoln Park on High Street near Santa Clara and built a home he called "Homebush." Census taker William Grove Deal listed Farwell as a "merchant." Angelina bore Farwell a son in 1866, and she passed away in 1868.

The 1870 census records show Farwell living at Homebush with his four-year-old son, Willie. Mary and Pat Galigan, who hailed from Ireland, were working for Farwell, Mary as a domestic servant and Pat as a driver. Ah Ming was also a member of the household. Census taker Stephen Burpee recorded him as a "waiter."

Burpee also recorded James' brother and his son's namesake, William, living in Alameda with his wife, Sarah. The 1868 San Francisco Directory tells us that William and James were partners in a chandlery, likely the same one that James had started in 1850. William and Sarah had two children, Laura and John.

In 1872 James teamed up with a group of wealthy men who included John Parrott and Peter Donahue. They had put up some \$2 million to start the Pacific Cordage Company. These investors wanted to meet the demand for rope while competing with the only rope manufacturer in San Francisco.

At first Californians imported all their rope. For example, in 1852 ships laden with 13,323 coils and 15,612 packages of cordage had passed through the Golden Gate on their way to eager buyers in San Francisco and beyond. To meet the local demand for rope, Hiram Tubbs opened the San Francisco Cordage Company in 1862. Nine years later Tubbs got some competition across the bay in the form of the Pacific Cordage Company.

The company built a 26-foot-wide and 1,800 foot-long ropewalk into the marshland just off Simson's Switch, the Central Pacific Railroad stop near today's High Street and Coliseum Way. They hired James to manage operations there. He hired 90 men, women and children to work in the shop, bragging that the cordage factory would be a "boon to the many poor families in the neighborhood who wish to earn a respectable living."



Captain R. R. Thompson. Courtesy photo.

The company manufactured its first rope in May 1873 and promised to spin "up 500 tons of Kentucky hemp, providing parties would cultivate it on this coast." The company offered "to pay a handsome premium for the first ten tons of hemp grown on this coast."

Farwell sold Homebush to O'Hara Taaffe the same year that Pacific Cordage produced its first rope. He bought a ranch in Hayward. The Pacific Cordage Company stayed in business for four years. For the first two years it offered Tubbs some lively competition; then it began to lose money. It closed its doors in 1877.

Farwell passed away at his ranch in Hayward on November 19, 1887. "Captain James D. Farwell, an old and respected citizen of the county, died last Saturday morning after

a brief illness, *The Daily Alta California* reported on the front page of its November 22, 1887 edition.

Gustav Frederik O'Hara Taaffe was born in Denmark on December 1, 1825. He arrived in San Francisco in 1851 and worked at first as an agent for the Commercial Union Assurance Co. He later served as the consul for Denmark and the vice-consul for Sweden and Norway. (A consul is an official appointed by a government to live in a foreign city and protect and promote the government's citizens and interests there.) Before coming to Alameda he lived at 2114 Mason Street in San Francisco.

Taaffe married Anna Södring on July 24, 1856, in Denmark. She was born in Denmark on July 11, 1838, and bore seven children before she and Gustav either separated or divorced. Six of their children survived into adulthood: four sons — Christian, Teodor, Viggo and Gustav — and two daughters, Agnes Elizabeth and Catherine. Taaffe served as president of the Scandinavian Hall Association and played an important role in starting the newspaper *California Scandinav*. He worked as a trustee at Our Savior's Scandinavian Evangelical-Lutheran Church. He was also an amateur sculptor.

Taaffe traveled in important circles. In 1869, three years before purchasing the Farwell estate in Alameda ("Vigilante, Rope Maker Once Made His Home on Site of Lincoln Park," *Alameda Sun*, June 12, 2014) he affixed his signature to the papers that formed the "California Immigrant Union."



Lincoln Park . . . Continued from page 2

He and his associates formed the organization to encourage immigration from Europe to California. The union appointed him one of its first trustees, and he sat at the table with such luminaries as railroad baron Charles Crocker, cattle tycoon Charles Lux and sugar magnate Claus Spreckels.

In 1869, the same year the California Immigrant Union set to work, Taaffe wrote a 40-page document that he called "*Californien som det er*," (California as it is). He had this published in his native country's capital city of Copenhagen.

"This pamphlet is, on the whole, a sober and seemingly accurate account of conditions in the state, which he knew intimately through travel and business," a reviewer wrote. He aimed his treatise specifically at Scandinavian farmers, people he felt would help California thrive.

In 1872, three years after he penned "*Californien som det er*" he purchased James Farwell's estate "Homebush," renamed it "Rosebush," and lived long enough to enjoy the place for just two years. He died in Alameda on April 16, 1874, only 48 years old. His obituary described him as "The most distinguished Dane in the city of San Francisco. He was laid to rest in San Francisco." His body was later disinterred and moved to Woodlawn Cemetery in Colma, where a small stone marks where Taaffe rests today.

Before coming to Alameda R. R. Thompson made his fortune first in the California gold fields, and then as a principal shareholder of the Oregon Steam Navigation Company. He and his partners sold their interests in the steam company to a railroad. Each man received a tidy sum. In 1877 Thompson decided to return to the state

where he made his fortune in gold. He headed for San Francisco, where he began investing the proceeds from the sales of his steamboat company in real estate. While shopping for property, he discovered that "Rosebush," Gustav Frederik O'Hara Taaffe's 12-acre estate in Alameda, was on the market and purchased it.

In 1879 Thompson decided to start a project that would supply his new hometown with water. After some testing he began to bore four wells on his property. The spot he chose for this enterprise bears his name, Thompson Avenue. He found an abundance of fresh water and obtained a license from the city fathers to lay down the pipe necessary to supply Alameda with water.

In the meantime Thompson found Taaffe's Gothic Revival cottage too small to suit his needs. So in 1880 he hired local architect William Patton to design a mansion for him. Thompson and Patton struck up a relationship that held them both in good stead. In 1887 Patton would design the building at 1400 Park Street for Thompson and the First National Bank, a building that is now home to Capone's Speakeasy.

The *Alta California* newspaper called Thompson's three-story home "the handsomest and most costly residence in Alameda County." According to the newspaper, "the lights over all the doors were of stained glass specially ordered for the mansion in Munich, Bavaria — each one of them in itself a work of art and done by the best artists."

"The carpets were woven in Europe to fit the rooms of the house and cost fabulous sums. The mantelpieces in the rooms were all of onyx, and everything in the house was of an equally luxurious and costly nature," the newspaper told its readers.

On October 19, 1880, while his mansion was rising up on High Street, the city of Alameda founded its fire department. On November 17 three fire-fighting companies formed. One, bore R. R. Thompson's name, the Thompson Hose Company No. 1. The following month, the city arranged for Thompson to supply the department with water. He also obtained the license from the city to use his water to flush the sewers in town. He also allowed the city to use his "pressure engine" for all fire purposes.

In a touch of real irony the man who did so much to supply the town and its fire department with water, stood by and watched his palatial mansion burn to the ground. The fire started just after 2:00 pm on August 18, 1884, in a room above the kitchen. Like other wealthy residents in Alameda, Thompson opposed the tax levies, including those to pay for the city's fire department. He told everyone who would listen that he had no need for the fire department because he had his staff drilled to put out any fire that might start on his premises.



This sketch of "Rosebush" shows James D. Farrell's home "Homebush" after the O'Hara Taaffe family moved in. Courtesy Arthur A. Shilt

Continued on page 4 . . .



Lincoln Park . . . Continued from page 3

"The firemen did all they could, but the water pressure was too low for quick and effective work," the *Alta California* reported. The newspaper reported another bit in irony in the case of man who did not want to pay for fire services. "A curious and unlucky coincidence to be noted in connection with the fire (at Thompson's home) is the fact that the building occupied by the Schmidt Lithographing Company on Main Street in San Francisco, recently destroyed by fire, was also owned by Captain Thompson."

The fire did not discourage Thompson in the least. In 1887 he and one of his partners in the Oregon Steamboat Navigation Company, J.C. Ainsworth, purchased a large tract of land on Santa Monica Bay. The pair moved south and established the city of Redondo Beach.

Thompson and his wife Harriet never returned to Alameda. They both passed away in 1908. That same year, a portion of the land they called home became city property. The following year, the city created Lincoln Park there. The decorative iron fence along High Street that Charles H. Foster crafted in 1879 remains to remind us of the Thompsons. In 1981 Lincoln Park was designated an official Monument by the City Council, the only park to be so honored.



This decorative iron fence makes a handsome welcome to the High Street entrance of Lincoln Park. Image: Valerie Turpen.

ALAMEDA MUSEUM LECTURE MARCH 26, *The Saga of Lincoln Park* Authors and *Alameda Sun* publishers Dennis Evanosky and Eric Kos. Sponsor: Johanna Hall, Alain Pinel Realtors, and Alameda Museum Board Member. For more information see back page.

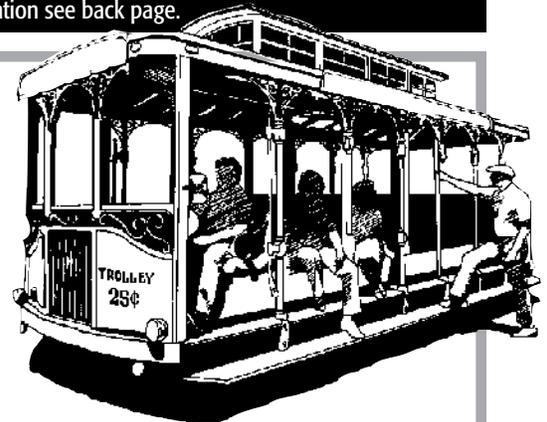
BACK TO THE FUTURE!

All Aboard for the Fourth Annual Trolley Tour.

Relive history, view the Island City in a new way, and benefit the Museum. Take a ride down memory lane to experience Alameda as it was in the late '50s and '60s, (1950s and 1960s, that is . . .) In those halcyon days, kids hung out at malt shops, there was a dance every week, AM radio ruled the airwaves, and we all went along for the ride!



Oh, and don't worry, we'll all get back here safely! The tour is **Saturday, July 18, 2015, with two identical flights: One from 10:00 am – noon and the other from 1:00 – 3:00 pm.** Tickets are \$50 each; please sign up now, as we always sell out. These tours are the brainchild of Peter Fletcher, Broker, Windermere Real Estate, our generous sponsor. **To reserve a seat, email judithal@comcast.net or call Peter, 510-521-1177.** If you telephone, please also let us have your email address, thanks!





Note

The 2015 Board of Directors will be seated and officers elected at the February 18 meeting, 5:30 pm at the Downtown Museum.

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

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

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Web: Adam Gillitt

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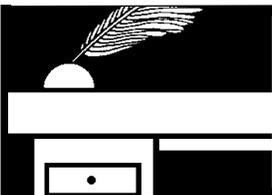
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Alameda Sun

DAMES AUX GATEAUX



IslandAllianceOfTheArts.org
sponsoring cross currents exhibits



From the Curator's Desk

by George C. Gunn

I want to personally thank those members who have donated funds toward the restoration of the Carriage House at the Henry Meyers residence. As I stated in my hand written plea to many of you, I was concerned about the physical condition of the building, and many of you responded graciously.

I have the pleasure of reporting that the building is now stable and resting on a belted concrete foundation, where once it had nothing but a deteriorated mudsill. Continued work consists of a cement slab floor, upgraded electrical service, insulations, dry wall, trim, and painting. The finished building will be used for various exhibits and activities.

I can give you no completion date, as further fund raising is necessary for this important capital improvement. We appreciate any amount you can donate toward the culmination of this worthwhile project, part of the Museum's stewardship of the Meyers House and Garden, a designated Alameda Monument (landmark).

A gala reception is planned in the future with special invitations sent to individuals who responded to our requests for funding for the Carriage House. We look forward to seeing you there!

Note: For an update on the Carriage House see the story and pictures on page 14.



A reminder of the Carriage House interior when it was jammed with a huge and obsolete storage tank. The tank was dismantled and recycled by the Scouts from Troop 78 with careful adult supervision. The young men donated the recycling payment back to the Meyers House in a ceremony last July. Image: Steve Ramos.

George C. Gunn
Curator, Alameda Museum

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The Alameda Museum runs estate sales tailored to your needs.

Call Johanna, 510-701-9392
or email info@alamedamuseum.org.



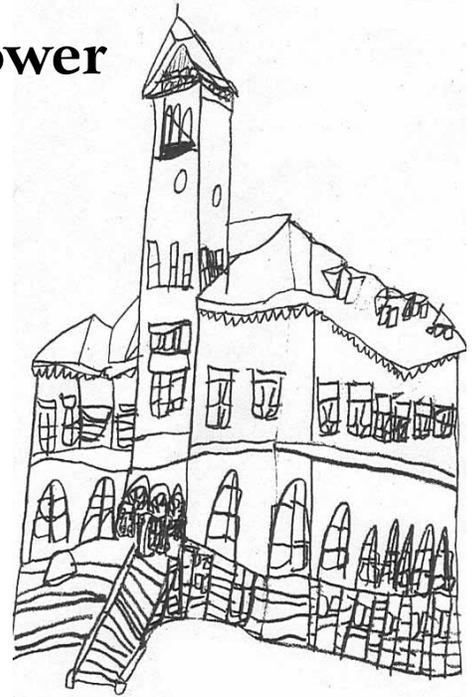
The Museum, the Kids and the Tower

WHEN CITY HALL OPENED IN 1896 it had a tower in the center that was as tall as a twelve-story building. The tower was removed over the years. The top was damaged during the 1906 earthquake, and the rest of the tower was dismantled in 1937. In 1975, Alameda City Hall became the city's first official Monument or landmark. Twenty years later it was renovated and Mayor Ralph J. Appezzato announced, "The final step in restoring our City Hall is to put the tower back."

A group of citizens then organized ARTT (Alamedans Rebuilding the Tower) and set about fund-raising. Alameda students joined the tower campaign with whole-hearted enthusiasm. Some gave the Mayor \$23.10 from their cookie money reserves; another group wrote a poem about the tower and its magical properties. Still others revived the 1978 Alameda

Anthem and added a verse that includes "Now we're going to put back the tower on City Hall!"

Second graders built a seven foot tall City Hall model, complete with hundreds of red wooden "bricks" they glued onto the clock tower. When Mayor Appezzato invited the class to display it at the real City Hall, they trooped up Oak Street, following their model in the back of a vintage truck. The parade was brief but lively, with spirited trumpet and drum music. The Mayor presided after the model was placed in the foyer. "When our City Hall opened in 1896, it was crowned by a magnificent red brick clock tower," he said. "Unfortunately the tower had to be removed, but we are raising money to put it back. How exciting that Alameda children have joined the tower crusade!" Then the students unveiled their model to much



City Hall with its original tower as drawn by 2nd grader Daniel Tea.

applause and a trumpet fanfare. After that event, their model was on display at the Alameda Museum for many years.

So what happened to the tower rebuilding effort? ARTT finally realized that trying to raise many millions would never work. They disbanded and forked over their treasury to the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society (AAPS), a fine choice who used part of that money to design, produce and install a handsome bas relief plaque that was recently affixed to the front stairs of the building. Many people enjoyed the celebration, and in memory of the efforts of many Alameda children, the Museum gave out bookmarks imprinted with their poem.



Dignitaries celebrate the installation of the new City Hall plaque. Pictured left to right, front row: Christopher Buckley, President AAPS; Marilyn Ezy Ashcraft, Vice Mayor; Trish Spencer, Mayor-Elect; Councilman Tony Daysog; and Nancy Hird, AAPS advisor. Back row: Museum and AAPS board member Johanna Hall, AAPS volunteer Kevis Brownson and AAPS VP and Museum board member Jim Smallman. Image: Elizabeth McRice for the "Alameda Sun".

Time to Renew?

Museum Members:
Please go to page 11 and send in the renewal form. **Many thanks!**





Raziah Robles and Ron Mackrodt set out along the Alameda estuary on a voyage of discovery. Image: Raziah Robles.

An Ark in Alameda

by Ron Mackrodt

MOVING INTO A NEW NEIGHBORHOOD, Raziah Robles soon began to hear whispers of its history. Her family's home was located on a small Alameda street, an eclectic mix of hundred year old cottages and bungalows. Her own house was rumored to have once been moored on the shores of the nearby estuary, one of the many Arks that had once lined the channel. Her curiosity piqued, Raziah resolved to learn more about the history of her small community: who had lived there, how had they passed their days, how were their families like her own?

The search turned out to be no simple task: no website, no book on the library shelf. With the assistance of a team of village elders, Raziah has set out on a quest to discover a bit of her own local history. She has made some surprising discoveries. She is also joining the Alameda Museum lecture series, the youngest expert we have ever had give a talk. On June 25, 2015, at 7:00 p.m. Raziah will be interviewed as part of the Museum lecture series by Ron Mackrodt, one of her guides. She will discuss her methods and her findings.

BE A MUSEUM DOCENT

MAKE SOME NEW FRIENDS

Please contact Adam Gillitt
volunteer@alamedamuseum.org
510-764-1325

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

Saturday, March 21
Noon
Masonic Hall

Annual Membership Lunch, Raffle, & Silent Auction

\$30 per person, free for docents who are members and for volunteer staff. Look for a special invitation in February. Master of Ceremonies: The debonair Jim Smallman; special guests: Mayor Trish Spencer and Alameda Poet Laureate Julia Park Tracey.

We need items for the silent auction and the raffle. Small pretty objects, gift cards, experiences such as theater outings, and distinctive art pieces are more than welcome. You can also fund a gift basket based on a theme: an evening in Venice, a picnic in Provence, a hike up Mt. Tam.

Call Diane, 523-5907, after 10:00 am to arrange pick-up for your donation or your check. You can also bring items to the Museum clearly marked "silent auction."
Thank you!

ROTOGRAVURE

In the 1920s and 30s, many newspapers published rotogravure sections in their Sunday editions. These pages were devoted to images and were made possible and practical by the invention of a new kind of printing press with a cylindrical or rotating mechanism that made high quality reproductions of photographs. Irving Berlin's song "Easter Parade" specifically refers to these sections in the lines "the photographers will snap us, and you'll find that you're in the rotogravure."



Girls Inc. volunteer Janet Thoma shows participants part of her exhibit about Dr. Edith Meyers, one of the founders of the organization.

Images: Judith Lynch except were noted.



Museum board member Adam Gillitt and Mayor Trish Spencer heard Julia read from her new book *Veronika Layne Gets the Scoop*.



The Dames aux Gateaux (so-called because they always eat their cake first) celebrated the comedic legacy of Phyllis Diller in the Art Gallery last year. In 2015 they are extending their celebration to the entire month of November with details to follow. Image: Dorinda von Stroheim.



Poet Laureate Julia Park Tracey filled the art gallery for her book launch party.



The perfect shoes for the main character, the sassy and much tattooed newspaper reporter Veronika Layne.



Docent Lin Datz with the doll Dimples, one of her favorite Museum exhibits.



Woody Minor (left) and Ron Mackrodt doing block book research in the Museum archives.



Richard Angilly hangs the poetic artwork of Superna Gosh, an artist from both Canada and India.



The January art gallery show features the work of Artists Embassy International. Natica Angilly explains her art, "Look to yourself to create the harmony of peaceful ideas."



Docent Linda Domholt enjoys showing visitors the images and artifacts from the roller coaster at Neptune Beach.



Retired Deputy Chief Jones with the flagpole finial he saved and restored.

Jackson Park Relic Saved

JACKSON PARK, THE ISLAND'S OLDEST, OPENED IN 1895, when it was graced with a wooden flagpole topped by a large spherical finial. One day in 1987, Steven Jones, a lieutenant at Fire Station 1 nearby on Park Street, noticed fellows dismantling the flagpole. They were hired by the city to replace all such wooden poles on public property with metal ones.

Lt. Jones asked if he could take the finial. "Sure," said the foreman, and it was removed to the Jones's garage where it stayed safe for 25 years. Jones was promoted to Deputy Chief of Department in 1996 and retired in 2003. He decided to renovate the finial; it took hours of sanding, filling, more sanding, and then the final touch, several coats of exterior quality gold paint. He and his wife Christine recently donated it to . . . the Museum, and you can enjoy this historic artifact in the history gallery!



From the President's Podium

by Judith Lynch

When I stepped up to be President I cautioned, "I am not executive material." An accurate statement, because after a life of excellent health, last January I pulverized my right hand. Then in August I fell and broke my back. After six months it still will not heal, and the pain seriously curtails what I can continue to do for the Museum. Worse, I am not a candidate for a minor operation that would fix the vertebrae and end the pain. So I am reluctantly resigning both as President and as a board member. My focus for the next 10-12 months will be intensive physical therapy, so please wish me well, and if you see me walking the streets, give a wave! Thanks from Judith

P.S. Thanks to an energetic and committed board and many dedicated volunteers and docents, 2014 was a good year for the Museum. We made a well-received presentation to City Council, dedicated a restored flagpole, hosted the 14th successful lecture series, welcomed great displays and events in the Art Gallery, opened the Meyers House twice a month, and undertook major capital improvements there. Lots more to report, but little room! Best to the new board and to all of you, and thanks for your support and kindness throughout the year.



Judith Lynch

President, Alameda Museum

Drawing of Judith by Otis School first grader Cassie Garcia.

What is That? Where is That?



Note: The image in the last issue was a sidewalk stamp indicating the location of a sewer line. However it was embossed into the concrete backward! You can find it around the corner from the Meyers House next to the First Congregational Church.

A game for readers of the *Alameda Museum Quarterly*: Here is an image from somewhere in Alameda.

Clue: Think terra cotta!

Email your answer to info@alamedamuseum.org and be featured in the next issue as Super Sleuth.

If you have your own secret spot in town, please send it to us along with a clue and the answer to have it published in a future *AMQ*.

In the Museum Art Gallery 2015

FEBRUARY: Alameda artist Bob Doerr. His theme this year is "Art from a small village (Kopoko) on a big island (Hawaii)." The show will also include paintings by Michael Karvasales.

■ **Reception Saturday, February 7
Noon – 3:30 pm**
You can learn more about Bob and his work at Poemia.net.



The Room by Bob Doerr.



Winter Scene by Minnie.



Amaryllis by Ann.

MARCH: Studio 820 artists work and take classes at the San Lorenzo Adult School under the guidance of instructor Monica Satherthwaite. They explore many subjects from still life to landscape to the human figure. They work in a variety of media, including watercolor, pastel, ink, and colored pencil. Studio 820 has been exhibiting annually at the Alameda Museum since 2000, and they donate to join the Museum's Heritage Partners.

■ **Reception Saturday, March 7
Noon – 3:00 pm**
For more information:
Studio820art@yahoo.com or San Lorenzo Adult School 510-317-4200.

Watch the *Alameda Museum Quarterly* for more details on these and other shows and events in the gallery.

APRIL: Restoring Historic Buildings, architect Jerri Holan.
■ **Reception Saturday, April 4, 1:00 – 3:00 pm**

MAY: Alameda Photo Society

JULY: Linda Weinstock, Chris Rummell, and others, mixed media.
■ **Reception Sunday, July 5, 1:30 – 4:00 pm**

AUGUST: Cross Currents
■ **Reception Friday evening, August 14**

SEPTEMBER: Local Chinese artists (under the tutelage of Feng Jin)

OCTOBER: Alameda Women Artists
■ **Reception Friday evening, October 9**

NOVEMBER: Dames aux Gateaux, "For the love of Phyllis Diller"

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- A copy of *Victoria's Legacy* with six Alameda walking tours

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For more information

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Join any time. Dues based on calendar year. Renewals after September will continue through the next year. Tax I.D. #94-2464751

Membership levels are annual, except one-time Lifetime. Please check the appropriate box or boxes. Thank you for your support.

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2nd Member Name _____
- \$25 Senior
- \$20 Docent/Volunteer
- Heritage Partner
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Meyers House and Garden Alameda Museum

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★ VALUED VOLUNTEERS

Shirley Ramos

Shirley got involved at the Museum and the Meyers House because since 1972, she and her husband Carl have had the good fortune to live on the same block of Garfield as Curator George Gunn. When they retired, the couple responded to his invitation to volunteer. Shirley went on, "I have been helping out here once a week or so at the garden and downtown. George is the brain, and we are his arms".

"In the garden, depending on the time of year, I pull weeds, deadhead flowers, trim what is overgrown, and do other kinds of garden maintenance. It's pleasant working in the beautiful Meyers House garden, and it's a way of contributing to the community. Carl and I do what needs to be done either

here or in the warehouse, the huge storage area behind the history gallery. That is where artifacts are catalogued for the collection, mended or repaired as needed, and put into safe storage in acid-free containers".

"It is not a glamorous job, but it is critical to maintain the archives of the City of Alameda and those of the Museum. Just the other day we helped protect architectural renderings in pencil done by Mildred Meyers, daughter of Henry Meyers, with whom she worked".

▶

Shirley's joy in shaping her home garden helped her decide to commit her volunteer time to the Meyers House.



Carl Ramos

Carl and Shirley were involved in the event last summer that celebrated the installation of the Meyers family flagpole—restored by Carl—and the removal of the immense metal storage tank that was hogging most of the floor space in the Carriage House.



The tank was dismantled by the Scouts of Troop 78; three of their members are the Ramos's grandsons. "When we first moved to Alameda," Carl said, "George helped us with information about our Victorian house, so when we retired both of us decided to help out".

"The flagpole had been removed and was just resting drearily on the ground, so I figured out how to restore and install it in a better location. There is a happy element of volunteering in a wonderful town of Alameda. We get lots of exercise and meet many people with like interests. We also enjoy George's quips, such as 'I can't hear you, I just washed my hair,' many based on vintage movies!"

◀

Carl's grandsons (Shirley's too!) Ian, Nathan and Zach, helped him renovate and re-install the original Meyers House flagpole. They and other members of Scout Troop 78 raised a vintage flag lent by Charlie Howell during a celebration in the garden last summer.



GET COMMITTEED!

Please consider joining one of our committees.

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

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



NOTE

The 2015 Board of Directors will be seated at the February meeting. These committee chairs may change after.

■ Budget & Fund Raising:

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

■ Collections, Events & Exhibits:

George Gunn, Advisor
510-521-1233

■ Membership, Docent & Volunteer Recruitment:

Adam Gillitt
volunteer@alamedamuseum.org
510-521-1233

■ Merchandising & Estate Sales:

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

■ Meyers House & Garden:

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

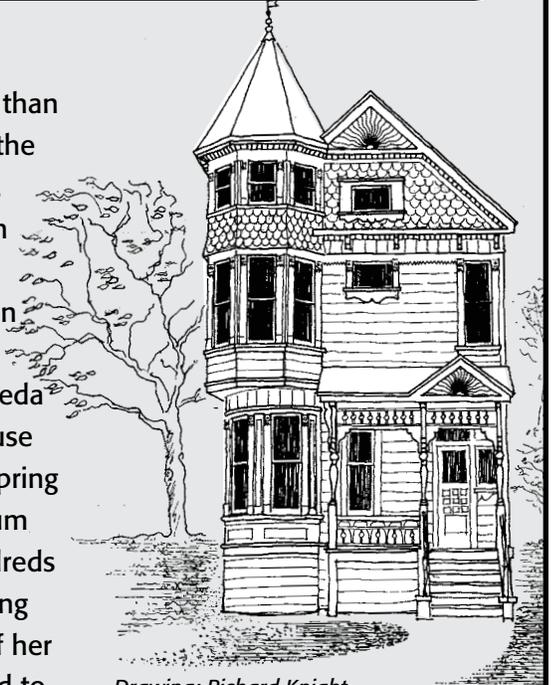
■ Publicity & Communications:

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

VICTORIA'S LEGACY IN ALAMEDA

Queen Victoria's legacy in Alameda is legion, with more than 4,000 buildings still left from the time of her reign, 1834–1901. Because these buildings laden with architectural fancy were constructed during her time on the throne, they are dubbed Victorians in her honor. Alameda youngsters know of her because she assumes the body each spring and visits the Alameda Museum to review the artwork of hundreds of elementary students studying the history and architecture of her era. Now grownups are invited to learn about the richly embellished styles that make Island streets such a delight to stroll. Think of it as bird-watching and start your Victorian life list!

A free class for Mastick members offers eight sessions on Victorian culture, highlighting the 19th century buildings of Alameda. Five slide shows and three walking tours will show you how to recognize architectural details and distinguish amongst the various styles of fancywork homes that abound here. Taught by local author and retired teacher Judith Lynch, who has served on the City of Alameda Historical Advisory Board.



Drawing: Richard Knight



Slide sessions are held Tuesday and Thursday mornings at Mastick Senior Center June 16–July 2.



Walks on June 23 and 27 and July 7 visit Bay Station, Outer Pacific, Leonardville and include a Saturday afternoon tour of the Meyers House (admission \$5).



As a bonus, prepare and enjoy Victorian high tea with Alameda chef Jacki Rosen and meet Queen Victoria herself! The high tea class is Saturday, July 11 and costs \$15. **Space is limited in both classes; please call Mastick to reserve slots: 510-747-7506.**



What's New at the Meyers House



Carriage House Project off the Ground . . . Literally

Story and images by Jim Smallman

When the Carriage House at the Meyers House and Garden was first constructed in 1897, it was an “incidental” building that did not receive the careful design and construction lavished on the main house. As was common in those days for such buildings, the “foundation” was simply 2' x 6' redwood planks, laid flat on the sandy soil. Shortly after construction, the building was extended to accommodate a car, using the same minimal construction. As the Meyers family fortunes expanded, so did their automobile ownership. In the 1910s, they acquired the adjacent lot, built a multiple-car garage, and the Carriage House became a pump house for the well that still irrigates the gardens.

Fast forward a century to 2014. The Carriage House now housed a huge cast iron storage tank, piping, the well head and miscellaneous stored items. The building was underutilized and unusable. More seriously, the original “foundation” had rotted out, providing an invasion path for dry rot and termites that progressed up the studs and structural supports. Several corner supports collapsed completely; the building was in danger of complete failure, a terrible loss of an original structure.

It was almost too late. Then Curator George Gunn enlisted local Boy Scout troop 78 to cut up and recycle the cast iron storage tank. The troop made short work of the tank and then donated the proceeds of the recycled iron to the Museum. The Museum Board of Directors requested proposals for structural work, including a new foundation and slab. John Jameson Construction won the project, and as this goes to press, the foundation is complete, the floor has been poured and structural stabilization of the walls has begun. When the current work is completed, we can look forward confidently to another century of its service.

The Carriage House will be a multi-use facility. The flat unobstructed floor inside will allow the room to be used for meetings, displays, and educational demonstrations. The newly reconstructed walls will be ideal for displaying revolving exhibits of the numerous wall hangings in the Museum collection. Equally important, the exterior of the Carriage House will retain its historic 1910 appearance.



Hector Rodriguez, the foreman of John Jameson's crew, gives the thumbs up for the concrete slab and foundation being poured at the Carriage House.



Carriage House foundation and slab in progress. The studs holding up the walls and roof were so deteriorated and termite riddled it was a wonder the place stood up!



The Carriage House was endangered because it never had a foundation but instead rested on boards in dirt (called a mudsill). This close-up shows the new foundation and the reinforcing bars (re-bars) that make a solid connection between walls and floor.



New electrical and pump access; when the floor is finished the top of the box will be level with the rest of the floor.

GENEROUS MUSEUM MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF THE MEYERS HOUSE have responded to the Carriage House fund-raising efforts of Curator George Gunn, see page 5.

We are about half-way to our goal. A reception for contributors is planned for the summer of 2015, when the work is complete.

DON'T MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY!

VOLUNTEERS: ALAMEDA MUSEUM & MEYERS HOUSE & GARDEN

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Margaretha Augustine | Julie Kennedy |
| Chad Barr | Carole King |
| Margie Benko | Adam Koltun |
| Yvonne Blackburn | Mary Lou Kurtz |
| Ginnie Boscacci | Gayle Macaitis |
| Emily Byrne | Kate McAnaney |
| Gene Calhoun | Jeannie McCaffery |
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| Diane Coler-Dark | Lloyd Novakowski |
| Cathy Conley | Susan Potter |
| Charles Daly | Carl Ramos |
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| Reid Davis | Patricia Rios |
| Robbie Dileo | Virginia Rivera |
| Ross Dileo | Betty Saunders |
| Marilyn Dodge | Holly Schmalenberger-Haugen |
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| Tom Faulds | Jim Smallman |
| Pamela Ferrero | Ellen Tilden |
| Adam Gillitt | Ron Ucovich |
| George Gunn | Gerry Warner |
| Johanna Hall | Robert Welch |
| Debra Hilding | Joe Young |
| Charlie Howell | Karen Zimmerman |
| Gail Howell | |
| Virginia Jones | |

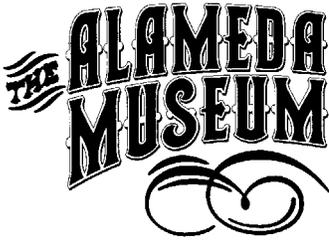
RECENTLY RETIRED:

Thank You for Your Service to the Alameda Museum
Leslie Hawksbee

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 three hours to make new friends? Come and spend that time with us!

Docent coordinator for Alameda Museum
Adam Gillitt
volunteer@alamedamuseum.org
510-764-1325

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



FOUNDED IN 1948

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ALAMEDA MUSEUM

2324 Alameda Avenue

HOURS

Wed. – Fri., Sunday

1:30 pm – 4:00 pm

Saturday

11:00 am – 4:00 pm

510-521-1233

MEYERS HOUSE & GARDEN

2021 Alameda Avenue

HOURS

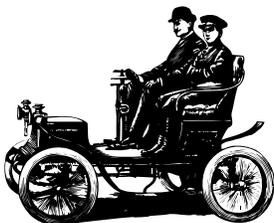
2nd & 4th Saturdays

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

(Last tour at 3:00 pm)

510-521-1247

www.alamedamuseum.org



ALAMEDA MUSEUM LECTURES 2015

- ❖ **MARCH 26, The Saga of Lincoln Park**
Authors and *Alameda Sun* publishers Dennis Evanosky and Eric Kos. The back story of how this splendid homesite became Alameda's only park that is a Monument. *Sponsor: Johanna Hall, Alain Pinel Realtors, and Alameda Museum Board Member.*
- ❖ **APRIL 30, Victorian Glory**
Author and Designer Paul Duschcherer, celebrating the release of his completely redesigned and enlarged book. *Sponsor: Judith Lynch.*
- ❖ **MAY 28, Capitalizing on Insanity: The Alameda Park Asylum in Post-Gold Rush CA**
U.C. Berkeley graduate historian and Alameda resident Madeleine Seiwald. *Sponsor: Carol Kane.*
- ❖ **JUNE 25, An Ark in Alameda**
The Robles family and Ron Mackrodt reveal the fascinating lore of a little known variety of local architecture. *Sponsor: Janelle Spatz, Realtor, Bayside Real Estate.*
- ❖ **JULY 30, San Francisco: Last Stop on the Whale Road**
Alameda architect Richard Rutter on the history of whaling in the Bay Area. *Sponsor: The Alameda Architectural Preservation Society (AAPS).*
- ❖ **AUGUST 27, Street of Dreams, Central Avenue in Alameda**
Alameda author and historian Woody Minor. *Sponsor: Peter Fletcher, Broker, Windermere Real Estate.*
- ❖ **SEPTEMBER 24, The Work of Alameda Photographer Edgar O. Cohen**
Paul Roberts, former Alameda Main Street director and past president Alameda Architectural Preservation Society (when it was AVPS). Edgar was the son of entrepreneur and railroad founder A. A. Cohen, whose estate was developed as the Fernside neighborhood several decades after his mansion of the same name burned. *Sponsor: Evelyn Kennedy, Realtor, Gallagher & Lindsey, Inc.*

NOTE: Lectures take place at the Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Avenue off Park Street. Admission is free for museum members and \$10 for others. No reserved seats. We open at 6:30 pm on lecture nights. Come early to save a seat and enjoy the displays in the History and Art Galleries. For information leave a message at 510-748-0796 and check alamedamuseum.org.