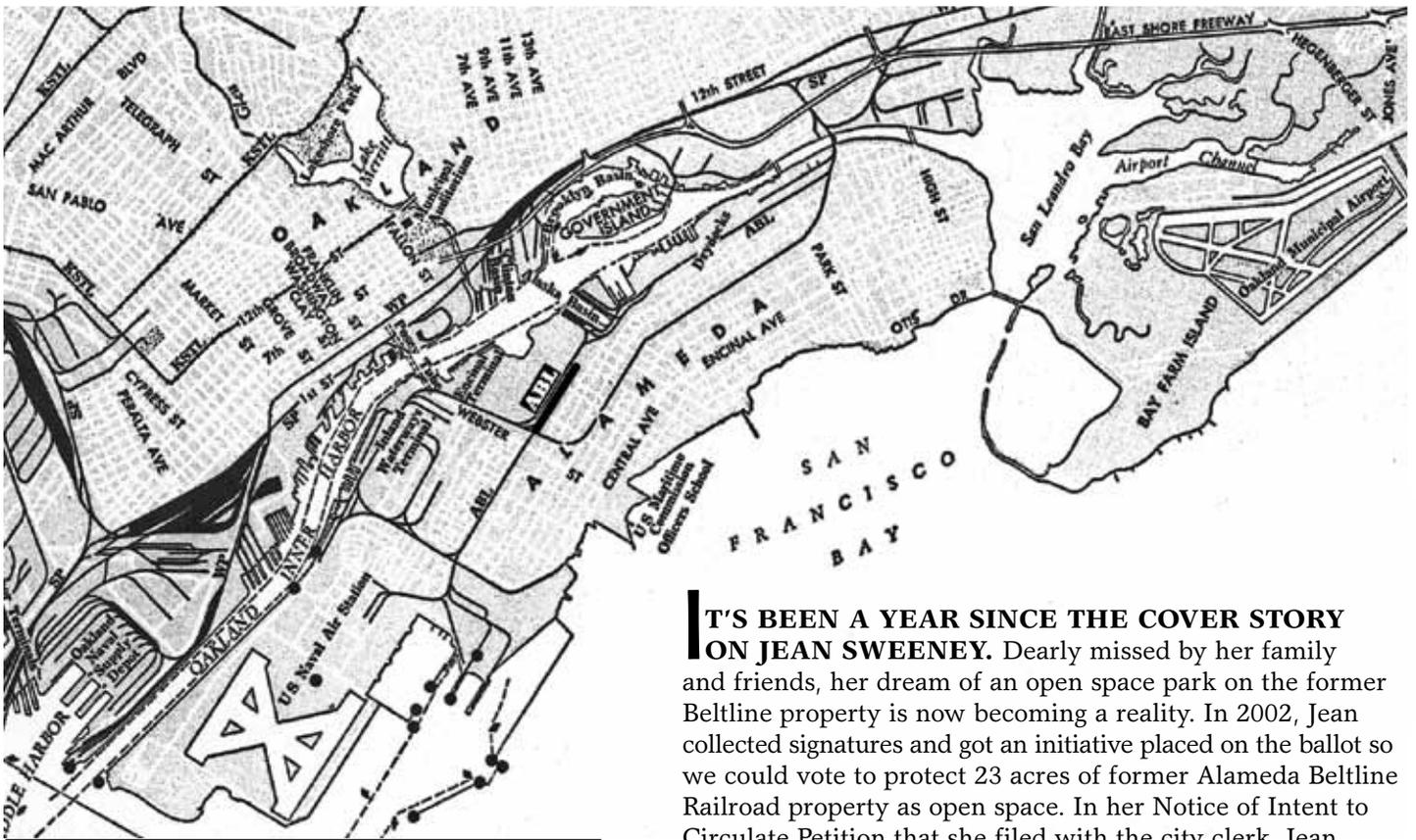


# Alameda Museum

# Quarterly

## PLANNING BEGINS: ALAMEDA BELTLINE TO JEAN SWEENEY OPEN SPACE PRESERVE



*This map of Alameda and Oakland from "Ships and the Sea", by Kalmbach Publishing Co., Milwaukee, WI, December 1952 shows rail lines for the Alameda Belt Line (ABL), Southern Pacific (SP), and Western Pacific (WP). The ABL Railroad started with Mayor Frank Otis's vision for a good transportation system serving the city's northern waterfront. It remained in use until 1998. The open space is located on the line east of Webster Street. Image: Richard Rutter.*

**I**T'S BEEN A YEAR SINCE THE COVER STORY ON JEAN SWEENEY. Dearly missed by her family and friends, her dream of an open space park on the former Beltline property is now becoming a reality. In 2002, Jean collected signatures and got an initiative placed on the ballot so we could vote to protect 23 acres of former Alameda Beltline Railroad property as open space. In her Notice of Intent to Circulate Petition that she filed with the city clerk, Jean described the Beltline Railroad Yard as quiet, pristine, and secluded; a wonderful treasure that must be saved. Jean had a vision of a space where we could enjoy the out-of-doors, with long walks, some community gardens, native California plants and native creatures, among other ideas. That initiative was passed by the people of Alameda and meant that the land could not be used for other purposes.

*Continued on page 2...*



**Planning Begins . . . Continued from page 1**



*Trail through the Beltline property.  
Photo: Joseph Woodard*

The City of Alameda has the unique opportunity to design a new community park in the heart of the island. To maximize that opportunity, the City needs input from the community. Meetings will be held Saturday, February 9th from 10:00am—12:00pm at the O'Club at 641 W. Redline Avenue and Wednesday, February 13th from 7:00pm—9:00pm at City Hall, 2263 Santa Clara Avenue, 3rd Floor. The February 13th meeting will also be televised live on Alameda TV, Ch. 15. Community members may also provide feedback through surveys available online at the Alameda Recreation and Park Department (ARPD) website at [www.cityofalamedaca.gov/Recreation](http://www.cityofalamedaca.gov/Recreation) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/playARPD](http://www.facebook.com/playARPD).

City Council voted to name the park The Jean Sweeney Open Space Preserve. To learn more about the park development as news becomes available, request to join the email list [SweeneyOpenSpacePark@gmail.com](mailto:SweeneyOpenSpacePark@gmail.com) or

contact Jim Sweeney at 510-522-1579 or by mail at 212 Santa Clara Avenue, Alameda, CA 94501.

From a forum honoring Jean, an audio CD was created by Joseph Woodard Multimedia, his website is <http://woodard.freemanbusiness.com>. The CD is available by sending email to [jwoodard@freemanbusiness.net](mailto:jwoodard@freemanbusiness.net). During the forum, Jean tells the story in her own words of the history behind her research and the final solution to save 23 acres as wonderful open space for all to enjoy. There is also a Facebook Page: [www.facebook.com search: Jean Sweeney Open Space Park, Alameda, CA](http://www.facebook.com/search:Jean+Sweeney+Open+Space+Park,+Alameda,+CA). To receive information from the Alameda Recreation and Parks Department send email to: [ARPD@ci.alameda.ca.us](mailto:ARPD@ci.alameda.ca.us)

There are lots of ideas about the types of uses that could be located on this site such as community gardens, wildlife habitat, playgrounds, and some have even suggested sports fields. It could be developed as a very passive park, more active park uses or a combination of both, based on community need and funding opportunities. Get informed through the contact information above. Most of all, participate in the public meetings. Jean's diligent research got us to this point with a successful lawsuit for the City of Alameda. Now it is time to preserve these acres for the future. Jean will not be here to see her dream park come about, but we can create a great legacy for her and build a place she would be proud to bear her name. History will be the final judge of our choices.

## What in the World is Red Petrolatum? by Ron Ucovich



**ALONG THE COAST OF CALIFORNIA**, beach resorts have always been a popular tourist attraction. Before the 1930s, swimwear covered most of the body. This, along with sunhats and parasols, provided necessary protection against sunburn. Lying on the beach solely to get a tan was unheard of. Cowboys, construction workers, and field laborers had suntans which revealed their proletarian lifestyle, while professionals and office workers had pallid skin, which gave them a higher status in society.

During the 1930s, swimsuits began to reveal more skin, and suntans started to become more fashionable, however, the increased exposure to the sun was accompanied by a higher risk of sunburn. After an hour at the beach, bathers had to remember to get under a beach umbrella or to put their street clothes back on. Your only other alternative was to paint your skin with a white ointment called zinc oxide.

Along came World War II. American sailors were working on the decks of aircraft carriers, and soldiers were fighting in the scorching sun of the Philippines. Our government had to find more efficient protection against the sun. What they found was an inert petroleum byproduct

called red petrolatum. It is the residue that remains after gasoline and bunker oil had been extracted from crude petroleum. Its natural red color made an effective barrier against the sun's burning rays.

The physician who assisted the military in developing this sunscreen was Dr. Benjamin Green. Dr. Green recognized that there was a vast, untapped commercial market for sun protection products. After the war, Dr. Green refined his ointment into a more marketable product. He made a light-colored lotion which did not block the sun's rays, but rather filtered the harmful ultraviolet rays. This allowed the skin to achieve a copper color without burning it. As a *coup de grace*, he scented his lotion with essence of jasmine. He named his lotion Coppertone, and by the 1950s, America's newest fashion craze was to wear skimpy clothes and show off your copper-colored skin.





**BE A  
MUSEUM DOCENT**

*Make some new friends.  
Please contact Ellen Chesnut  
510-865-1204 for details.*

*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.*

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THANKS TO OUR CORPORATE SPONSORS



**From the Curator's Desk**

*by George C. Gunn*

*A*s you might have noticed, I usually use my column as a vehicle to acknowledge the efforts of volunteers, etc. I want to personally thank all those who donated to the Meyers House Campaign to raise money for improvements there.

The campaign, formulated by President Robbie Dileo and Treasurer Bob Risley, with the goal of painting the exterior, repairing the library roof, and miscellaneous carpentry, so far has been a great success. The funds raised will be expended on projects that desperately need to be done and not frivolities. I also want to acknowledge significant donations made by Joseph Young, Jeanne Gallagher and Alameda Architectural Preservation Society toward this project.

Finally, in ending, I want to thank Dennis Evanosky, Editor of the *Alameda Sun*, and a member of the museum board for submitting an illustrated article that appeared in the January 2013 addition of the *Alameda County Historical Society Quarterly*. It gave the history of the Meyers House and a request for donations toward its restoration.

*George C. Gunn*  
Curator, Alameda Museum

**MARCH  
16**

**MARK YOUR  
CALENDARS:  
Annual Membership Lunch  
& Silent Auction**

\$25 per person, free for volunteer staff. Look for a special mailing soon. We need auction and raffle items. Call Diane at 510-523-5907 to arrange donation pick-up.



## The Magic Flying Machine *by Ron Ucovich*



*First flight of the Wright Flyer I, December 17, 1903, Orville piloting, Wilbur running at wingtip at Kill Devil Hills, North Carolina.*

**AS A PROMOTIONAL EVENT, THE RED BULL COMPANY ORGANIZED AN AIR SHOW** which was held in McCovey Cove in San Francisco last November. The competitors are not really airplanes, but rather gliders powered solely by human muscle and gravity, and these homemade contraptions compete to see how far they can travel before spectacularly crashing into the bay. The event, called the Red Bull Flugtag [Fly Day], was first opened in 1992 in Vienna Austria, and has since been held in 35 cities all over the world. The longest flight was 229 feet, but spectators come by the thousands to see the wild designs and dramatic crashes, more than to see who wins the race. It is much like the Bay-to-Breakers race where spectators are more interested in the outlandish costumes than in the race itself.

Now, let's turn back the clock to the year 1900. You will see people gathering from miles around hoping to witness the first successful flight, but actually witnessing only spectacular failures. These early inventions could be imaginative, creative and fanciful, but at the same time, they were impractical, unscientific, and downright dangerous. Many contestants met violent deaths as they confidently stepped off a rooftop with merely wings strapped onto their backs and feathers sewn onto their clothing, or they would jump off a cliff in their flimsy creation patterned after a chicken hawk, a box kite, or a Chinese lantern.

Along came the Wright Brothers in 1903 with the first successful air flight. History books often refer to the Wright Brothers as though they were just bicycle mechanics who stumbled upon the right way to build an airplane. Actually, they were very diligent engineers who spent years creating the science of aerodynamics. They first created

a wind tunnel to perform their experiments. They designed a 3-axis control system with a moveable rudder to steer left and right, aileron flaps to bank to the side, and an elevator flap to control pitch. After they had scientifically engineered their airplane, they applied for a patent, not for a flying machine, but rather for their sophisticated system of aerodynamic control of flying machines.



*Orville Wright*

Aerodynamic control was the first problem that they had to solve. They also needed an efficient method of propulsion. For this, they turned to methods developed by ancient mariners. To sail against the wind, mariners use a triangular sail. When they turn their sail slightly into the wind, the air passes faster in front of the sail than behind it. Faster moving air decreases air pressure, so you have lower air pressure in front of the sail than behind it. This moves the boat forward, even though the wind is going the other way.

This principle is applied to the airplane wing. By making the top of the wing round and the bottom flat, the faster-moving air above the wing gives the plane lift. This keeps the plane in the air. Now, apply this principle to the propeller. You make the front of the propeller round and the back flat, this gives you less air pressure in front of the propeller than behind it. This is what moves the plane forward. This principle is what made the Wright Plane fly while the competitors did not.



*Wilbur Wright*

In 1900, an eccentric scientist named Professor R.H. Botts moved to Point Richmond, California. Professor Botts had designed an aircraft which looked impressive on the drafting table, but in practicality was aerodynamically defunct. He took a close-up photograph of a small model he had made of his invention. He then photographed the town of Richmond from the top of the hill, and he combined

the two photographs, so it looked as though his airplane was flying over the town of Richmond. So impressed were the people of Richmond upon seeing this fanciful machine flying over their homes, they hastily bought shares in the enterprise which Professor Botts called "The World's Aerial Navigation and Construction Company of Point Richmond, California."

By January of 1903, Professor Botts was ready to launch his craft off the top of Nicholl Nob, just west of town. With mounting enthusiasm and optimism, the professor, the spectators, reporters, and investors anticipated a groundbreaking launch which would change the course of history. Unfortunately, (or perhaps fortunately), the launch never took place. During the night, a storm



*Professor Botts in his flying machine.*

blew in, and a strong gust of wind snapped the mooring lines, lifted the craft into the air, and dashed it headlong onto Glenn Avenue at the bottom of the hill. The Good Professor promptly gathered his belongings and left town, pursued by a crowd of disappointed townsmen and angry investors.

Fortunately, Alameda and Oakland have suffered no embarrassments of this type in the field of aviation. In Alameda and Oakland, as you travel the streets leading to the Oakland Airport, you will see street after street named after our local heroes: Jimmy Doolittle, Lester Maitland, Albert Hegenberger, Samuel Langley, Sherman Fairchild, Gene Benson, Stanley Hiller, Leroy Grumman, and Amelia Earhart... all accomplished pioneers in the field of aviation.

## Upcoming Exhibits at the Museum Art Gallery

### ■ FEBRUARY 2 – FEBRUARY 28

**The Bob and Thom Show:  
Two Generations**

**Dr. Bob Doerr and Thom Lafferty**

**Reception Saturday, February 2**

**1:00 pm – 4:00 pm**

A generation apart, they represent East Coast-West Coast sensibilities, their works are found in international collections.

### ■ MARCH 3 – MARCH 29

**San Lorenzo Adult School Art, Studio 820  
Reception Saturday, March 9**

**12:00 pm – 3:00 pm**

Studio 820 is a company of artists led by well-known artist and teacher, Monica Satterthwaite. Art work from 21 artists: Watercolors, Acrylics, Pastels, Color Pencil, Graphite and Pen and Ink. Sale items will include framed and matted originals, greeting cards and bookmarks. Door prizes will be given away at the reception.



# From the President's Desk

by Robbie Dileo

*H*

**APPY NEW YEAR!** The Meyers House article on page 14 explains our goals for getting the house ready for rental activities after dealing with some deferred maintenance. My thanks to all who contributed including the Meyers Fund at EBCF and to City staff for working toward the transfer of responsibilities.

Founded in 1948, we are 65 years old this year, a real accomplishment for any non-profit organization. Volunteer run, open five days per week, free, we are a quasi visitors' center with historical displays and a place to showcase local art. We offer tours for children or large groups during non-business hours. Education about Alameda is our specialty and that includes the annual September home tour that also supports heritage tourism and generates revenue for both the Museum and the Architectural Preservation Society. Our volunteers are the best, both regular staff, and those who only help at special events. I am always willing to discuss a variety of volunteer opportunities.

Over the past several months, Bob Risley and I worked with consultant Kathleen Brown and ARPD Director Amy Wooldridge on the value of museum services to the community, but in particular, services provided directly in support of only City-archived and displayed items. It was a valuable exercise and the result could not be more exciting. City staff created a five year contract for our services to be voted on by City Council on February 19th. Payments will come monthly, similar to the "hand shake" arrangement we

had in the past. This \$42,600 annually will save us from the extra work and promotion at year end that we called Bang for the Buck which added \$3800 to our previous subsidy. This will free up valuable volunteer time allowing us to concentrate on improvements to exhibits instead of future budget cuts. Send a letter or come to the City Council meeting to show your appreciation of the City's support.

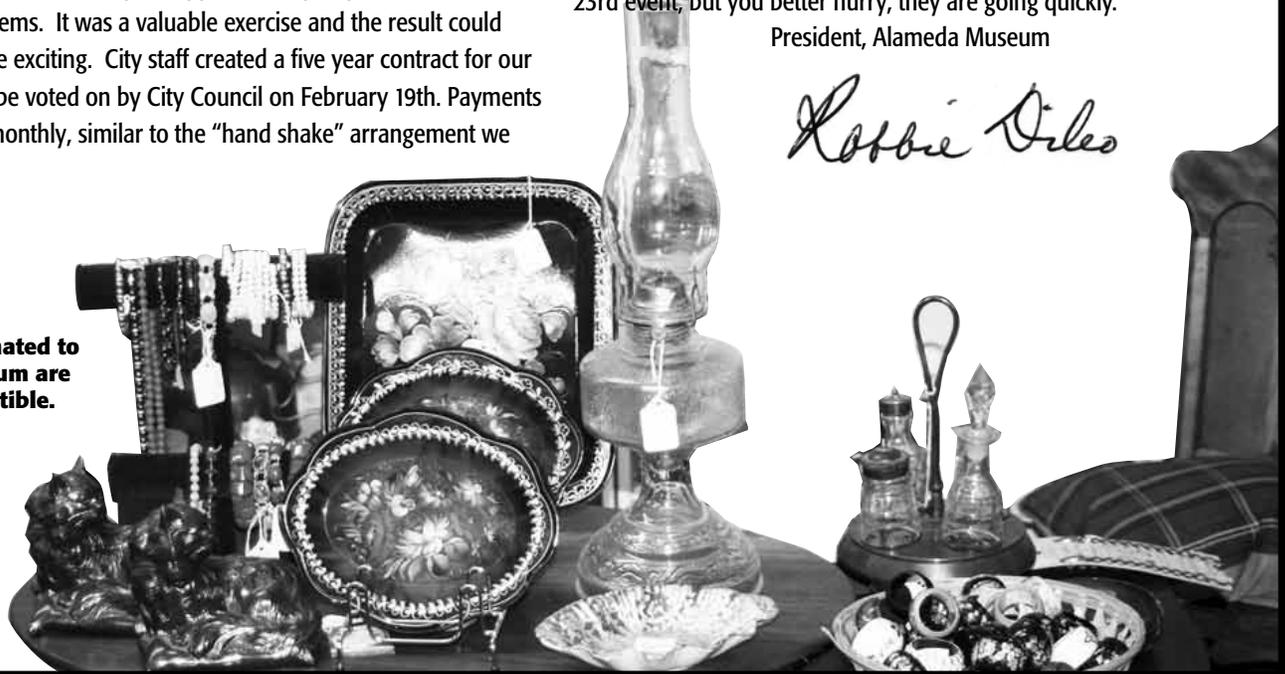
Most of you know we accept items for resale, consignment, plus sell new books and videos on Alameda history in our gift shop. The permanent collection grows with items found in attics or from longtime Alameda families. We also do estate sales, always respectful of the items from daily living as much as collectibles and furnishings. As I write this column, we are working on another estate sale, thanks to realtor Ann Bracci's recommendation. We work hard to preserve history for the future and keep our doors open. Please consider a donation of money or items we can sell. Checks payable to Alameda Museum will be used for the main location, while those payable to Meyers House will be used for that venue. We are part of the fabric that makes Alameda a very special place. Membership and donations are tax deductible and we depend on them to continue our services to preserve the past for the future.

Last but not least, look for our letter about the Annual Luncheon and Silent Auction slated for March 16th at 12:00 noon. While Board Members are asked to make gift baskets or get gift certificates, our members and local businesses have always been generous in giving us things to auction or raffle. Have something? Call me 510-865-1767 or email [damsel\\_d@pacbell.net](mailto:damsel_d@pacbell.net) to discuss pick up options. I made Judith promise to keep at least 2 Trolley Tour tickets for the March 23rd event, but you better hurry, they are going quickly.

President, Alameda Museum

*Robbie Dileo*

**Items donated to the museum are tax deductible.**





## EXTRA! EXTRA!

### The Latest News

#### BOARD CHANGES FOR 2013:

Johanna Hall and Adam Gillitt replace Freesia Blizzard and Ginger Schuler, while Julie Kennedy becomes Recording Secretary and Dewey St. Germaine takes leave to become a father in April.

#### DOCENT CHANGES:

Jana Kurka joins us as we bid farewell to retiring Lou Baca and Bonne Germain.

Thank you all for your dedication.

**ALAMEDA MUSEUM  
IS ALWAYS LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS**

—  
**CALL ROBBIE  
510-865-1767 TO OFFER  
YOUR SERVICES**

## LEGACY SOCIETY

**THE COMPLETE FLYER IS AVAILABLE  
AT THE MUSEUM.**

Gifts from your estate must be \$1,000 or more to be a part of the program. Lesser amounts may be donations to a specific project or archival fund. Perhaps a \$500 Lifetime Membership would be appropriate?

**For questions about donations, please call Robbie at 510-865-1767.**

## JOIN ALAMEDA MUSEUM

Preserving the Past for the Future  
for over 60 Years

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- 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.

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# A Closer Look at Pee Wee Golf

by Ron Ucovich

**DO YOU SUPPOSE THAT QUEEN VICTORIA EVER PLAYED PEE WEE GOLF?** Well, she didn't, but not because it wasn't available to her. In her youth, she was a gregarious and vibrant princess who led a pleasant and enjoyable life. It was the death of her husband Albert, however, that led her into depression and drove her into seclusion. She started wearing black clothing, she cloaked her face with a dark veil, she avoided all public appearances, she rarely set foot in London, and she never participated in amusing diversions... not even "chip and putt," or what we call today "miniature golf."

The game of golf started in Scotland about 500 years ago. Players used an assortment of clubs to hit a leather ball stuffed with feathers into a hole. It was originally a pastime of soldiers who needed a break from the defense exercises which they practiced daily in the fields. When it was learned that soldiers were so engrossed in golf that they were neglecting their military drills, the king prohibited soldiers from playing the game. Golf became a diversion reserved only for the Royal Court, and it was forbidden to all commoners.

Over the years, golf became a more arduous game. The golfer would play on wooded grasslands where he had to confront rolling hills, verdant thickets, rocks, creeks and sand traps. Ladies of society, however, did not participate in laborious sports. They enjoyed moderated activities, such as lawn bowls and croquet. A scaled-down form of golf was fashioned to accommodate a decorum befitting a queen or princess. They played on a course laid out within the palace garden. They had only two clubs, a putter and a short driver. The goal was to maneuver the ball around obstacles which are normally found in royal gardens: brick walkways, fountains, statues, stepping stones, fish ponds, terraces, planters and benches.

In America, the Industrial Revolution produced a large middle-class society. By the early 1900s, working men were beginning to have time for leisure activities. Golf was no longer reserved for the socially elite. The Great Depression of the Twenties, however, left even wealthy people looking for cheaper means of entertainment. In 1926, a creative entrepreneur built a pocket course on the roof of a skyscraper in the financial district of New York City. Sawdust matting was dyed green to imitate grass. The idea took off, and within a short time, the Manhattan skyline was pockmarked with dozens of "putt-putt" golf courses.



The name "midget golf" was coined by a New York City franchise called "Tom Thumb Golf." Across America, pocket courses sprouted up with miniature buildings and prefabricated landscapes. During the Depression years, Americans could escape from their troubles for a few minutes and enter a make-believe world where they were giants living in a tiny cartoon village. With over 25,000 midget golf courses across the Nation, it wasn't hard to find a putt-putt course close to home.

After World War II, the midget golf craze had started to wane. Americans were driving more. Gasoline was cheap, and people were traveling farther pursuing leisure activities. Miniature golf courses had to catch the attention of highway travelers. Courses became larger, and themes became more spectacular. You could golf your way around the world... through the pyramids and sphinxes of Egypt, the towers and cathedrals of France, the bogs and windmills of Holland, the huts and wild animals of Africa. Advertising was created to





**Pee Wee Golf...** *Continued from page 8*

capture the imagination of children. Kiddy themes, like Mother Goose towns, underwater mermaid gardens, abandoned gold mines, enchanted forests, haunted castles, gingerbread houses, Smurf villages, and dinosaur jungles, became popular motifs.

You can still enjoy midget golf, putt-putt golf, miniature golf, pee wee golf, mini golf, goofy golf, (or whatever you want to call it), right here in Alameda. It's called the Subpar Entertainment Center, and it is right next to Ole's Waffle Shop on Park Street. Their theme is Bay Area landmarks, and you can putt your way around familiar icons like the Golden Gate Bridge, the Altamont Wind Farm, the Winchester Mystery House, the Middle Harbor Container Yards, Alcatraz Island, and the Park Street Bridge. Here's your chance to relive your youth, and participate in a royal pleasure that Queen Victoria never knew.

**AWARDS  
GALA  
MAY 23**

## The Season is Open! *by Judith Lynch*

**ACCORDING TO ALAMEDA MAYOR MARIE GILMORE,** "Most cities dedicate only one month to Historic Preservation; however, here in Alameda we have so many walks, tours, talks and awards, we celebrate for three months and call it Historic Preservation Season!" When she declares Historic Preservation Season open at a March City Council meeting, she will highlight the economic benefits of preserving vintage places: "Historic preservation promotes Heritage Tourism, brings visitors to town, and revitalizes neighborhoods."

Historic Preservation Season on the Island began in 2008 and is a cooperative effort among three Alameda groups who are staunch advocates for recognizing and saving older buildings: the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society (AAPS), the Alameda Museum, and the City Historical Advisory Board.

Events during the season include an adventure on a motorized California Street cable car at the former Naval Air Station; tours of the Meyers House; films on the Craftsman style; lectures by renowned authors; and the sixteenth anniversary of two "only in Alameda" events, the Kids & Queen Victoria show at the Alameda Museum and the AAPS Preservation Awards Gala. This year the awards include prizes for Alameda school kids investigating official City Monuments. For the entire schedule of Historic Preservation Season events, turn to page 13, check [alamedamuseum.org](http://alamedamuseum.org) and [alameda-preservation.org](http://alameda-preservation.org) or leave a message at 510-748-0796.

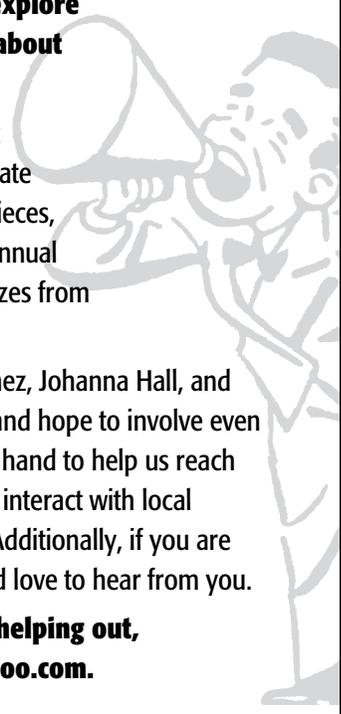
## AAPS KIDS PRESERVATION CONTEST

**In 2012, AAPS successfully launched its first annual AAPS Kids Preservation Project. The project seeks to encourage kids to explore Alameda's rich architectural heritage and learn about the importance of preservation.**

Over 130 students around Alameda participated in last year's project. Entries included everything from elaborate collaborative art projects, to individual essay and art pieces, and even a ghost story. Winners were featured at our annual AAPS Preservation Awards gala event, and received prizes from a variety of local organizations and businesses.

Current committee members Judith Lynch, Corri Jimenez, Johanna Hall, and Erich Stiger are excited to build on last year's success and hope to involve even more students this year. We can always use a helping hand to help us reach out to local schools, talk to students about the project, interact with local businesses, and help with organization in general. Additionally, if you are interested in donating to help purchase prizes, we'd love to hear from you.

**If you are a volunteer or donor interested in helping out, please contact Erich Stiger at [erich.stiger@yahoo.com](mailto:erich.stiger@yahoo.com).**





# A Trip to the Hardware Store

by Ron Ucovich

**AN OLD CO-WORKER OF MINE WAS RETIRING,** and to celebrate, we decided to create a hillbilly band and sing him a country farewell. For makeshift instruments, I would need a washtub, a whiskey jug, a curtain stretcher, a mop handle, and a scrub board. I decided to make a quick trip to Pagano's at South Shore Center. I had never been there before, but I was sure I could find these items at the hardware store.

The first aisle I came across had casserole dishes and assorted kitchenwares. The next aisle had spray paint, rollers and brushes. Then I came to the toy department which had dolls, scooters and wagons. I passed patio furniture, plastic flowers, lawn fertilizer, potted plants, and bundled firewood logs. I passed sunglasses, straw hats, T-shirts, candy, bubble gum, and soda pop. The building is called a hardware store because it is supposed to sell things made of iron, but almost everything I saw was made of plastic or sugar!

My mind took a little diversion right then, and it flashed back about 60 years to when I was boy. I went to Pagano's Hardware Store on Lincoln Avenue with my father. It was a magical place with a wooden floor that creaked and had ruts worn in it from years of heavy foot-traffic. It had a nostalgic smell of sawdust and glue... very unlike the smell of the vinyl garden hoses in today's hardware stores. The aisles were narrow, and merchandise was stacked on tall shelves. A special ladder was needed to reach the top shelf, and above that shelf was more merchandise hanging from hooks on the ceiling rafters. All around you was the sound of people working...cutting keys, scoring glass, sawing wood, drilling holes, hammering nails, shaking paint, and at the checkout stand, you heard the sound of the cash register that would make a gear sound each time the cashier pulled the crank on the side, and it would ring a bell when you hit the total button.

Hardware stores are an invention of the 20th Century. They didn't exist during the 1800s. Andy Pagano's business started in the early 1920s selling coal and ice. You drove onto the property from Lincoln Avenue, made your purchases, and exited on Saint Charles Street. As the years went by, home heating converted to methane gas, and an electric refrigerator had replaced the old ice box. By 1950, Andy was out of the coal and ice business, and over the years, he had developed the largest hardware store in the East Bay.



Before 1776, it was illegal to manufacture hardware in the United States. Before the Revolution, America was governed by England, and they wanted to maintain the Colonies as a market for British goods, so manufacturing was strictly forbidden. After we gained our independence, America was free to begin manufacturing our own hardware.

During the 1800s, many iron products were made by hand at the village smithy. He could make you a hinge, chain or lock, all custom made according to your specifications. The village wainwright would be hired to make you a wheel, axle, or spring for your wagon or buckboard. You paid according to the time it took the worker to complete your order. Hardware that came from a factory, like door knobs, nails, screws, nuts and bolts, could be bought at the general store. You bought those items either individually or by the pound. Paint stores sold all types of mineral oils, thinners, benzene, turpentine, diesel fuel, and gasoline. These products were sold by the quart or gallon. A dry goods store sold textiles, thread, string and yarn by linear measurement, but tape measures were seldom used. Measurements were made with the salesclerk's body parts: his foot could measure something lying on the floor, the tip of his thumb to the first knuckle measured an inch, and the tip of his nose to the end of his arm was a yard. In these small specialty stores, the type of the merchandise sold there was determined by how the product was measured.



Paint stores did not really exist until 1884, the year that Henry Sherwin partnered with Edward Williams and started production of pre-mixed house paint. Before then, you would have to go to a wet goods store and buy paint ingredients, and then mix them yourself. Wet goods stores existed until the Prohibition years. It was discovered that mineral spirits made an



expedient substitute for alcohol. Solox (shellac thinner) became particularly popular, however, it was well-known that Solox, being almost 100% methyl alcohol, exacted dire consequences upon the liver and

central nervous system, and was consumed only by the most desperate of winos. Wet goods stores acquired a sullied reputation, and after Prohibition ended, they have since been referred to as "paint stores."

The lumberyard is where you went to buy lumber and wood products. During the 1800s, standards required green lumber to have full nominal dimensions after it dried, so a 2x4 board had to measure a full 2 inches by 4 inches. In 1910, it was required to measure 2x4 inches when it was green, so after the wood dried, the dimensions shrank. This regulation led to very inconsistent measurements, so in 1961 the Department of Weights and Measures set the code at 1/2 inch smaller than the nominal dimension, and since then, a 2x4 board would actually measure 1 1/2 by 3 1/2 inches.

Plywood was also sold at the lumberyard, but only after the 1920s. Henry Ford popularized the use of plywood after he started using it as a building material for his mass-produced automobiles. Even today, we still use words like floorboard, running board, and dashboard as though they were still made out of plywood.

It was Henry Ford's "mass-production" idea that led to the trend of combining small stores into mass-production stores. Instead of going to a general store to buy canned goods, then to a bakery, a butcher shop, a fruit stand, a fish market, a vegetable stand, a candy store, a liquor store, and a dairy to do the rest of your shopping, they could go to a supermarket and buy all these things in one place. Similarly, instead of going to a general store, a coal and fuel store, a tool shop, a plumbing shop, a wet goods store, a dry goods store, a lumberyard, and a brickyard, you could buy all these items in an establishment called a hardware store. Hardware stores, just like the supermarkets, had something else that the small shops did not have... a parking lot that would accommodate several customers at the same time. They also had two or three checkout stands, and they even employed a young lad who could carry your purchases out to your car for you.



Andy Pagano's old-time hardware store is a thing of the past, now. Even the name "hardware store" is slowly being replaced by the modern term "home improvement center." I don't think Andy would approve of that term, though. He would probably agree with my grandfather who used to call stores like these a "whatnot shop."

# AHOY! Don't be left pacing at the dock!

Curious about the history, the archeological underpinnings, and the fate of the Naval Air Station—Alameda? Join us on the

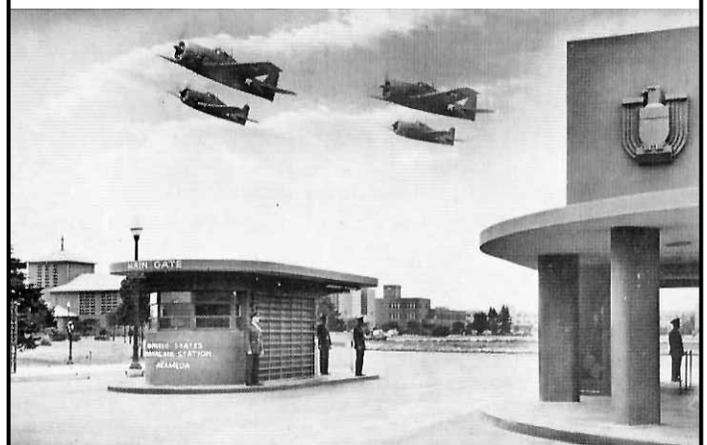
## Second Annual Alameda Trolley Tour Saturday, March 23rd!

On the trolley route, local architect, preservationist, and raconteur Richard Rutter, will regale us with tales from his days at NAS as a Navy flyboy. He will take us behind the scenes at the workshop where volunteers spent hundreds of hours restoring the vintage airplanes on pylons. He will also reveal the location of the restored mural of lush Polynesian ladies that graced the mess hall of the Bachelor Officers Quarters.

*This event sold out in days last year, thanks to Alameda Realtor-musician Peter Fletcher, whose fertile brain hatched this tour idea.*

Your \$35 ticket includes a two hour journey aboard a historic replica of a cable car. Thirty passengers will depart at 10:00 am. **This time is SOLD OUT.** The second flight will board at 1:00 pm to undertake the same journey.

**To reserve your seats, call 510-521-1177, and please indicate morning or afternoon. You can also email [judithal@comcast.net](mailto:judithal@comcast.net).**





# Who Remembers Pop Beads?

by Ron Ucovich

**THROUGHOUT HISTORY, BEADS HAVE BEEN USED AS JEWELRY** or to embellish a clothing ensemble. Envision an American Indian with beaded moccasins, necklace and headband, or imagine a duded cowboy wearing a beaded jacket, dress shirt and trousers. In our museum gift shop, visitors are always searching for beaded handbags, belts and bric-a-brac. Love beads from the Hippie Generation are particularly prized.

During the 1950s, the Richelieu Jewelry Company of New York held the patent for Lucite plastic pearls which could be popped apart and snapped back together to create an infinite number of configurations of bracelets, anklets, waistbands, and necklaces. At that time, the word "pop" was a shortened form of "popular" and expressions like pop music, pop art, and pop culture were in vogue. Also, because they made a popping sound when they connected or disconnected, the name "pop beads" just seemed appropriate.

When first marketed, pop beads were designed to replace expensive jewelry. The original colors were metallic gold, silver, amethyst, turquoise, pearl, ruby, and emerald. This cheap jewelry was summarily rejected by the fashion world, and the company decided to gear its production toward casual wear. They switched to pastel colors, like carnation pink, whisper lavender, lemon yellow, baby blue, and mint green. Consumer demand skyrocketed, and when the pop bead craze reached young girls, brighter colors were added, such as sunshine yellow, navy blue, and bubble gum pink.

Pop beads became the fashion fad of the 1950s. They could be arranged into single or multi-strand bracelets and necklaces, and they could be recombined to match or contrast with any outfit, and the color and style combinations were infinite. Although they were introduced as a fashion novelty for adults, they turned into a magic toy box for stylish young ladies.



## *The Royal Progress*

Something in the Alameda air entices people to role-play characters from yesteryear. Visitors have included Governor George Pardee, Louis Comfort Tiffany, King Edward VII, architects A.W. Smith and Julia Morgan, home builder Joseph Leonard, Prince Albert, and of course Queen Victoria.

Up there in the ethereal zone, she must have heard that the Alameda Museum hosts **"KIDS & QUEEN VICTORIA,"** the only such show throughout the land. For sixteen years now, students in grades K-5 have exhibited drawings, sculpture and writing based on the Victorian era.

You too are invited to meet the Queen, attired in a vintage gown, with her crown a tall masterpiece of disco balls, fake gems and faux ermine.

She visits the museum **Saturday, April 13, 2013, from 11:00 am to noon.**

Please observe the courtesies by saying "Good morning, Your Majesty," then gentlemen bow or nod the head and ladies curtsy.



# City of Alameda Historic Preservation Season 2013

▶ **Tuesday, March 5, 7:00 pm**  
**Alameda City Council and Mayor Marie Gilmore proclaim Historic Preservation Season 2013 open!**

Council Chambers, 3rd floor, City Hall, 2263 Santa Clara Avenue. *Free.*

▶ **Saturday, March 23**  
**Second Annual Trolley Tour**

During the two hour ride aboard a replica cable car Alameda architect, historian, and raconteur Richard Rutter will reveal much about the history and architecture of NAS-Alameda.

*\$35 reserved ticket.*  
*Email: judithal@comcast.net*  
*Information: 510-521-1177*

▶ **Thursday, March 28, 7:00 pm**  
**Pursuing Beauty, the Architecture of Bernard Maybeck**

Alameda debut of a new film introduced by Peter Fletcher, a graduate of Principia, the college campus designed by Maybeck. Sponsored by Peter Fletcher, Real Estate Broker, Prudential California Realty.

*Free for Museum members, \$10 for others. Information: 510-748-0796.*

▶ **Saturday April 13, 11:00 am - Noon**  
**Kids & Queen Victoria 16th Annual Exhibit**

Please practice your bow or curtsy for when you meet the Queen. Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Ave. *Free. Information: 510-748-0796.*

▶ **Thursday, April 25, 7:00 pm**  
**More on Maybeck: The Inspiring Saga of the Palace of Fine Arts**

By Gray Brechin author of *Imperial San Francisco: Urban Power, Earthly Ruin*, and many other books and articles. *Free for Museum members, \$10 for others. Information: 510-748-0796.*

▶ **Thursday, May 23, 7:00 pm**  
**Preservation Awards Gala**

The 16th annual celebration of historic preservation projects on the Island, sponsored by AAPS. Also introducing the winners of the second annual AAPS Kids Preservation Contest.

*Free, Auctions by the Bay Theater, 2700 Saratoga Avenue, Alameda. Information: 510-479-6489.*

▶ **Thursday, May 30, 7:00 pm**  
**Andy Pagano Film Festival**

Several movies on local history by Mr. Alameda. Sponsored by the law offices of Susan Jeffries.

*Free for Museum members, \$10 for others. Information: 510-748-0796.*

▶ **Saturday, March 23, 1:00 – 4:00 pm**  
**Saturday, April 27, 1:00 – 4:00 pm**  
**Saturday, May 25, 1:00 – 4:00 pm**  
**Meyers House & Gardens**

Docent-led tour of this official Alameda Monument includes Henry Meyers's architectural studio and displays of vintage clothing and building details. 2021 Alameda Avenue.

*Free for Meyers Guild members; \$5 for others. Information: 510-865-1767.*

## MUSEUM LECTURES JUNE TO OCTOBER

❖ **Thursday June 27, 7:00 pm**  
**Much Ado**

Celebrating 75 years of the Altarena Playhouse, a spunky in-the-round group of players holding forth on High Street. Sponsored by Robbie Dileo, President, Alameda Museum.

❖ **Thursday July 25, 7:00 pm**  
**Designing with Nature: Arts and Crafts Architecture in Northern California**

Another film by Paul Bockhurst Productions. Sponsored by Janelle Spatz, Realtor, Bayside Real Estate.

❖ **Thursday August 29, 7:00 pm**  
**The Chicago World's Fair and the "Rise" of the Skyscraper**

By U.C. Berkeley professor and architect Greg Castillo. Sponsored by Evelyn Kennedy, Realtor, Gallagher & Lindsey.

❖ **Thursday September 26, 7:00 pm**  
**Slide Talk: Learning from Nature: Tales of two Anselms, Mr. Hall and Mr. Adams**

Sponsored by Judith Lynch, member, Alameda Historical Advisory Board.

❖ **Thursday, October 24, 7:00 pm**  
**Digging Alameda: The Inside Scoop on the Underground Island**

A slide revelation by publishers and authors Eric Kos and Dennis Evanosky. Sponsored by Ginger and Eric Schuler, Harbor Bay Realty.



enough to keep up with all the maintenance. Our museum paid for several improvements amounting to \$35,800 with almost \$20,000 spent in the last 30 months. Upon transfer, the EBCF funds will come to us. We hope to accomplish more than what the City could get done with these funds because we can get volunteer labor and donations are tax deductible. It will be a challenge, but we are better able to rent the grounds and manage events at the property as some of our key volunteers are neighbors. When the painting is done we will celebrate with a party for donors giving \$250 or more.

A gorgeous oak side-by-side 1900's desk was donated to the house by Brad Murphy. A beloved family piece from Hannibal Missouri, we could not accept it into the main museum collection, but it would be perfect at the Meyers House. George knew instantly that it would best serve in the child's room to better display books, toys and dolls. Brad agreed that the house was perfect for it and he even helped move it upstairs. Check it out when we are open on 4th Saturdays.

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

**We did it!** The Capital Campaign reached the goal of \$40,000 by December 31st with the included \$10,000 matching contribution from the East Bay Community Foundation (EBCF). Over 100 people donated specifically to the campaign while others rejoined the Meyers House Guild, with those funds also benefiting the house. Several donations of \$250 and \$500 were received, but it was the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society donation of \$2,000 and that of now retired docent Jeanne Gallagher for \$2,500 that put us over the top. It all started with Joe Young's \$10,000 in April. The need for capital will not end. If you have yet to make a donation, please do so with a check payable to Meyers House, c/o Alameda Museum 2324 Alameda Avenue, Alameda CA 94501. **Thank you to all who donated.**

In February, City Council will consider the Alameda Park and Recreation Department (ARPD) recommendation of new Director Amy Wooldridge to turn over the full operation of the Meyers House and Gardens to the Alameda Museum. When the 2012/2013 budget was being approved last year, it was recommended that a non-profit historical group take over the management of the entire place. Due to the final wishes of the Meyers sisters, the house cannot be sold by the City or the Museum, so we started discussions last spring in how best to handle a transfer with EBCF. Consultant Kathleen Brown was brought in to help us. Our track record with repairs and fund raising speaks volumes of our willingness and ability to get the house's deferred maintenance done. And now we have the Campaign funds.

In 1994 Alameda Museum began creating the house museum portion, spending \$30,000, and opening to the public in 1997. The grounds and buildings were the City's responsibility, so they received an annual grant from EBCF from the Meyers Fund. Unfortunately that was not



*Brad Murphy donated a secretary to the museum which was owned by his great grandparents. It has found its new home in the Meyers House.*

The Meyers House website (<http://MeyersHouse.org>) will soon be populated with rental information. New board member Adam Gillitt, a web designer, will work with site manager Morgan to mitigate some snags she has encountered. Some of the problem is in what we have provided her as content, a learning curve for us all. We have a new MHG logo reminiscent of a wedding invitation monogram. Frank Bette Center for the Arts has a new calendar for 2013 with October featuring a watercolor of the Meyers House that was generously sponsored by Jeff Cambra, an Alameda Avenue neighbor and active city volunteer.

**2013 will be an exciting year for the Meyers House.**



## VOLUNTEERS: ALAMEDA MUSEUM & MEYERS HOUSE & GARDENS

- |                       |                             |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Barbara Balderston    | Carole King                 |
| Chad Barr             | Adam Koltun                 |
| Jim & Jane Burgelin   | Jana Kurka                  |
| Janine Carr           | Mary Lou Kurtz              |
| Katherine Cavanaugh   | Gayle Macaitis              |
| Ellen Chesnut         | Jeannie McCaffery           |
| Barbara Coapman       | Jim & Carla McGrogan        |
| Dorothy Coats         | Joanne McKay                |
| Diane Coler-Dark      | Stephanie Paula             |
| Cathy Conley          | Virginia Rivera             |
| Charles Daly          | Betty Saunders              |
| Reid Davis            | Holly Schmalenberger-Haugen |
| Gail deHaan           | Norma Serles                |
| Ross & Robbie Dileo   | Margy & Virgil Silver       |
| Marilyn Dodge         | Lois Singley                |
| Linda Domholt         | Marcy Skala                 |
| Margaret Duran        | Lavonne & Fred Stittle      |
| Joanne Dykema         | Lois Thomas                 |
| Caroline Erickson     | Eugenie & John Thomson      |
| Pamela Ferrero        | Ellen Tilden                |
| Barbara Gibson        | Ron Ucovich                 |
| George Gunn           | Henry Villareal             |
| Leslie Hawksbee       | Gerry Warner                |
| Debra Hilding         | Robert Welch                |
| Lois J. Hoffman       | Mark White                  |
| Charlie & Gail Howell | Joe Young                   |
| Virginia Jones        | All Directors               |
| Mary Lee Kieffer      |                             |
| Julie Kennedy         |                             |

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

**Docent coordinator for main museum  
Ellen Chesnut, 510-865-1204**

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



## MEYERS HOUSE GUILD

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

**For more information call Robbie 510-865-1767.**

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



**Thank you for your support!**

Make check payable to Meyers House Guild.

Mail to: **Alameda Museum**

**2324 Alameda Avenue, Alameda CA 94501**

Annual Guild Membership \$25

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

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

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to:

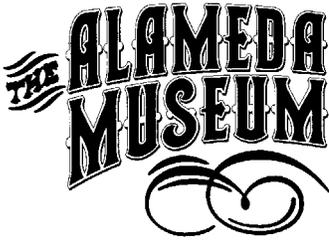
Be a Docent

Garden

Clean & Maintain Artifacts

Help with Special Events

Other \_\_\_\_\_



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- ▶ *A Closer Look at Pee Wee Golf*
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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

### MEYERS HOUSE & GARDENS HOURS

2021 Alameda Avenue

#### HOURS

4th Saturdays

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

510-521-1233

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



## ALAMEDA MUSEUM LECTURES 2013

- ❖ **THURSDAY, MARCH 28**  
**Pursuing Beauty,**  
**the Architecture of Bernard Maybeck**  
Alameda debut of a new film introduced  
by Peter Fletcher.
- ❖ **THURSDAY, APRIL 25**  
**More on Maybeck: The Inspiring**  
**Saga of the Palace of Fine Arts**  
By Gray Brechin author of *Imperial San*  
*Francisco: Urban Power, Earthly Ruin.*
- ❖ **THURSDAY, MAY 30**  
**Andy Pagano Film Festival**  
Several movies on local history by  
Mr. Alameda.
- ❖ **THURSDAY, JUNE 27**  
**Much Ado**  
Celebrating 75 years of the Altarena  
Playhouse. A spunky in-the-round group  
of players holding forth on High Street.
- ❖ **THURSDAY, JULY 25**  
**Designing with Nature: Arts and Crafts**  
**Architecture in Northern California**  
Another film by Paul Bockhorst Productions.
- ❖ **THURSDAY, AUGUST 29**  
**The Chicago World's Fair and**  
**the "Rise" of the Skyscraper**  
By U.C. Berkeley professor and architect  
Greg Castillo.
- ❖ **THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26**  
**Learning from Nature: Tales of two**  
**Ansel, Mr. Hall and Mr. Adams**  
A glimpse into the life of explorer, photogra-  
pher, and adventurer Ansel F. Hall, first chief  
naturalist and forester of the National Park  
Service. By Alameda resident Johanna Hall,  
his great grand-daughter.
- ❖ **Thursday, October 24**  
**Digging Alameda: The Inside Scoop**  
**on the Underground Island**  
A slide revelation by publishers and authors  
Eric Kos and Dennis Evanosky.

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