

# Alameda Museum Quarterly

## LOCAL BOY BECOMES LEGENDARY WAR HERO

by Robbie Dileo

### ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT HEROES IN UNITED STATES HISTORY

was born in Alameda, December 14, 1896. James Harold Doolittle lived at the corner of Foley and Buena Vista until he was four. The house still exists today, but was moved around the corner to 1620 Foley Street in 1912 when builder George Noble constructed bungalows on the Buena Vista lots. Look beyond the Marketplace parking lot on Park Street and you will see the only Victorian-era house mid-block. Built in 1887 by J.E. Langren, the residence is now a fourplex in only fair exterior condition, but intact architecturally.

His father Frank headed to Nome, Alaska as part of the Klondike Gold Rush, continuing to make his living as a carpenter and building a new house there for his family. His mother Rosa moved north with young Jimmy in 1900 and stayed about eight years. Jimmy was bright, spry, with a head of curls, but his short stature caused bullies to tease him. Good at gymnastics and acrobatic routines, he fought back when challenged, usually winning — a character building skill that lasted a lifetime.

With relatives in Los Angeles, Jimmy and his mother returned there in 1908, leaving his father in Alaska, but



The young Jimmy Doolittle Alameda, 1898



The Doolittle home in Alameda now located at 1620 Foley Street. Image: Robbie Dileo.

The family in Nome Alaska, 1908. Rosa Shephard Doolittle, James H. Doolittle, and Frank H. Doolittle. Family Images: USAFA Album.



Continued on page 2 . . .

**Local Boy** . . . Continued from page 1



One of the B-25 bombers taking off from the deck of the USS Hornet (CV-8). All planes lacked enough fuel to reach bases and either crash landed or were ditched along China's south coast.

remaining married. A less harsh environment with better educational opportunities allowed Jimmy to hone his pugilist skills, becoming a West Coast Flyweight Champ at age 15 and then holding his own at 17 in a Bantamweight match-up with World Champion Kit Williams.

Riding motorcycles to get to class and being near an airfield evolved into a love of aviation, as both required strong mechanical abilities with motors. Going fast was fun. A daredevil was born who could tweak engines to win many airplane races.

- **1922** - first transcontinental flight, first to fly only on instruments, did it blindfolded.
- **1932** - fastest cross country flight in 11 ¼ hours, and he miraculously survived several crash landings.

Due to WWI, Doolittle left studies at UC Berkeley to join the military as a flying cadet in 1917. Participation in an army program in practical aero-nautical engineering got him into a special program at MIT. Via petition, UC Berkeley awarded him a BS degree on the basis of those studies and his flying experience. He later earned a Masters from MIT and then received MIT's first Doctor of Science in Aeronautical Engineering. Racing in early airplanes became Jimmy's passion, but he also married his high school sweetheart on December 24, 1917, Josephine Daniels, nicknamed Joe, a remarkable woman in her own right.

They had two sons and lived a nomadic life with Jimmy frequently absent, pursuing his racing and promoting aviation fuel while working for Shell Oil. In 1940, seeing war on the horizon, Jimmy returned to the Army and was given a staff position in the Army Air Corps working for Hap Arnold.

The bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 brought the United States into the war. At age 45, the 5'4" Lt. Colonel was asked to do a secret mission to retaliate against Japan. His men, that history would call The Doolittle Raiders, would have followed him anywhere.

A total of sixteen B-25s that arrived at NAS Alameda, California, on March 31, 1942 had no mechanical issues. Fifteen made up the mission force and the sixteenth, by last-minute agreement with the Navy, was loaded so that it could be launched shortly after departure from San Francisco to demonstrate to the Army pilots that sufficient deck space remained for a safe takeoff. Instead, that bomber was made part of the mission force.

The raid, launched from the deck of the *USS Hornet* (CV-8) at 620 miles off the coast of Japan, dumped tons of bombs on military and industrial targets in Tokyo, Yokohama, Kobe, Nagoya and Osaka. This demonstrated that Japan was vulnerable to attack and boosted American morale after many losses in the Pacific.

Our very own Alameda hero was promoted in 1985 to four-star rank by a special act of Congress and had his stars pinned on by President Ronald Reagan and Senator Barry Goldwater. In 1989 he received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President George H.W. Bush.

At the end of his amazing life, September 27, 1993, James H. Doolittle was 96, widowed, and living in Carmel, California. As a final honor, Doolittle and his wife Josephine were interred at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington DC.



Alameda Mayor Winthrop J. Branscheid, James H. Doolittle, and wife Josephine on November 5, 1945. The event, honoring Doolittle is being broadcast on the KLX radio station identified on the microphone stand. The station was owned by the Oakland Tribune and was housed on the 20th floor of the Tribune Tower in Oakland.



**HISTORY MATTERS**  
★★★ **IT IS IN** ★★★  
**YOUR OWN BACKYARD**

.....  
**DOOLITTLE RAIDERS**  
**75TH ANNIVERSARY**  
**EVENTS IN ALAMEDA**

.....  
**DOOLITTLE WALK**  
**April 1 • 11:30am**

There will also be a month-long  
Doolittle photo display.

Alameda Naval Air Museum  
2151 Ferry Point  
Building #77

Open: Sat & Sun 10am – 4pm  
alamedanavalairmuseum.org

.....  
**DOOLITTLE RAIDERS**  
**EXHIBIT OPENING**  
**& PAPER AIRPLANES**

See website for details.  
**April 18 • 11am**  
**April 23 • 2pm**

USS Hornet  
707 W. Hornet Drive

Open Daily: 10am – 5pm  
uss-hornet.org

.....  
Attend the informative lecture  
by Robbie Dileo &  
Dennis Evanosky about  
Doolittle's early days in  
Alameda, his mission to bomb  
Japan, and his return to  
Alameda as a celebrated hero.

**ALAMEDA'S**  
**HOMETOWN HERO**  
**April 27 • 7:00 pm**

Alameda Museum  
2324 Alameda Avenue  
alamedamuseum.org

**NOMINATIONS REQUESTED!**

**Make sure your home is part of  
the legacy Sunday, September 24th!**

**The Alameda Museum & the AAPS**  
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# San Francisco History Days at the Old Mint

by Staff

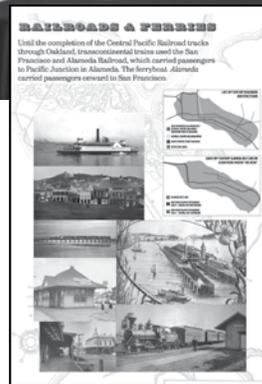
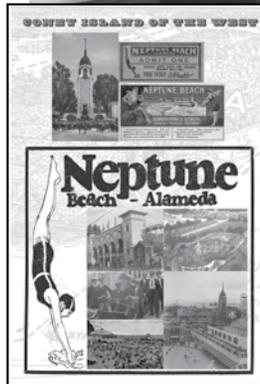
**THE FIRST WEEKEND IN MARCH,** the Old Mint hosted a “San Francisco History Days” event with over eighty participating historic organizations.

It was quite astounding how many entities filled the building with information on every San Francisco connection you could think of. There was history on neighborhoods, fraternal organizations, cultures, state parks, and on and on. Lectures and tours were held throughout the weekend and one room was devoted to authors and movie makers discussing their creations.

This was the Alameda Museum’s second time attending. It was a bit of a sell for museum president Dennis Evanosky last year. The participant committee didn’t quite see what Alameda had to do with San Francisco. Once they were reminded that the Alameda Terminal was the end of the Transcontinental Railroad, the ferry service connected the City to the East Bay, and Alameda’s founding fathers Chipman and Aughinbaugh could see their future land purchase from their San Francisco office, the committee relented.

Every visitor who dropped by the table this year knew about Alameda. They liked to take walks there, had relatives to visit, or had a favorite restaurant. Many did not know there was a history museum, but they do now. They also know there is a home tour, a lecture series, and several books available on local history.

The event was very well attended. It was refreshing to see hundreds of people interested in history and participating with so many likely non-profit and volunteer opportunities.



*Adam Gillitt at the Alameda Museum booth showcasing books, walking tour brochures, and information on the museum and Meyers House. Adam improved our display this year with posters and a banner he designed. Image: Dennis Evanosky.*

The mint itself has gone through many transitions since surviving the earthquake in 1906. A new minting facility was built in 1937. The Old Mint remained open to visitors until 1993. In 2003 the federal government sold the structure to the City of San Francisco for one dollar—an 1879 silver dollar struck at the mint.

Until a new tenant is found, the Old Mint will continue to be used for special events, some open to the public. The front facing main rooms are beautifully restored and the lower brick-lined level is accessible. In April 2016, the California Historical Society agreed to undertake the restoration of the building and its preservation as a public space. They are currently raising funds to complete the project.





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## BE A MUSEUM DOCENT

MAKE SOME NEW FRIENDS

Please contact the  
Docent Coordinator

volunteer@alamedamuseum.org

510-504-5612

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*Alameda Museum Quarterly is published four times a year and is available in electronic form on the museum website.*

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THANKS TO OUR  
HERITAGE PARTNER

*Alameda Sun*



## From the President's Podium

by Dennis Evanosky

For the second year in a row, the Alameda Museum participated in History Days at the Old San Francisco Mint at Fifth and Mission streets. Almost 6,200 people came through the doors on Saturday and Sunday, March 4 and 5 to enjoy and learn from 400 presenters, authors, volunteers, and exhibitors from 82 organizations from all over the Bay Area.

Board Vice-President Adam Gillitt designed four posters for the museum's table this year. These posters informed those who stopped by the Alameda Museum's table about our city's special architecture, it's long-gone rail and ferry transportation system, Neptune Beach and the Naval Air station. Adam helped staff the table along with board members Valerie Turpen and Olivia Bauman and me.

Did you know that Alameda was born in San Francisco? Founders Gideon Aughinbaugh and William Worthington Chipman were living there in 1851. Aughinbaugh owned a grocery store on Mission Street—not far from where we just celebrated History Days—and Chipman ran an "Intelligence Office" on Clay Street. The pair came up with the idea of approaching Dom Antonio Peralta and inquiring about purchasing the peninsula that became the Island City. The Dom agreed.

At History Days we spoke with people about this connection to San Francisco. We also described to the visitors our city's unique position in the world of Victorian-era architecture, informed surprised visitors about Alameda's role as the final stop on the transcontinental railroad in 1869 and its place in history as the "Coney Island of the West."

A special thank-you luncheon for our docents is in the planning stages. I have booked Pier 29 restaurant for Saturday, April 29 for the occasion. Hopefully all of our volunteers are able to join us. Pier 29 hosted last year's luncheon.

Curator George Gunn has worked his magic in the art gallery. Thanks to a generous donation he was able to transform the gallery into exhibit space. Stop by the museum and see what George has done.

We will be bringing the community together at the museum on October 11 as we host an Alameda Chamber of Commerce mixer. By then we will have gone a long way in bringing the museum into the 21st century. For example, Adam will be working on introducing Bluetooth into the museum's exhibits. We also plan to have the warehouse remodeled by then and, perhaps, use some of the warehouse space for exhibits and an office.

**Dennis Evanosky**  
President, Alameda Museum



# Barnes & Tibbitts Planted Maritime Seeds *by Dennis Evansky*

**THE MARITIME INDUSTRY HAS THRIVED** at the site of today's Alameda Marina for 101 years. In 1916 Walter Tibbitts teamed up with J.D. Barnes and J.D.'s sons James and Daniel to form Barnes & Tibbitts Shipbuilding & Drydock Company. They opened offices at 1 Drumm Street in San Francisco and set up shop on the Alameda side of the Oakland Estuary between Grand and Chestnut streets, right next to the Alaska Packers' fleet that had called Alameda "homeport" since 1904.

Walter Tibbitts was born in Maine and raised in the shipbuilding industry. His father, Alpheus Tibbetts, was a successful sailmaker who held a patent on the design of his fore and aft sails. (Walter changed the spelling of the family name from Tibbetts to Tibbitts.)

Walter married Grace Thurber Cilley on September 12, 1893, in Maine. The couple moved to California and settled in Alameda with their family. They lived at 1246 St. Charles Street. Two of their five children survived into adulthood.

Grace came from an interesting family. Her grandfather Jonathon sat in the United States House of Representatives, until he lost his life in a duel. Her father, also named Jonathon, was a decorated Civil War veteran who witnessed first-hand Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox. General Cilley was living in Alameda with the Tibbitts family when he passed away in 1920.

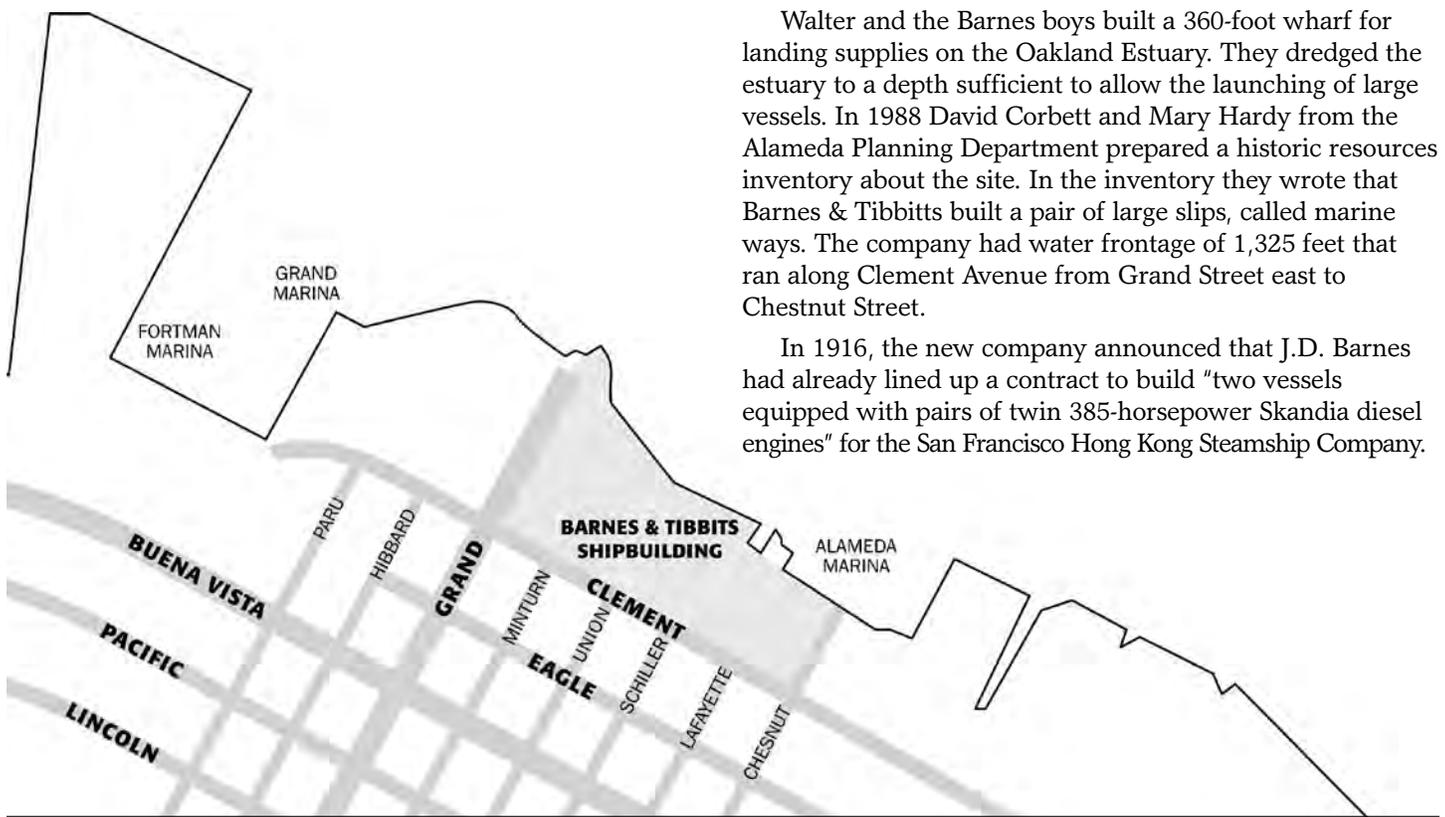


**Foot of Fifth Avenue, 1898** The Alaska Packers began wintering their ships in the Oakland Estuary in 1896. In 1898 Alameda photographer Edgar took his photograph of some of the company's ships. In 1904 the Alaska Packers purchased land at the foot of Grand Street and set up shop there. Image: Edgar Cohen.

Walter Tibbitts first opened the Pacific Shipyards and Ways on land that now houses Bay Ship & Yacht. In 1916, he went into business with the Barnes family. J.D. Barnes owned an established chandlery company on Steuart Street in San Francisco. J.D. and his son James ran the operation. Shipbuilding coursed through the family's blood. J.D.'s second-oldest son, Daniel, earned his living as a ship's carpenter. Daniel had two sons of his own, Charles and James, who worked as a ship joiner and a ship caulker, respectively.

Walter and the Barnes boys built a 360-foot wharf for landing supplies on the Oakland Estuary. They dredged the estuary to a depth sufficient to allow the launching of large vessels. In 1988 David Corbett and Mary Hardy from the Alameda Planning Department prepared a historic resources inventory about the site. In the inventory they wrote that Barnes & Tibbitts built a pair of large slips, called marine ways. The company had water frontage of 1,325 feet that ran along Clement Avenue from Grand Street east to Chestnut Street.

In 1916, the new company announced that J.D. Barnes had already lined up a contract to build "two vessels equipped with pairs of twin 385-horsepower Skandia diesel engines" for the San Francisco Hong Kong Steamship Company.





To get down to business, the company purchased wood-working machinery from companies on the East Coast. Barnes & Tibbitts also acquired machinery from Walter Tibbitts' Pacific Shipyards. Barnes and Tibbitts did business, mostly ship repair, at the Pacific Shipyards site until its Clement Avenue property was ready in 1918.

According to Corbett and Hardy, Barnes & Tibbitts stayed in business for six years. On January 27, 1922, the trade journal *Building and Engineer* announced that George A. Armes, president of the General Engineering Company, had purchased Barnes & Tibbitts for an undisclosed price. According to one report discovered by Corbett and Hardy, J.D. Barnes and Walter Tibbitts remained on the site as either tenants or partners.

Armes had begun working in the maritime trade just two years earlier with a San Francisco machine shop that he owned along with James H. Young and J.F. Mooney. "Armes will head the combined affairs of the entire operations in San Francisco and Alameda," *Building and Engineer* told its readers. "The name of the shipyards will be changed to the General Engineering and Drydock Company."

Armes got down to business and his Alameda shops began turning out diesel-electric vessels for Southern Pacific Railroad's Golden Gate ferries. The ferries that came off Alameda's shipways carried passengers on Golden Gate's San Francisco-Sausalito and San Francisco-Berkeley runs.

Corbett and Hardy tell us that by 1925, the yards at General Engineering included a plate shop, four wharves, and a pair of marine railways. By 1927 General Engineering had grown and its operations included a blacksmith shop,

By 1928, General Engineering owned the Hanlon Dry Dock shipyard at the foot of Fifth Avenue in Oakland. The company operated Hanlon as a repair yard. General

Engineering survived the Great Depression largely by doing boat repairs. When World War II began, the company got contracts to build three types of ships for the Navy: Aloe-class net-laying ships, Auk-class minesweepers and Admirable-class minesweepers

After the war business dried up, in 1946 General Engineering sold its property to the Loyola University Foundation for \$7.5 million, but remained in operation there until the end of 1947. About that time, the Navy purchased the shoreline between Grand and Willow streets from Loyola, 12.5 acres in all.

In 1952 George and Thomas Plant leased the yard from the Navy and used it as a dry dock and for ship repair. Two years later Moore Drydock moved in and built ferry boats that carried passengers from the island of Coronado to San Diego. In 1959 the Navy declared the yard surplus property. By then, the City of Alameda owned 12 acres of adjacent real estate. When the Navy left, the city became the owner of 20 additional acres. Three years later, Pacific Shops, Inc., leased that property from the city and sowed the seeds for the Alameda Marina.

In 1966, the City of Alameda reclaimed the western edge of the old shipyard. Alameda Municipal Power's headquarters occupy that site today. That same year Svend Svendsen moved his business onto the old General Engineering property. Over time the 42-acre site grew to a facility with 530 wet berths, dry boat storage to accommodate more than 700 boats and RV's, as well as office, warehouse and industrial space.

In 2012, the City of Alameda renewed Pacific Shops' lease for 25 more years. Today, Alameda Marina is home to more than 65 businesses. The marina is the only facility accessible to San Francisco Bay with a full-service boatyard, chandlery and sail lofts. Pacific Shops has announced its intention to develop the site.



**Lake Gebhart**

*The Lake Gebhart sits in dry dock at Barnes & Tibbitts. The Gebhart only survived for four years. She was built in Chicago in 1919 and sunk in 1923 after hitting a reef on the way to Alaska. Image: Worth Point.*





**FROM THE COLLECTION**

# Louis Marx the Toy King

by Valerie Turpen

**THE FIRST TOYS** used by early man were generally found objects of stone, wood, or bone, manipulated to represent an animal, tool, or weapon. All of these objects could be thrown or kicked in a game. However, there was not much time for idleness in our ancient ancestor's lives. A day was simply filled with tasks geared toward survival, yet there was the instinct to play.

As humanity progressed, the toy was generally a miniature version of adult life. Girls mimicked their mothers with dolls and cooking devices. Boys imitated their fathers' examples of hunting, warfare, and games of skill and chance. In 2004, archeologists recovered a 4,000 year old stone doll head in the ruins of an Italian village. Believed to be one of the oldest toys in the world, it was buried with a set of small kitchenware.

When the Industrial Revolution rolled around with its advances in technology, and economy (creating the middle-class), tin toys became possible and

profitable. And, there were many new mechanical devices to replicate.

The tin toy became a favorite of toy makers because the material was lightweight, easy to work with, inexpensive, yet holds up under duress.

One of the interesting toys in the Alameda Museum collection is a tin playset called the Roadside Rest Service Station. Circa 1930s, it was manufactured by the Marx Toy Company.

Louis Marx was born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1896 to Austrian Jewish parents. At age 15 he took a job working for Ferdinand Strauss, a manufacturer of mechanical toys. Strauss produced wind-up toys for the Abraham & Strauss Department Stores and was a pioneer in the tin toy industry. But Marx's toy career soon came to a halt when the US entered WWI.

The young man enlisted in the Army, serving until the conflict's end in 1918. Marx's passion for the Army was reflected throughout his life; with most of his military toys representing Army equipment.

Upon his return to civilian life, Marx went to work selling for a Vermont-based manufacturer of wood toys, redesigned the product line, and increased the company's sales tenfold.



Described by many as an experienced businessman with the mind of a child, Louis Marx's ability to see into the minds of children guided his toy creations and advertising efforts.

In 1919 Louis and his brother David incorporated, founding the company that bore their name. Initially working as a middle man, when his former employer, Strauss, fell on hard times, Marx was able to buy the dies for two Strauss toys and turn them into bestsellers. By age 26, three years after founding his company, Marx was a millionaire.

The company's basic aim was to "give the customer more toy for less money," and stressed that "quality is not negotiable," two values that made the company highly successful.

Marx offered a variety of tin vehicles, from carts to dirigibles. The company would lithograph toy patterns on large sheets of tinplated steel. These would then be stamped, die-cut, folded, and assembled. Marx's less expensive toys were extremely common in dime stores, and its larger, costlier toys were staples for catalog retailers such as Sears and Montgomery Ward.

Unlike most companies, Marx's revenues grew during the Great Depression with the establishment of production facilities in economically hard-hit industrial areas of Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and England.

In 1972, at the age of 76, Louis Marx sold his toy company to the Quaker Oats Company. Despite best efforts, no one had the gifted touch of Louis Marx and the company suffered a decline until 1980 when the last Marx plant closed in West Virginia.

*Information from: Marx Toy Museum*

*Marx often revamped old toy designs to incorporate characters that were popular at the moment. These two attendants have a strong resemblance to Laurel and Hardy.*



*The Roadside Rest Service Station had gas pumps, gas cans, a motor oil cart and an open-air kitchen with a dining counter. The service ramp for the car is missing from the set. The gas pumps originally had light bulbs that screwed into the top illuminating the scene.*

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# Alameda in the News

## What was happening in the Island City in 1906

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From *The Encinal* and *Argus* newspapers

**The Aeolian Yacht Club** is the newest organization in Alameda boating circles. The club was organized at a recent meeting held on board the ark *Bugaboo* in San Leandro Bay. Herbert Hauser is temporary president, and Edward F. Evans is temporary secretary. Thirty members have enrolled.

The club's first cruise and jinks will include a clambake to be held on the Bay Farm Island sandhills. Ten sailboats and launches are enrolled in the club. Laurance C. Knight was unanimously elected temporary commodore.



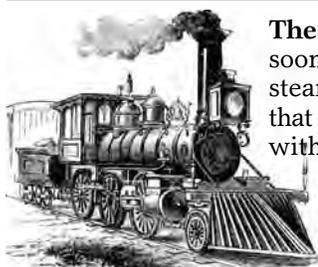
In other boating news, thousands of spectators gathered on the banks of Lake Merritt to witness the championship rowing races, where the **Alameda Boating Club** carried off the honors of the day, winning both barge and skiff events, and the **Encinal Yacht Club** held its annual regatta at its clubhouse at the foot of Grand Street. Over 900 people attended to watch and take part in swimming, sailing, water polo, and canoeing events.

The circus arrived back in town in August. This year it was the **Adam Forepaugh and Sells Brothers Circus**. The circus train arrived in the morning, and a record crowd was on hand as it paraded down Park Street to its lot at the foot of Oak Street. Afternoon and evening performances are scheduled, and schools will be let out a half-day for the afternoon show.



The contract for a new steamer for the **Key Route** to replace the *Claremont*, recently destroyed by fire, has been awarded to John W. Dickie, and it will be built at the Dickie yards in Alameda. Dickie built the hull that was destroyed. Motors and shafting escaped harm and will be installed in the new hull as soon as possible.

Nightly band concerts in front of the **Park Theater** will be given before each performance, from 7:15 till 8:00 p.m. The band will be composed of Alameda musicians. Paul Tereux will conduct.

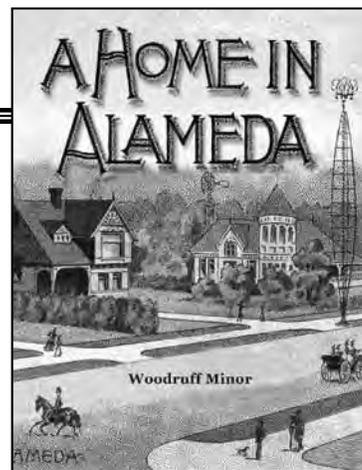


**The Southern Pacific Company** has declared that it will soon convert all lines leading to the Alameda Mole from steam to electricity. "The company proposes to convert that system," said the paper, "into a modern electric railway, with modern equipment of cars, motors, and the like.

The work will undoubtedly be commenced in a relatively short time, if the predictions of those in close touch with the company can be believed."

**The Alaska Packers' Association** is moving all of its operations into Alameda. A channel is being dredged to the company's property at the foot of Nautilus Street, consisting of 25 acres, with 3,700 feet of waterfront. The land surrounds three sides of a basin of about 40 or 50 acres which will shelter the company's fleet of seventeen sailing vessels and fifty-seven steamers during the winter.

President H.F. Fortman, in an interview, said, "In the course of a year, we handle about 75,000 tons of cargo. This includes the salmon pack brought here and the tin plate." He also said that the company employs about 7,000 men, and that the depot for much of the supplies they require will be here. About 300 additional men will be given constant employment. "This is one of the largest waterfront realty deals chronicled in a long time," said the *Encinal*, "and it means the bringing to this city one of the largest industries on the coast."



## ON THE PRESS

### A Home in Alameda

showcases the architectural firms of Joseph A. Leonard and Marcuse & Rimmel, renowned builders of Leonardville and Bay Station neighborhoods.

The latest edition has updates on recently restored residences.

Available soon at the Alameda Museum or in the online store at [alamedamuseum.org](http://alamedamuseum.org)

**ON SALE \$15**  
includes sales tax

# Docent Dossiers

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

**Jessica Lindsey** was born and raised in San Francisco. "I loved growing up in the City because there were so many activities to do with my friends: museums, movie theaters, tourist attractions, concerts, parks, playgrounds, shopping and lots of great restaurants."

In 2000 Jessica moved to Alameda with her husband, Mel. "We were very lucky to move here almost 17 years ago," she notes, "when Alameda was still a hidden gem." Although Jessica grew up only 10 miles away, in San Francisco, she had only been here once! "Since then we've gotten a fantastic movie theater and library and many more places to eat and drink – including wineries, breweries and distilleries at Alameda Point; and play at the Pinball Museum and indoor mini golf. The downside is the traffic congestion which, sadly, is getting increasingly worse."



▲ Jessica poses with one of the Alameda Museum's newest treasures to move from the warehouse to the gallery, a Spark stove from the 1920s. Image: Evelyn Kennedy.

Jessica loves learning about American Popular Culture, architecture and collecting antiques and ephemera from the 1940s to the 1980s. "I am a huge garage sale enthusiast and met Adam Gillitt at an estate sale that was sponsored by the museum. When I mentioned that I was a collector, with many Alameda artifacts, he suggested volunteering as a docent, which sounded fun. Plus, I was (and still am) hoping I could use my expertise to help with any future sales." She also loves learning about Alameda's colorful past and being a docent at the museum gives her the opportunity to meet and interact with people with similar interests.

"As a Pop Culture Collector with way too many treasures in my home, my husband decided to build a website, [kookykitsch.com](http://kookykitsch.com), so I could sell off my "extras." Since moving to Alameda, I have been a vendor at Lost City Antiques at 1519 Park Street (formerly Alameda Antiques and then Park Street Antiques) where I sell an eclectic mix of vintage clothing, Hawaiian and tiki barware, mid-century art, kitchenware, jewelry, toys, games and miscellaneous kitschy collectibles.



▲ Charlie Howell at the Meyers House Architectural Exhibit. Image: V. Turpen.

**Charlie Howell** is a docent at the Meyers House, the Alameda Museum, and served on the museum Board of Directors. Charlie came to the west coast from Arizona while serving in the US Navy at Hunter's Point. A friend's wife, who was a terminal matchmaker thought he should meet her friend Gail.

Through that connection Charlie became well acquainted with Alameda, as Gail had grown up here. Previously, Charlie had made the trek to NAS Alameda once when he came with naval binoculars and telescopes to be repaired.

The couple was married at Christ Episcopal Church at Santa Clara Avenue and Grand Street in 1971. However, they drove back across the bridge and spent the next 40 years residing in San Francisco.

In 2006 Charlie and Gail returned to the island for a longer stay, moving into Gail's family home—a George Noble bungalow on Verdi Street. Soon they were hanging out with people with the same interests—historic homes, home tours, and Woody Walks.

Charlie has always had a love of history, especially architecture, stemming from the years residing in San Francisco. But, being involved with museums was not a new passion. After his military service he worked as the Assistant Operations Manager for the Cantor Art Center at Stanford University for ten years.

When asked what he liked best about being a docent Charlie replied, "The joy that people get from seeing the Meyers House and that it has been saved as a museum."



## VOLUNTEERS: ALAMEDA MUSEUM & MEYERS HOUSE & GARDEN

- |                      |                             |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Margaretha Augustine | Evelyn Kennedy              |
| Chad Barr            | Julie Kennedy               |
| Olivia Bauman        | Carole King                 |
| Margie Benko         | Mary Lou Kurtz              |
| Ginnie Boscacci      | Jessica Lindsey             |
| Gene Calhoun         | Gayle Macaitis              |
| Dora Calhoun         | Nancy Martin                |
| Janine Carr          | Jeannie McCaffery           |
| Katherine Cavanaugh  | Carla McGrogan              |
| Barbara Coapman      | Jim McGrogan                |
| Cathy Conley         | Joanne McKay                |
| Charles Daly         | Chuck Millar                |
| Lin Datz             | Lloyd Novakowski            |
| Robbie Dileo         | Carl Ramos                  |
| Ross Dileo           | Shirley Ramos               |
| Marilyn Dodge        | Virginia Rivera             |
| Linda Domholt        | Holly Schmalenberger-Haugen |
| Joanne Dykema        | Rasheed Shabazz             |
| Dennis Evanosky      | Margy Silver                |
| Tom Faulds           | Virgil Silver               |
| Pamela Ferrero       | Jim Smallman                |
| Adam Gillitt         | Trish Herrera Spencer       |
| Debra Hilding        | Ellen Tilden                |
| Charlie Howell       | Gerry Warner                |
| Gail Howell          | Robert Welch                |
| Virginia Jones       | Helen Wittman               |
| Charles Kahler       | Joe Young                   |

*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**  
Evelyn Kennedy  
volunteer@alamedamuseum.org  
510-504-5612

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

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### New & Renewed Membership

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- The satisfaction of supporting local artists and students

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*\*Person who resides with a paid Adult Member at same address, also gets voting privilege.*

**To pay by credit card visit alamedamuseum.org**

Make check payable to: Alameda Museum  
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**2324 Alameda Avenue, Alameda, CA 94501**

Dues Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Meyers House and Garden  Alameda Museum

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E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

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# What's New at the Meyers House



## Where Do the Contents of a Museum Come From?

by Valerie Turpen

**A**cross the United States museums are visited 850 million times a year, according to the American Association of Museums. Most of these patrons roaming the halls of history, art, and industry do not think about where the contents of the collection came from. Acquiring museum pieces requires a little more thought than taking a donation box, labeling the contents, and placing it on a shelf. First the curator (ours is George Gunn) accesses the

donation for its historical relevance to the museum collection and insures the exhibit the public views is an object of interest and quality.

In the case of the Meyers House, the daughters of Henry Meyers, Edith, Jeanette, and Mildred, bequeathed the house and property to the City of Alameda. Opening as a museum in 1998 the intent was to "Give the impression," said George Gunn, "that the Meyers sisters have just walked down the street to go shopping – they have left the doors open and invited you into their home." Although a good deal of the contents belonged to the Meyers family this is not the case with everything. Many pieces came from the Alameda Museum collection. What the museum has in its archives are objects from Alameda families important to the history of the city.



*The basement of the Meyers House has displays featuring furniture and memorabilia from other Alameda locations. This Victrola phonograph came from M. Franck & Sons, a music store on Park Street. Today the storefront is home to Tucker's Ice Cream. Images: Turpen.*

The museum depends on donations of historic value from patrons to maintain the history of the city for generations to come. Often visitors come to the Alameda Museum with a box of goods retrieved from an Alameda basement or attic for donation. It is important for the museum to know who the items belonged to and any history attached. Although the contents may be vintage, the determining factor of whether the contents are delegated to the museum gift shop or whether it goes into a display case is the historic relevance to Alameda.

If you have items of historical value you would like to donate to the museum, please call to arrange a review. The gift shop accepts donations for resale and the museum also handles estate sales. Donations are tax deductible.

**For more information about donations contact George Gunn at 510-521-1233.**



*This 19th century settee once graced the parlor of the Fenn family, longtime owners of a home near the Meyers House. It was donated to the museum by the estate when the residence was sold.*



## THANK YOU

### FOR SUPPORTING THE ALAMEDA MUSEUM

OUR APRIL & MAY LECTURES  
ARE SPONSORED BY:



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To sponsor a museum lecture call  
Valerie Turpen at 510-522-3734  
or email [v.turpen@att.net](mailto:v.turpen@att.net)  
Sponsorships are \$150

# Alameda Museum Lecture Series 2017

### ❖ **APRIL 27 Alameda's Hometown Hero – Jimmy Doolittle**

Presented by Secretary of the Alameda Naval Air Museum, Robbie Dileo and AM President, Dennis Evanosky. This year is the 75th anniversary of the raid on Tokyo following the bombing of Pearl Harbor by Japan. Led by American aviation pioneer James H. Doolittle the mission was carried out by crews aboard 16 B-25 bombers launched from the *USS Hornet* (CV-8). Learn about Doolittle's youth in Alameda, his mission to bomb Japan, and his return to Alameda as a celebrated hero. *Sponsor: Alameda Naval Air Museum.*

### ❖ **MAY 25 Alameda Legends: Over 100 Years of Alameda Sports History**

Former Alameda resident James Francis McGee, a product of private and public schools in the Island City, will speak about his newest book, *Alameda Legends*, detailing the lives who have impacted Alameda's sports history. It is a work that honors the past and looks optimistically to the future. McGee will profile various famous Alameda residents from the past and present as he intertwines fate, fame, and the fortuitous fortune of his respectfully named "Legends." *Sponsor: Pacific Coast Community Services.*

### ❖ **JUNE 22 Early Alameda, the Hayloft, and the First Congregational Church**

This architectural gem is the 5th oldest church in Alameda. Ann Beret Johnsen is a 4th generation Alamedan and lives in the family home on Alameda Avenue established in 1881 by her great-grandparents. Her mother Shirley acted as family historian caring for family records, movies, and letters. Ann grew up hearing family stories, which sparked an interest in family and community history. Attending First Congregational Church since she was born, she was asked to serve as Church Historian by the Rev. Larry Schulz a task she enjoys, assisted by Ginny Krutilek, another native Alamedan. *Sponsor: Liz Rush, Realtor, McGuire Real Estate.*

### ❖ **JULY 27 The African American Community in Alameda**

Rasheed Shabazz, Alameda Museum Docent will enlighten us on early settlers in Alameda. *Sponsor: Evelyn Kennedy, Alain Pinel Realtors, and Alameda Museum Board Member.*

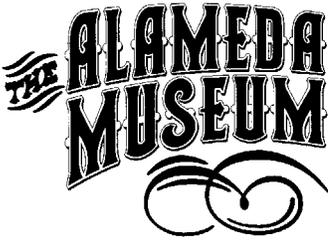
### ❖ **AUGUST 24 '20s and Beyond**

Alameda author and historian Woody Minor will speak about homes of the '20s and later in the richly intact neighborhoods of the southeast section of the city. We will see how the bungalow evolved after World War I, interacting with new styles, and witness the Ranch House emerge on the eve of World War II. Among the notable builders whose work we will encounter are the aristocrats George H. Noble, Noble F. Justice, and P. Royal Haulman along with the incomparable Sid Dowling. *Sponsor: Peter Fletcher, Broker, Windermere Real Estate.*

### ❖ **SEPTEMBER 28 European Roots**

Dennis Evanosky and Eric J. Kos, authors and *Alameda Sun* executives. On July 17, 1854, Alfred A. Cohen married Emma Grace Poole Gibbons. The couple moved to Alameda and established an estate on the East End they named Fernside. Alfred and Emma can both trace their ancestry to England. Their colorful forebears include a man who owned slaves in Jamaica and another who sat on the jury of the only witch trial in Pennsylvania. Join Eric and Dennis as they introduce these interesting families and trace their stories from California back six generations to Wilshire and London in England. *Sponsor: Evelyn Kennedy, Alain Pinel Realtors, and Alameda Museum Board Member.*

*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. For information check [alamedamuseum.org](http://alamedamuseum.org) for updates or call 510-748-0796.*



FOUNDED IN 1948  
2324 Alameda Avenue  
Alameda CA 94501

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- *Louis Max Toy King*
- *Docent Dossiers*
- *What's New at the Meyers House*
- *Alameda Lecture Series 2017*

**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**

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**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**

**alamedamuseum.org**

# DOCENT LUNCHEON

## April 29 at Noon

**Pier 29 Restaurant  
1148 Ballena Boulevard  
Alameda, CA**

This year we would like to simply celebrate YOU our treasured Docents & Volunteers of the Alameda Museum and Meyers House.

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Without you our organization would not be able to open the doors and present the history of our Island City to the public.

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**Information will be sent from the Docent Coordinator Evelyn Kennedy.**

**If you would like to bring a guest who is not a docent the luncheon fee is \$15 per person.**