

# Alameda Museum

# Quarterly

## HOME TOUR A SUCCESS— ARTISTICALLY AND FINANCIALLY

by Robbie Dileo

**O**VER 100 DOCENTS STAFFED EIGHT HOMES with help from House Captains that lent pen to paper helping write the stories that appeared in the *Legacy Guidebook*. The guidebooks were brilliantly designed and proofread by Valerie Turpen who also provided historical background peppered with tidbits on architectural details from Curator George Gunn.

Dennis Evanoski, editor of *The Alameda Sun*, provided the excellent opening article. Homeowners filled in our questionnaires and then opened their doors to the public, showcasing the restoration journey taken to become a place of architectural interest, but more importantly, a home for their family. Whimsical Designs provided beautiful fall floral arrangements at each location and Urban Forest framed the thank you certificates.

The story of Maria and Doug Love's house was personal, because we've been neighbors, so-to-speak, living across from Maria's father on Alameda Avenue. 25+ years of holiday parties, watching our families grow, then having Maria and Doug take over as 4th generation owners of the San Antonio house made the tour

experience extra fun. My family were docents along with neighbors Dede Cunningham and daughter Chloe as house captains.

The Smallman house on Clinton at Lafayette was another almost 30 years in the making architectural victory. Jim's retirement, patience, dedication, and some investment funds resulted in a stucco monstrosity turning into an elegant Victorian-era gem. I'm reminded one should not prejudge a house by its exterior—the interior was always amazing and original. But now it has some modern



*This stately Queen Anne was built for the family of Frederick F. Kessing in 1893.*



*Jeannie Graham serves with Bob Lynch of Irish Monkey Cellars who donated wine for the occasion. Catering was done by Little House Cafe. Photo: Robbie Dileo.*

Continued on page 2 . . .



**House Tour . . . Continued from page 1**

indulgences like a tasteful new kitchen respecting the home's past and fresh paint throughout.

Then there was the random call from Oregon in May that turned out to be a relative of the original owners of Brian Geasa's home at 1430 Santa Clara. It was straight from the "Outer Limits" but added an interesting twist (see story page 12). At tour end, we celebrated with a party for homeowners and staff catered by ALHT sponsor Little House Cafe. Thank you ALL for participating in our mission to educate and promote our wonderful island's architectural legacy.



*Above: Bill Galli, Lifemember and Docent, celebrates a glass of wine with Diane Coler-Dark, who answered the calls and questions about tour tickets and manned the sales table at Franklin Park.*

*Below: Docents Claudia Bermúdez and Brion Wikes view the festivities from the balcony.*



**I WOULD LIKE TO THANK**

everyone who participated in this year's Alameda Legacy Home Tour on Sunday, September 26th. The homeowners, volunteers, tour attendees and sponsor Perforce Foundation/Little House Cafe all contributed to make this important fundraiser for the Alameda Museum and the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society a very successful event. Two home tour committee members, Robbie Dileo and Valerie Turpen, deserve special recognition for their tireless work on this year's tour.

If anyone is interested in joining our home tour committee to help plan and organize next year's home tour, we hold our meetings on the second Wednesday of the month at the Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Avenue at 7:00 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for January 12th.

Have a home to suggest for being on ALHT 2011 tour or want to volunteer for the committee? Contact me evenings at home, after 5:00 pm, 510-521-9177 or at [chuck-birgitt@comcast.net](mailto:chuck-birgitt@comcast.net)

**Chuck Millar**  
**2010 ALHT Chair**



*Left: Maria Love and daughter Mary, owners of House #5.*

*Below: Museum President Robbie Dileo at the party after a busy day.*



*Below: Docents Liz Rush, Rosemary McNally, Valerie Turpen, and homeowner Mary Fetherolf relax after enjoying the tour.*





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

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

**COMMUNICATIONS STAFF**

Contributors: George Gunn, Robbie Dileo, Ron Ucovich, Kin Robles, and Judith Lynch.  
Editor: Ron Ucovich  
Proofreader: Robbie Dileo  
Designer: Valerie Turpen

**MUSEUM DIRECTORS 2010**

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

THANKS TO OUR CORPORATE SPONSORS



Alameda's only locally owned and operated newspaper



# Boy Scouts Honored

**THE ALAMEDA COUNCIL CELEBRATED** the 100th anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America with a month-long exhibit at the Alameda Museum during October. The installation highlighted the 95 years of Scouting in Alameda and included historical displays, a model campsite and memorabilia from local Scouting units.

The Alameda Council BSA is the largest youth serving organization in our community and presently serves over 3,200 youth in Alameda and is supported by over 450 adult volunteers. Cub Scout Packs (for boys ages 7-10), Boy Scout Troops (for boys ages 11-17) and Venture Crews (for boys AND girls ages 14-21) are established across our community and always eager for new members. Information on a unit near you is available at 510-522-2772 or www.bsa-alameda.org

**Scouting For Food**, which supports the Alameda Food Bank, is scheduled for November and is the largest collection of food in our community annually. Please help local families in need by contributing non-perishable foods on Saturday, November 20 (Scouts will pick-up donations from your doorstep between 8:30-11:30 am).



Three generations of Alameda Scouting enjoy the opening reception at the Alameda Museum Scouting Centennial Exhibit. Left to right: Dick Anderson, Toby Anderson and Sam Anderson. Photo: Patrick Kenney.



# Make Sure Not to Miss This Opportunity

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL SEASON AND ELECTION OF DIRECTORS** is just around the corner. Look for a special mailing with coupon to renew and space for recommending people you feel will help further the goals of our organization. There will be a couple of open director positions to fill—new people bring fresh ideas.

Everybody is encouraged to join the fund raising or home tour committees or become a docent if a smaller role is more to your taste. Every *Alameda Museum Quarterly* issue includes a page (see page 9) to become a member of the Museum and the Meyers House Guild, or contribute to the rent subsidy matching grant with the City that we call "Bang for the Buck".

This issue features a full page (see page 10) to let members know that \$3,800 is available, provided we first raise that amount from donations specifically for that purpose. If EVERY MEMBER gives an extra \$10, by December 31st, we will achieve that goal. Rent is our largest expense—\$62,000 per year. The City contributes \$42,000 and will give us the additional \$3,800 in a matching grant.

**Let's make sure we don't miss this opportunity. Renew today—say YES to being a matching grant donor.**



## From the Curator's Desk

by George C. Gunn

Thanks to all who made the latest home tour a financial and artistic success. A very attractive and informative booklet was given to each patron attending the tour, and was used as an entrance ticket to each home. This handsome publication created by Valerie Turpen, a graphic designer, added greatly to the professionalism of the tour. Our own Robbie Dileo spent hours on various aspects of operation logistics making this event a success. Chuck Millar of the Board of Directors, along with his helpers, hauled and assembled the tables, furniture and fixtures used that day.

During August and September, the museum co-hosted the Annual Sports Exhibit created by board member Dewey St. Germaine, and Brian McDonald. It was an excellent and definitive exhibit and was frequented and enjoyed by many.

Following this event, a display honoring the founding of the Alameda branch of the Boy Scouts was exhibited. Under the guidance of Patrick Kenney with his volunteers, many objects, including a recreation of a camping site, plus various uniforms and equipment were displayed.

*George C. Gunn*  
Curator, Alameda Museum

## ALAMEDA MUSEUM LEGACY SOCIETY



**Notify us of your future bequest and the museum will honor you with a Life Membership and place your name on the ALAMEDA MUSEUM LEGACY SOCIETY PLAQUE in the Alameda Museum.**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL 510-523-5907.**

■ **LEAVE A GIFT IN YOUR WILL** for the nonprofit and charitable organizations that make a difference in your life. Less than 6% of American households have included nonprofits in their estate plan even though many of these households support and care about these organizations during their lifetime. Imagine the positive impact on our community if everyone made a donation to support their favorite nonprofit organization.



## A Closer Look

by Ron Ucovich

**WHEN VISITORS ENTER OUR MUSEUM**, the first item that catches their attention is the high-wheel bicycle. They want to know why is one wheel so big and the other so small? ...how do you get on the thing? ...did people get injured frequently? ...was it used for transportation or for stunt driving?

The very first bicycle was created in Germany in 1817. The construction was similar to that of a wheel barrow: it had a wooden frame and heavy steel wheels. The rider sat astride a wooden rail and pushed the vehicle along with his feet (much as you would a scooter), and he steered the front wheel.

This primitive vehicle was first called a *hobby horse*. In Old English, a work horse was called a *hobbín* (in America, a *dobbin*). A horse that was too small to do any work, and you just kept it for amusement, was called a *hobby*. This is why non-productive pastimes are called hobbies. So a "hobby horse" simply meant a horse you rode just for fun.

In the early 1860s a Frenchman named Pierre Michaux changed the wooden frame to tubular steel, enlarged the front wheel, and added a pedal crank for propulsion. This was called an *ordinary* bicycle. The French word "ordinaire" means used by the common people, as opposed to royalty. The design was good, but the bicycle was slow, and it was very heavy.

Originally spokes were designed to carry weight by compression. The big change in bicycle wheels came when spokes were redesigned to carry weight by tension. Steel is much stronger under tension than compression, so spokes could be made thinner and lighter. The weight of the rider,



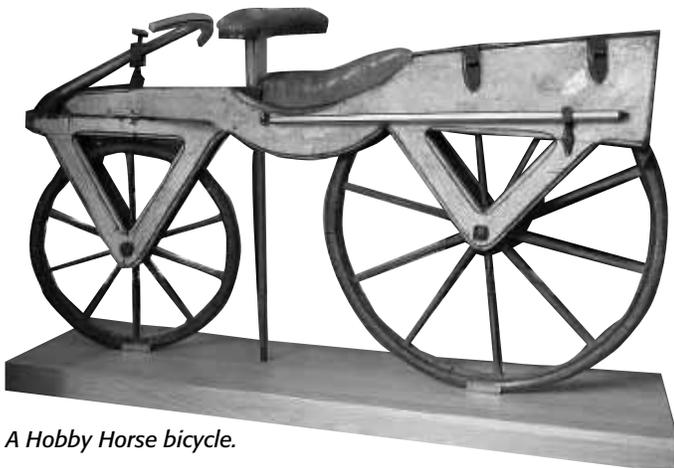
*The museum's Ordinary bicycle also known as a Penny-farthing in England.*

now, was not pushing from the axle to the ground, but rather hanging from the top of the wheel. Crisscrossing the spokes gave the wheel rotary strength.

With slender spokes the wheel was very light-weight. Before a chain-and-sprocket gear system was invented, the rotation speed was increased by using a short pedal crank and a large wheel. The larger the wheel, the faster you could travel. The rear wheel was very small since it was the coaster wheel; the front was the drive wheel. In England this bicycle was called a *penny-farthing* comparing the wheel sizes to a penny (a large coin) next to a farthing (a small coin).

To mount the bicycle, you had to run next to it, then put your left foot on the peg and swing your right leg over the seat. You did the reverse to dismount. This was not difficult to do as long as you were rolling. Problems occurred when you stopped unexpectedly. If you fell off the bicycle, you couldn't protect yourself by extending your leg. You would extend both hands as you hit the ground, invariably breaking both your wrists. This type of accident was called *taking a header*.

By the early 1900s, chains and sprockets were used to achieve speed. Bicycle races and daredevil stunts became popular. There was one stunt which was particularly spectacular. The rider would speed into a circular track, roll completely upside down, and exit right side up. This stunt was called *loop the loop*. A new word was coined then: whenever a person had too much to drink and was unstable on his feet, they would say he was *looped*.



*A Hobby Horse bicycle.*



## From the President's Desk

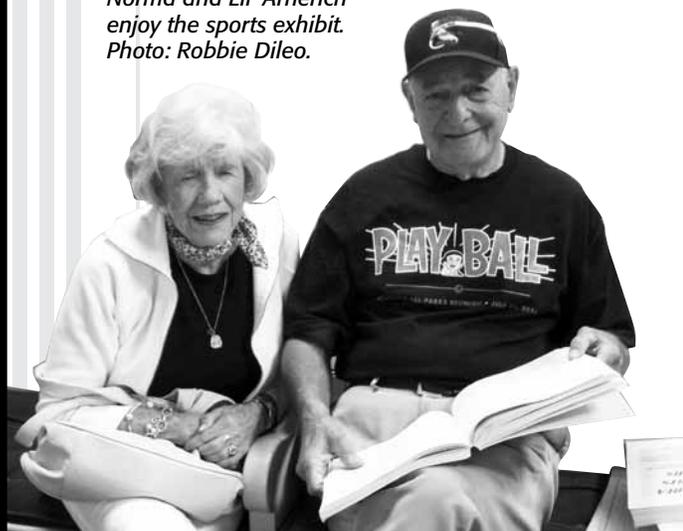
by Robbie Dileo



es, it was quite a summer and fall is here. The September 26th home tour was a great success—a lot of work by dedicated volunteers and very generous homeowners. The lecture series ended—another wonderful season—thanks to Judith Lynch and her marvelous band of raconteurs. Two presentations shared the art gallery while the 2nd Annual Sports Exhibit wrapped up its run that began mid-August. How could we have known that “Play Ball” would mean so much with the SF Giants in the World Series!

Director Dewey St. Germaine and friend Brian McDonald of the AlamedaSportsProject.com created a larger and more exciting sports display than last year. Several items were added from the Museum's collection. Excellent publicity resulted in a well attended opening reception with great food (I catered) and drink to compliment the outstanding exhibit and opening speeches. Lil' Arnerich was pleased to be featured on the cover of the just published Summer *Alameda Museum Quarterly* and beamed proudly while pointing to items he provided from his personal collection. AND, proving that all their sports memorabilia was NOT in the museum gallery or ALL that they collected, Brian and wife Keri Spaulding graciously opened their home for the ALHT.

*Norma and Lil' Arnerich enjoy the sports exhibit.  
Photo: Robbie Dileo.*



*The gallery was packed with fans at the 2nd Annual Sports Exhibit reception August 21st. Photo: Robbie Dileo.*

On a sad note, my father and best buddy—who lived with me—took ill the day after ALHT ended. His medical ailment would have required hospitalization and invasive surgery—something that he refused to undergo. Per dad's wishes, his doctor's understanding, and morphine for pain, he died peacefully at home October 1st, with me by his side. Ross, the kids and I are doing fine, but lectures won't be the same without his help putting away the chairs or his avid interest in the next museum event.

Others in the museum family have also had recent losses. Director Ginger Schuler's mother died after a long illness and then her cousin unexpectedly passed a few days later. Brian McDonald's mother died just before the home tour. I write this not for getting sympathy, but because it's important to remember our loved ones, to soldier forth, and then to consider a donation to Alameda Museum in honor of family and their memory. The Legacy Society is available for those who wish to make a bequest to the museum in their will while still alive. Besides updating my own bequest, I will be making a donation in Jim Kilpatrick's name because he appreciated what we provide to the community. Consider doing the same for your friends, family, and put Alameda Museum in your own will so it can survive to be at least 88 years old—like my dad—a goal I hope to see myself.

*President, Alameda Museum*



# He Changed America

by Ron Ucovich

**HE WAS BORN FRANÇOIS HENRI LALANNE**, but his friends all called him Jack. As a boy, growing up in Berkeley, he was puny and sickly. His diet was terrible... full of sugar, fat, and junk food. In school he couldn't concentrate. His grades were low. He was nervous and irritable. Finally, a doctor suggested that his diet might be the cause of his poor health. He started to read about diet and exercise, and he decided right then that this would be his goal in life. He joined the Berkeley YMCA and soon became obsessed with health and exercise.

He graduated from Berkeley High School in 1932, and he then enrolled in Oakland Chiropractic College. He received his degree in chiropractic medicine, but his approach was unique: he wanted to prevent disease, rather than cure it.



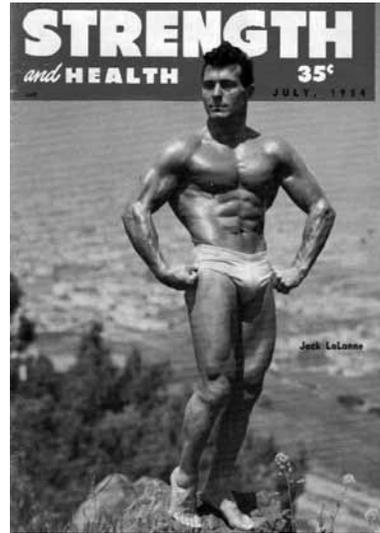
Bodybuilding, in the early 1900s, was virtually unknown. Weightlifting was practiced by only a few musclemen who would demonstrate feats of strength in carnival sideshows. Gymnasiums were places for competitive sports, not for fitness development. Jack used his backyard in Berkeley as a gymnasium. He had an assortment of barbells and dumbbells which the neighborhood athletes used to build up their strength and stamina.

Jack then had some revolutionary ideas. He encouraged women to exercise. This idea was ridiculed by society. People thought that women would become muscle-bound freaks, and would lose their femininity. So, to encourage women to exercise, Jack developed some machines which used pulleys, cables, and adjustable counterweights so people of all ages and abilities could use the same equipment. In 1936 Jack opened the first body fitness gymnasium in the world. It had separate areas for men, women, and kids. The word "gymnasium" scared most people, so he called it Jack's Physical Culture Studio.

It was at this studio that Jack met his future wife, Elaine. Soon, they were married, and they moved to Alameda to start a family. They found a perfect home. It was on Mound Street, just across the street from Krusi Park. This was perfect because Jack encouraged the people of the neighborhood to join him in using the park equipment for exercise.

Since public gymnasiums did not exist then, the only exercise equipment available was in public playgrounds. They had balance beams, horizontal bars, ladder bars,

parallel bars, pommel horses, swing rings, and chain rings. Nowadays, par courses have generally replaced the gym equipment in public parks. The problem is that you need sand under the equipment as a shock absorber when you fall, and ADA does not allow sand in playgrounds because it is not wheelchair-friendly.



Jack lived in Alameda during the 1940s. After WWII, broadcast television was introduced, and Jack thought this would be the perfect medium to reach thousands of women all across the nation. He moved to Hollywood in 1951, and *The Jack LaLanne Show* was aired for the first time. Instead of the traditional shorts and tee shirt, Jack wore ballet tights and slippers. He taught

exercising as though he were teaching a dance class. In those days, body parts could not be mentioned on public television, so Jack had to invent a whole new vocabulary. He created euphemisms such as front porch, back porch, spare tire, and saddlebags.

Jack's sponsor was Yammy Yogurt. Yogurt was not a popular food then because of its flavor, so Jack suggested that people puree fresh fruits and add them to the yogurt. Yammy was the first company to sell flavored yogurt. Jack was also the first person to advertise whole-wheat bread. He warned against the danger of eating what he called "balloon bread."



Jack's ingenuity was boundless. He created numerous exercise devices, such as the Glamour Stretcher. He wrote books, sold vitamin supplements, and designed kitchen appliances.

Most people don't remember when Jack lived in Alameda, but many may recall his publicity stunts which he used to perform every year to promote his gymnasium. He started by swimming from Alcatraz to San Francisco, which at that time was considered impossible. Then, he did it handcuffed. The next year he did it towing a row boat. Every year he tried to outdo himself... he had no other competition.



## What's New at the Meyers House & Gardens

**OCTOBER MARKED THE END OF THE SEASON** for MHG because the 4th Saturdays in November and December are holiday weekends. The Meyers House Guild is a special membership category that helps fund maintenance and improvements. We hope to paint the basement and mount a Meyers sister clothing exhibit next spring. There's also a better entry door planned for the Architectural Exhibit. Consider joining the Guild for \$25 per year to help make these projects possible. Joining now will give you free visits to regular and special openings of the house through 2011. Checks are made payable to Meyers House Guild and mailed to the museum.

**A GROUP OF 48 SENIORS** from St. Gerard's Women's Club in San Lorenzo visited the MHG October 11th by special arrangement. The afternoon weather could not have been more ideal. Jane Burgelin and her team of docents gave them the full tour and showed a picture slide show of the house, studio, architecture exhibit and the 2007 wedding gown exhibit to those that did not want to go up the stairs or were tired of walking – they had been to other places and lunch earlier. One of the ladies worked with the McConaghy House in San Leandro. She said that we were extremely lucky to have so many beautiful items donated to our house, as they haven't been so fortunate. It made us very proud. The house is definitely the genius inspiration of George Gunn and his keen eye finding things to add to the displays. The minimum fee to open for a special group tour is \$150. Depending on the number of people, plan at least an hour or more. **Call Jane at 510-865-3402 to discuss details.**

## VOLUNTEERS: ALAMEDA MUSEUM & MEYERS HOUSE & GARDENS

- Lou Baca
- Barbara Balderston
- Doris Bay
- Jane Burgelin
- Katherine Cavanaugh
- Ellen Chesnut
- Barbara Coapman
- Dorothy Coats
- Diane Coler-Dark
- Charles Daly
- Robbie Dileo
- Ross Dileo
- Marilyn Dodge
- Roni Dodson
- Joanne Dykema
- Caroline Erickson
- June Feder
- Pamela Ferrero
- Blake Francis
- Jeanne Gallagher
- Bonnie Germaine
- Barbara Gibson
- George Gunn
- Leslie Hawksbee
- Debra Hilding
- Lois J. Hoffman
- Mary Lee Keifer
- Julie Kennedy
- James A. Korn
- Flora Larson
- Gayle Macaitis
- Carla McGrogan
- James McGrogan
- Joanne McKay
- Stephanie Paula
- Susan Potter
- Darlene Pottsgeiser
- Virginia Rivera
- Lucy Rocha
- Betty Saunders
- Norma Serles
- Margy Silver
- Virgil Silver
- Lois Singley
- Marcy Skala
- Lavonne Stittle
- Wanda Thatcher
- Ellen Tilden
- Ron Ucovich
- Henry Villareal
- Mark White
- Joe Young
- Every Director

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

**Docent coordinator for main museum**

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

# JOIN ALAMEDA MUSEUM

Preserving the Past for the Future  
for over 60 Years

Your Annual Membership helps:

- Fund Children Programs
- Support Local Artists
- Free Monthly Lectures
- Receive *Alameda Museum Quarterly*
- Free Meyers House Pass (new members only)

For more information call 510-523-5907  
or visit [www.alamedamuseum.org](http://www.alamedamuseum.org)

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.

- \$30 Adult
- \$20 2nd Household Member\*
- \$20 Senior
- \$15 Docent/Volunteer
- \$250 Business Member
- \$500 Lifetime Member  
(one payment only, for life of the member)

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

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

Dues Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Additional Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_



## MEYERS HOUSE GUILD

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

For more information call Jane 510-865-3402.

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



**Thank you for your support!**

Make check payable to Meyers House Guild.

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

Annual Guild Membership \$25

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

Additional Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to:

- Be a Docent
- Garden
- Clean & Maintain Artifacts
- Help with Special Events
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

# BANG

**CITY  
MATCHING GRANT  
RENT DRIVE:  
DOUBLE YOUR  
DONATION!**

# FOR THE BUCK!

**The City of Alameda will match donations that exceed donations in the Museum's 2006 fiscal year, up to \$3,848.**

**The Museum must raise over \$16,000 per year in addition to the \$40,000 normal operating expenses. Donations of \$3,848 plus the City matching funds equals only half of what we need to raise. All donations really help the Museum to survive.**

**Before December 31** Please send in the coupon below with your donation and double the bang for your bucks!

\$25 becomes **\$50.**  
\$100 is **\$200.**  
\$1000 equals **\$2000.**  
We like to **think big** when it comes to keeping **Alameda Museum** functioning as a valuable resource.



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

Yes, I want to double my donation for the Alameda Museum.

Enclosed is my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, it is okay to list my name in the next Quarterly as a **Museum Rent Drive/ Double the Bang for the Buck** supporter.

Tax ID# 942464751



# How Come There is no Park on Park Street?...

by Ron Ucovich

...NO COURT ON COURT STREET?... no college on College Avenue?...no fountain on Fountain Street?... no peaches on Peach Street?... no union on Union Street?... no Palace on Palace Court?... Main Street is not a main street, and High Street is not high?

The first business on Park Street was a hunting lodge called the Park Hotel. It was built in 1865 by A. A. Cohen as a recreation resort for wealthy San Franciscans. In those days the word "park" did not refer to a playground with picnic tables and athletic apparatus. It came from the French word *parc*, which meant natural or undeveloped land. It was a place you went to hunt game or collect firewood. It was a perfect name for a hunting lodge, but quite a misnomer for what exists on Park Street today. The only vestige we have of the original meaning of the word lies in front of your own home: the unpaved strip of land between the sidewalk and the curb is called the "park strip."

In 1853 the East Bay was split into two counties: Contra Costa and Alameda. Whichever town had the biggest courthouse would become the county seat, so the original owners of Alameda offered free land to anyone who would build a large courthouse. Plans were laid out, and a street leading up to the proposed building was called Court Street. The courthouse was never built, but the street still bears its name. Similarly, College Street was named for a college that existed only on a drawing board.

Fountain Street, on the other hand, *did* have a fountain. It comes from the French word for a natural spring or water source. Fountain Street lies on what used to be an artesian well that Captain R. R. Thompson tapped in 1880 to supply the East End with drinking water.



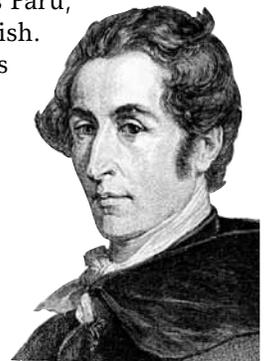
Union Street gets its name from the Civil War. California was sympathetic to The North, although The South wanted us to side with them. All across America streets and towns were named Union or Confederate to show their solidarity. The greatest

rallying point in the Bay Area for demonstrations at that time was in San Francisco in a plaza named Union Square.



Park Street with no park in sight in 1900. Photo: Alameda Museum.

When land developers lay out a tract of homes, they will choose an arbitrary theme for street names, much as South Shore has a nautical theme. Over the years these names change, and the original theme disappears. In the Krusi Park neighborhood the theme was fruit trees. The only street name remaining today is Peach Street. In the Franklin Park neighborhood, the streets were named after fish. The only fish name left today is Paru, a tropical fish related to a butterfly fish. In the McKinley Park area the streets were named after birds. The only example left is Eagle Street. In the Washington Park area the streets were named for saints. The last one remaining today is Saint Charles. Caroline Street was named after Caroline Chipman, an avid fan of classical music. She named a few streets after her favorite composers: Mozart, Verdi, and Weber.



Carl Maria von Weber

There was never a palace on Palace Court. The street was named after the Palace Brewery which was once located there. Nothing remains but happy memories. The fermented trub (brewery waste) was hauled to a nearby dairy farm. They had the happiest cows and produced the sweetest dairy products in town.

Main Street was never a "main" street. It was named after Charles Main, an original landowner at Alameda Point. And High Street was never higher than it is today. When the street was named, the word "high" had nothing to do with altitude. It meant "most important of its kind." "High school" gets its name because it is more important than grammar school. Similar expressions we use today are: high class, high road, high seas, high mass, High German, high tea, and highway.



*Frederick F. Kessing was in his later years when he had his stately residence built in Alameda in 1893.*

## The Kessings Came Calling

**AFTER THE HOMES WERE CHOSEN** for the Alameda Legacy Home Tour, Alameda Museum President, Robbie Dileo, received a random call from a woman in Oregon who had photos of an Alameda home where her great-great-grandmother used to live. As they talked, it came to light the lady was a descendent of John Frederick Kessing.

George Gunn, museum curator, was consulted and he revealed Kessing as the owner of 1430 Santa Clara Avenue. Family photos, additional phone calls and e-mails were exchanged. As an enthusiastic genealogy buff, current owner Brian Geasa was excited to be put in contact with Carolyn Stone and her daughter Cynthia Williams who were equally thrilled. He even had information about family they did not know. It was a wonderful coincidence for the homeowner and the Alameda Museum—to receive additional information on one of Alameda's grand houses.

## Alameda Wine Walk 2010

*by Robbie Dileo*

**BOTH WEBSTER STREET AND PARK STREET** business associations co-sponsored a Wine Walk organized as an evening event where various merchants and restaurants could feature local vintners inside their establishments from 6:00 to 9:00 pm. Webster's event was in September. Alameda Museum's Art Gallery was a perfect host, one of many locations for the October 14th event on Park Street.

Glasses were purchased elsewhere with wrist bands denoting paid guests who sampled wines from Rock Wall Winery, Rosenblum Cellars, Irish Monkey Cellars, R & B Cellars, Fenestra Winery, Heart O' The Mountain, and Urbano Cellars. Most of the merchants along Park Street from the 1300 to 1500 block had their doors open. Some restaurants

ran specials. Pauline's Antiques had desserts and a chocolate fountain that was fantastic.

The museum had various cheeses, spreads, crackers and cookies for guests sampling Fenestra Wines in our Art Gallery. Robbie Dileo arranged for the edibles and table decor, while Robyn Adams, Mary Fetherolf, and Chuck Millar helped answer guest questions about the museum and gift shop. We very much enjoyed our evening, delighted at all the new faces to visit our realm, and some people with promises to visit our gift shop for treasures. Fenestra gave us a couple of bottles as a thank you that we can use at a future event. Overall, with not much effort, it was a wonderful event. We hope there is another in 2011.



*Mary Fetherolf and Robyn Adams were volunteer staff for the evening.*

*Wine Walkers sampled offerings from various local wineries and viewed museum displays.*



## TEN YEARS OF EXCELLENT LECTURES

by Judith Lynch

**THE ALAMEDA MUSEUM HAS A STELLAR RECORD OF OFFERING TASTY LECTURES,** important book launches, and lively discussions over the past decade. We even featured some eerie visitors from the dim distant past, such as architect Julia Morgan, California Governor George Pardee, and Louis Comfort Tiffany, who was fabricating a fancy glass window up in the ethereal zone. (Too bad he dropped it . . .) Many lectures are sponsored by local businesses and professionals, bringing revenue to the Museum. We also make a tidy sum from paid admissions and garner new members. People respond to our excellent publicity and come from other locales, frequenting nearby restaurants and shops and bringing commerce to our historic downtown.

The focus was frequently on our own home town with talks about the former Naval Air Station, the Del Monte Warehouse, local "New Deal" projects, A. A. Cohen and Old Fernside, and the Alameda Civic Center. We learned how early transportation had a profound effect on the development of our city when Bruce Singer and Grant Ute presented *Trains, Ferries, and Trolleys* and *Ride the Alameda Red Cars*. Glass artist Ken Matthias presented four glorious slide shows, detailing his relentless documentation of every decorative pane on the island. One of our favorite duos, Dennis Evanovsky and Eric Kos of the *Alameda Sun*, showed historic images of Park Street, and treated us to previews of two of their books, *The East Bay Then and Now* and *Alameda: An Architectural Treasure Chest*.

Other books that have been showcased include *Victorian Classics* by Alex Brammer, who spent ten years feeding his obsession with the fabulous residences of the railroad barons and silver bonanza kings atop San Francisco's Nob Hill. We also hosted Gray Brechin, Ph.D. author of *Farewell Promised Land: Waking From the California Dream*, published by the University of California Press. His talk about his volume *Imperial San Francisco* was an exposé of the impact of the Hearsts and other powerful Bay Area families on the environment of California. Architectural designer Paul Duchsherer showed us several of his labors of love, *The Bungalow*,

*The Bungalow Garden, Beyond the Bungalow, and Victorian Glory*, all by Penguin Books. Local hero, writer and historian Woody Minor was a frequent guest at the Museum. We published two of his volumes; both were introduced at lectures: *Taking Care of Business* and *A Home in Alameda*.

We also "visited" Berkeley with author Richard Schwartz, a dynamic speaker who mined salvaged old newspapers and other musty records to write *Berkeley 1900, Earthquake Exodus 1906, and Eccentrics, Heroes, and Cutthroats of Old Berkeley*, another magical tome about historic "Berserkeley." This article is but a glimpse into the Alameda Museum legacy of civic discourse. Review the entire ten years on our web site. What's in the works for 2011? Watch this space!

## WANTED: WEB MASTER

**O**ur web master Robb Detlefs is going to become a father early next year and we are very happy for him.

Robb has asked that we replace him so he can concentrate on parenting duties. Training for use of the software and our host server is available.

**To volunteer, please contact Robbie Dileo  
at [damsel\\_d@pacbell.net](mailto:damsel_d@pacbell.net)  
or call 510-865-1767.**



# The Land Where Victoria Reigned

by Judith Lynch

**MY FIRST TRIP TO ENGLAND WAS INSPIRED** by a story about London Summer School in the San Francisco Victorian Alliance bulletin. The intensive annual course was organized by the Victorian Society in America. I applied, got in, and embarked on a life-changing journey, three weeks of immersion in the culture, pastimes, and history of the era. From 1837–1901 when Victoria was Queen. The class only heightened my appreciation of the wealth of Victorians we enjoy in Alameda and the community effort that went into the restoration of our Meyers House Museum.

That I was accepted in the program was in part thanks to Museum Curator George Gunn, who honored me with a letter of support. It's too embarrassing to repeat here; suffice to say he ended it, "While Judith has a wealth of experience with local 19th century architecture, she is sadly lacking in its historical underpinnings. Admission to the VSA London program would greatly broaden her knowledge of the origins of the era that we call

*This painted porcelain toilet bowl was part of a display of English pottery in the Stoke-on-Trent museum. Photo: Judith Lynch.*



'Victorian' in honor of that long-reigning monarch."

The first clue to the intensity of the course was a four-page single-spaced book list. I thought I was extremely well-read in the history and homes of the era, yet on that list I knew only *Sweetness and Light*, about the murky origins of the so-called Queen Anne style. Hasty visits to the Museum gift shop, Wilmot's used books, and Amazon netted me a few of the recommendations and many weekends were devoted to studying.

## Knackered But Happy

We were cautioned about the strenuous nature of the session by administrator Susan McCallum, who sent a stern e-mail, "You will have no time for shopping or sightseeing!" How right she was; we were in class from early morning to evening for fourteen straight days. We listened to lectures; we took walking tours; we marched through churches, museums, estates, gardens, and homes. The most compelling instructor was Ian Cox, an Englishman of considerable charm, as well as learning. He guided us through many a building and lyrically connected elements of English development, including art, geography, architecture, industry, morality, engineering, and literature.

Fellow students included house museum directors, art conservators, doctoral candidates, historians, novelists, and a philosopher from Italy. We lodged in humble dormitory rooms in the Methodist International Center near Euston Station, a hub of bus lines, trains, and the underground. In the middle of the course we took a bus north for five days to visit Liverpool, Manchester, and Birmingham.



*This red clay bracket was designed by Mary Watts and embellishes the Watts Memorial Chapel, completed in 1904 in Compton, England. Photo: Judith Lynch.*

From the historic preservation point of view, we were impressed with the daunting tasks taken on by groups of citizen volunteers who flung themselves into lengthy and costly projects. On our jaunt to Brighton we stopped by such a project in East Sussex where a few devotees have undertaken the complete restoration and furnishing of a five-story Regency townhouse.

In addition to rejuvenating and de-modernizing the entire place, they are also on the lookout for a houseful of authentic furnishings and appointments, from the ground floor kitchen to the fifth floor rooms shared by female servants. Asked where they were getting the money, volunteer Director Nick Tyson twinkled, "Perhaps from the likes of you?"

## Efforts on a Major Scale

Another equally dismaying project was an abandoned church in Liverpool, where a band of volunteers was

*Continued on page 15...*



**Victoria Reigned . . . Continued from page 14**

cleaning up after decades of squatters had used much of the fine woodwork as fuel. Asked how much the restoration would cost, one said without blinking, "Oh some sixteen or seventeen million pounds." Yet the townspeople persist because they love the building!

The experience was thrilling, and I recommend it with gusto. The 30th annual London Summer School is set for July 2-17, 2011. Applications are available on their web site, Victorian Society in America, and some scholarships are available. You can also e-mail the school administrator Susan E. McCallum at [vasummerschools@comcast.net](mailto:vasummerschools@comcast.net).



*Minton tiles abounded throughout Liverpool. Here in the floor of the City Hall tiles depict the town symbol, the "busy bee." Photo: Judith Lynch.*

# How do you say VERSAILLES?

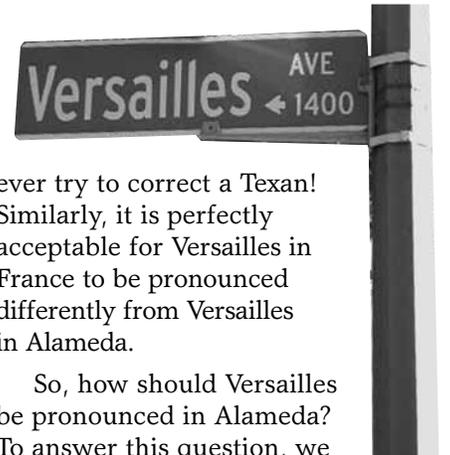
by Ron Ucovich

**MANY ALAMEDA STREET NAMES OF FRENCH ORIGIN** have adopted an Americanized pronunciation, like Regent, Grand, Vermont, and Page. Versailles, however, is sometimes heard Americanized, and sometimes retains its French pronunciation. Which is correct in Alameda?

The double "L" in French, as in Spanish, is pronounced similar to a "Y" in English. When we see the "LL" in a local place name, we tend to give name an Americanized pronunciation, even though we know this pronunciation is not traditional: Estudillo, Vallejo, Cabrillo, Valle Vista, Farallon Islands, Ballena Bay, etc. Pronouncing a double "L" as a single "L" just makes the word easier to pronounce.

It is ironic that some people insist that the traditional pronunciation is the only correct one, and these same people have surnames which were Americanized when their ancestors came to this country. They see nothing wrong with Americanizing their own names. Just think of all the movie stars who Americanized their names: Frederick Austerlitz became Fred Astaire; Milton Berlinger became Milton Berle; Charles Buchinski became Charles Bronson; George Birnbaum became George Burns.

It is common to see place names pronounced differently in different places. Houston, New York is pronounced [hows·tən], but Houston, Texas is pronounced [hyeus·tən]. Paris, France is pronounced [pa·ree], but Paris, Texas is pronounced [pæ·rəs]. But, don't



ever try to correct a Texan! Similarly, it is perfectly acceptable for Versailles in France to be pronounced differently from Versailles in Alameda.

So, how should Versailles be pronounced in Alameda? To answer this question, we need to ask an expert... that is, someone who is totally fluent in both French and English. But, don't ask him for the correct pronunciation, just listen to him speak. If he is speaking French, he will pronounce it in French. If he is speaking English, he will Americanize the pronunciation.

Don't believe me? Try this yourself: say out loud the word "France". Now say "tour de France." Did you pronounce it differently? Say out loud "grand". Now say "grand prix". Say "Paris". Now say "gay Paris". You see? If you are speaking French, you pronounce it in French. If you are speaking English, it is perfectly acceptable to use the Americanized pronunciation. So, if you are speaking English, and someone criticizes you for pronouncing Versailles as we do in Alameda, just tell them that you know a French teacher who said it was okay to do that.



*"Parlez-vous français?"*



NON PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT NO. 80  
ALAMEDA, CA  
94501

FOUNDED IN 1948  
2324 Alameda Avenue  
Alameda CA 94501

## IN THIS ISSUE

- *Home Tour a Success*
- *Boy Scouts Honored*
- *From the Curator's Desk*
- *A Closer Look*
- *From the President's Desk*
- *He Changed America*
- *How Come There's No Park on Park Street?*
- *The Kessings Came Calling*
- *Alameda Wine Walk 2010*
- *Ten Years of Excellent Lectures*
- *The Land Where Victoria Reigned*
- *How do you say Versailles?*

### ALAMEDA MUSEUM HOURS

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

Saturday  
11:00 am – 4:00 pm

### MEYERS HOUSE & GARDENS HOURS

Closed for the holidays in  
November & December.

510-521-1233

[www.alamedamuseum.org](http://www.alamedamuseum.org)



## FUTURE EVENTS

### ALAMEDA MUSEUM ART GALLERY

#### Women Artists of Alameda

Opening reception November 13th. Closing reception December 4th.

### ALAMEDA NAVAL AIR MUSEUM 2151 Ferry Point Rd., Building 77, Alameda CA 75th Anniversary of the China Clipper First Transatlantic Flight

November 25th 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm.

Admission is \$5.00 and parking is free. Food and beverages will be available.

For more information please call Kin Robles at 925-759-2090 or e-mail Kin at [anammedia@mac.com](mailto:anammedia@mac.com). Visit the web site at [www.alamedanavalairmuseum.org](http://www.alamedanavalairmuseum.org)

*Remember:*

**Donate to the City Matching Grant.**



See coupon page 10.