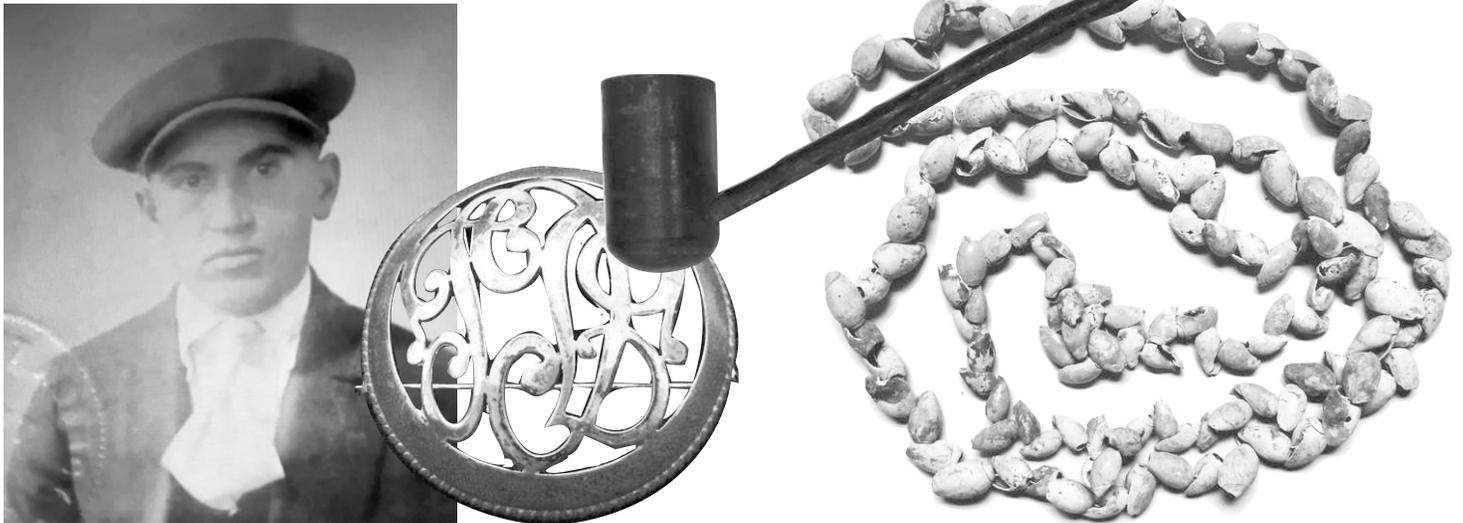


# Alameda Museum

# Quarterly

## HINTS OF HISTORY *by Myrna van Lunteren*



*A collection of objects from an array of lives; Arthur Guerra's passport photo as he traveled back to Mexico in 1921; Ida Clinton's brooch with her initials entwined into the design; the pipe of Quong Fat who worked at the Cohen estate; a string of snail shells found in the Sather Mound.*

**WRITTEN HISTORY** is a recorded account of events in the past. But this reflects a point of view, inevitably tinted by what was of interest to the author, or what the author thought was important to tell.

We are told that Alameda was founded in the wake of the discovery of gold in California, and the acceptance of California as a state in the Republic of the United States of America. People—men—became rich and successful in the gold fields or in business enterprises fueled by the huge numbers heading West to find their fortune. Some of them chose

bucolic Alameda for their lavish residences. They organized themselves according to the political and social groups of the time, their wives directed the households, practiced charity, and held tea parties. Everyone was active in clubs, a church, or fraternal order, and, judging by the numbers of these in the museum collection, everyone compiled scrapbooks.

This is the impression we get from the histories passed on to us. Many objects in the museum collection support this interpretation. However, some objects tell a different story, the hidden history of our town and its people.

The oldest objects that reflect human involvement predate the narrative of the Gold Rush and the United States—objects from the Native Americans. Now generally referred to as 'Ohlone', the tribes that lived in what was to become Alameda were hunter-fisher-gatherers. They settled in an oak forest on the banks of a freshwater creek, forming a marsh on the shore of an inland sea. They, over generations, raised mounds composed of the stuff of living and dying. Mound Street and the plaque in Lincoln Park commemorating it

*Continued on page 2...*

**A Hint of History...** *Continued from page 1*

reminds us of one of these shell mounds. Most of the Native American artifacts in the museum collection were hastily extracted before a road (Santa Clara Avenue) was built straight through it.

Let's for one minute imagine what their world must have looked like. A sandy peninsula in an oak forest on the lowlands, replete with deer and other animals, and redwood forests in the hills. Marshland rich in waterfowl, and a bay filled with fish.

The largest objects found in the mound were stone mortars. They tell us a lot about the lives of the people that used them. Alameda is composed of sand; there are no boulders; thus, to get the mortars here, there must have been a trade network. The effort it must have cost to make them, and transport them, also shows how important it must have been to have them. We get an additional glimpse in the lives of the Ohlone when we look at one of the mortars that is now just a big ring of stone—someone dedicated as much time to destroy it, as it had taken to create it in the first place. Sources tell us the Ohlone, out of respect for the dead, buried a person with their treasured objects, but destroyed them, to prevent the objects being used by anyone else.

Another intriguing object in the collection is tiny... In March 1937, Frank Wallin, employee of the Alameda Schools Department, was ordered to cut down an old oak tree, remnant of the oak forest, to make way for an addition of what was then called the Versailles School. When



the tree fell, Frank discovered a lead ball embedded in the bark. The musket ball, a .50 caliber, was shown to the Superintendent of Schools at the time, Mr. William G. Paden, who counted 122 rings of the tree starting from the one where the bullet sat. Counting back, the musket had been fired around 1815—before the founding of Alameda. By whom? There is no way of telling. Paden hypothesized an early Spanish settler or a sailor from the Russian brig *Rurick*, which was reportedly on a scientific expedition in the area in 1816.

Perhaps it was a ranch hand traversing Luis Peralta's Rancho San Antonio? I wonder, what it was they aimed for, when they hit the tree instead?

People ask about the diverse cultures in the growing town. There were people from all over. Some stayed briefly, others longer. There was, from the early Gold Rush days, a presence of Chinese people. They later faced politically sanctioned discrimination, but in those early years of the town, there were some who were part of the community. Often they worked as servants—cleaning, cooking, gardening—but they

*This lead ball was fired into a tree in the oak forest around 1815. It is shown larger than its actual half inch circumference.*

*This stone mortar with a large hole in the bottom was found in the Sather Mound which was bisected by Santa Clara Avenue. Here excavations were carried out in 1908 by Captain Clark, an amateur anthropologist.*

also set up businesses. One such business was a match factory. The company was completely manned by Chinese immigrants.

Historian Woody Minor writes, "After the opening of the Tidal Canal, in 1902, maritime industry flourished on the Alameda waterfront west of the Park Street Bridge. In five years, five firms opened along the estuary shore between Park and Oak Streets.

"The first of the new shoreline facilities was the Independent Match Co, established in 1903 at the north end of Oak Street. Schooners delivered wood to the factory—a big shed divided into rooms where wood was sawn and shaped into blocks of detachable sticks, dipped in vats of phosphorus solution to form ignitable heads, packaged, and shipped out.

"In all, it was a dangerous and toxic workplace. The factory closed in the summer of 1913 after the federal government imposed a stiff tax on match manufacturers, part of an international movement to curtail health and safety risks in the industry.

"At the time of the closure, the *Alameda Times-Star* reported that 'about thirty Chinese were employed at the plant,' noting that Chinese had made up the entirety of the workforce since its inception. Chinese immigrants had lived along this section of the waterfront since the 1860s, with two laundries in operation at the turn of the century, but it's not known if the factory's employees were locals or commuters. Today the site forms part of a 1980s mini-mall."

The museum has one block of these matches, donor unknown...

*Continued on page 3...*

**A Hint of History . . .** *Continued from page 2*



*These sulfur matches were made at a Chinese-run business located along the estuary at the corner of Blanding Avenue and Oak Street.*

We also have objects from one of the early African American families, the Clintons. Lee Clinton and his wife Rachael Foust were married in North Carolina in 1886. By 1889 they had settled in Alameda and Lee was employed by developer Joseph Leonard. He also worked as a janitor, bootblack, at a livery, and as a hotel steward. Rachael worked at home as a washerwoman and later was a servant for a private family.

By 1910 the Clintons owned a home at 1525 Morton Street, but Rachael was a widow. In this home she raised five children; Ida, Aneta, Estelle, Albert, and Robert. Later adding a young ward, Betty Winters.

We know about the Clintons because of the objects donated to the museum, decorative household items, a few precious books, a family Bible, diplomas, photos, knickknacks... Among the objects is a unique convertible two-in-one doll; hidden under the skirts of a doll with dark face and hands and tan dress, is a doll with light hands and face and a blue dress. Or the other way around, of course. We are one...

Some immigrant groups did form sizeable communities. Judging by the directories created at the time, sometime between 1878 and 1880, brothers Frank, Joseph, and Louis (likely originally Franco, Giuseppe and Luigi) Bruzzone, their respective wives, and possibly a sister, Maria, came from Genoa to Alameda, acquired land on the West End, and started a business—Bruzzone Brothers—growing vegetables for market. This was called a truck garden (to “truck” being a verb relating to bartering, or trade). Joseph is credited for figuring out a way to irrigate the fields—it seems similar to using barrels with holes in them.

By the time of the 1900 US Census, there was a huge clan of Bruzzone offspring. Joseph and his wife Julia had four sons Frank, Louis, Peter, John and two daughters Agnes and Flora. Louis and his wife Adelaide had five sons Frank, Joseph, Emil, Domingo, Giovanni L. and two daughters Mary and Louisa. Frank and his wife Adelaide had moved to what was then called Davenport Street, had two sons Joseph and John and four daughters Columba, Madeline, Desolina, and Johanna. Maria lived nearby and housed a large group of boarders, most of them Italian farm laborers.

In 1915 the brothers won a Grand Prize at the Panama Pacific International Exposition, for “a Collection of Vegetables in Variety”. From there the clan spread far and wide around the Bay Area; Bruzzones became landowners in Santa Clara, and the Walnut Creek / Orinda area, and descendants worked in a variety of enterprises.

The truck gardens are long gone now. Flora Bruzzone Jost (married to Bernard Jost, City auditor and assessor) donated one treasured item from her father’s family—the hand-carved, hardwood, bootjack that Louis Bruzzone used

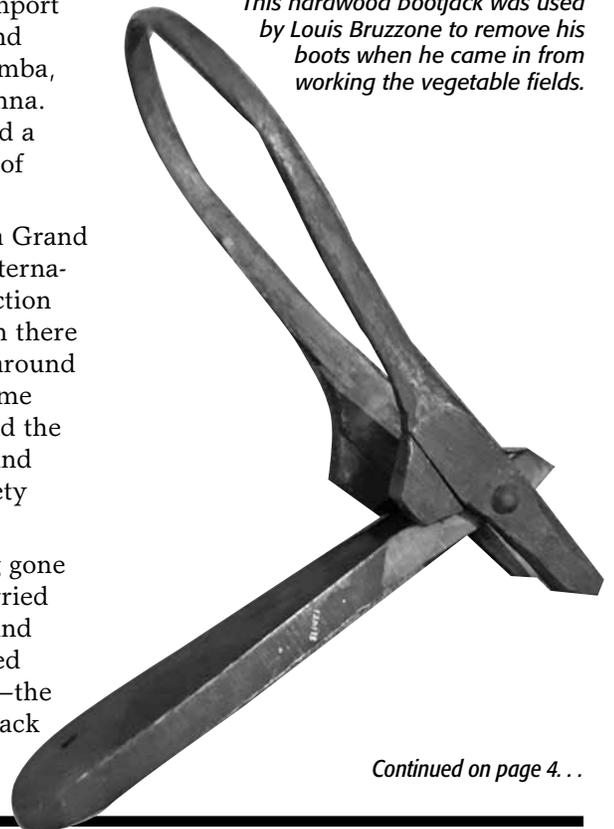
to take off his muddy boots when coming in from the fields.

A last item I’d like to mention was brought in last year; a fur coat which carried the label “Marie-Anne, Alameda”. Who was Marie-Anne, what was her last name? From what date was the coat? Impossible to know—the donor estimated in the 1930s or 1940s.

A search on the internet popped up a 1930 fur on a well-known resale website, and an advertisement in the 1946 *Oakland Tribune* for the Marie-Anne Fur Shoppe, at 1622 Encinal Avenue, Alameda. There are no directories for 1946, but pulling the one closest, 1941, gave us Marie A. Quinones, widow of Albert Quinones, furrier, residence 1620 Encinal Avenue.

Jose Alberto (Albert) Quinones was a landscape painter from Guadalajara, Mexico, who immigrated to the US through El Paso, Texas, with his wife, Maria Ana (nee Guerra). They had been married since 1915 and had one daughter, born in 1926.

*This hardwood bootjack was used by Louis Bruzzone to remove his boots when he came in from working the vegetable fields.*



*Continued on page 4 . . .*

**A Hint of History . . . Continued from page 3**

In 1929 the Oakland Art Gallery staged an exhibition of his work. He painted, and she created fashionable fur coats, first in Oakland (1930), and from 1933 in Alameda.

Jose Alberto died in 1938, and Maria Ana, now, after naturalization, officially named Marie Anne, bought the property at 1620 Encinal for her furrier business and the house next door as a residence. It appears she was involved with the Alameda business organizations, for the museum has a number of red card tables—one of which is on display—from the Alameda Branch of the Business and Professional Women’s Club, and Marie-Anne is one of the businesses listed on the tables. Furthermore, in her 1936 naturalization papers, she lists Mabel Tennant, then past president of the BPWC, as a witness on her naturalization application. The other witness was Dr. Arthur Luis Guerra.

So we have three items relating to this longtime Alameda business woman of Mexican heritage—Marie Anne Quinones—nee Maria Ana Guerra.

Three you ask? Yes, because on August 2, 1958, Marie Anne Quinones, nee Guerra married twice widowed



*This fur coat is a sample of the work of Maria Ana, an immigrant from Guadalajara, Mexico who established the fashionable coat business Marie-Anne in Alameda.*

Dr. Arthur Guerra, originally from the same town in Guadalajara, Mexico.

Son of a large property owner, Arthur Luis Guerra moved to the East Coast to study, at age 14, in 1904 or 1905. He obtained his MD in 1914, joined the war effort by serving in the Medical Corps, married his first wife, Carolene, and moved with her to the Philippines, before opening his practice in Alameda in 1923. Here he also became associated with the Alameda Hospital, and the Mabel Tennant Maternity Hospital.

After Carolene’s death in 1936 Arthur married LuLu, whose maiden name appears to also have been Guerra, and from the same hometown. They had two children, who attended St. Joseph’s. After her death, he married Marie Anne.

When Marie Anne died in 1972, the doctor married for the fourth time, to Mariejos H. Vernier. Upon his death in 1983, the Alameda Museum acquired Dr. Guerra’s Medicine Cabinet—the third item related to Marie Anne Guerra Quinones Guerra, the furrier.

These are the stories associated with a few of the items in the museum archives. Small or large, they offer a hint of history from lives past.

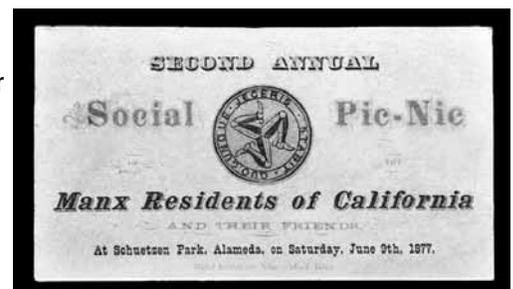
## Obscure Invite to a Schuetzen Park Gathering *by Valerie Turpen*

The Alameda Museum recently acquired a donation from Diane Daly-Smith of Alameda. The item is a small mounted off-white ticket. The text printed in black and red ink announces the “Second Annual Social Pic-Nic” surrounding three legs bent at the knee running in a perpetual circle. This gathering was for the “Manx residents of California and their friends.” The odd seal is that of Isle of Man, with the Latin motto: “*Quocunq̄ue Jeceris Stabit*” (Withersoever you throw it, it will stand). This small island is located between England and Ireland in the Irish Sea. It is only 14 by 32 miles and is home to about 84,000 people. Sound familiar?

The most amazing thing about this ticket is not the origin of the attendees, but that the ticket is 143 years old! The event was held at Schuetzen Park, Alameda, on Saturday, June 9th, 1877. In small print it is noted that the “Band leaves on nine o’clock boat.”

Schuetzen Park opened in 1868 on the shoreline between Eighth and Ninth Streets, south of Central Avenue. The grounds were a favorite for picnics and featured such amusements as a dance pavilion, parade grounds, and a shooting range.

Thank you Diane! The donation also included a rare flyer for an Odd-Fellows’ 55th anniversary picnic at Fasskings’ Gardens dated April 25, 1874.





## BE A MUSEUM DOCENT

MAKE SOME NEW FRIENDS

Please contact the  
Docent Coordinator

**Jean Graubart**

**510-217-8193**

**volunteer@AlamedaMuseum.org**

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

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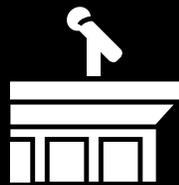
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THANKS TO OUR HERITAGE PARTNER



## From the President's Podium

by Valerie Turpen



es, no, maybe, maybe not...the museum board has been debating whether to open the museum doors to visitors since mid October.

As Alameda County moved into the orange tier of California's color-coded county tracking system, the go ahead was given for indoor museums to open at limited capacity. But, how safe is this really? Jean Graubart, Docent Coordinator contacted our hard-working volunteers to see who felt comfortable with this task. People are tired of staying at home after eight months, but also remain cautious. Now Covid cases are on the rise again as we head into the holidays.

The museum's financial situation, as with most non-profit organizations has veered off course. Income for the Museum and the Meyers House came to a standstill with the loss of income from the gift shop, lecture series attendance, Meyers House tours, and estate sales. We have done sales online with book orders handled by Melissa Marchi. This is the only location to buy George Gunn's two books on Alameda residences and *A Home in Alameda* by Woody Minor. Also, the website is featuring select items from the gift shop at [AlamedaMuseum.org/store/](http://AlamedaMuseum.org/store/). A time can be arranged for pick up.

Many have been cleaning out closets and organizing their living space as our homes have become a learning center for students, office space for work, and a social center for those we are quarantining with. This has led to some interesting donations to be used for sales in the gift shop and for the museum archives (see page 4). Digitizing our archives has continued and according to the program developer, a record has been set (see page 11).

I have received shipments from South Dakota, Los Gatos, New York, and I have visited several people in Alameda to collect their treasures. I also get to hear the stories of who used these items and their connection to Alameda. This is one of my most favorite things about history—the story behind an object—the story of who held it and used it. The stories of a few of the museum archives are showcased in the cover story and center spread of the *Quarterly* this month.

Note this mailing also contains a renewal form. You may also renew your membership or make a donation online with a credit card at [AlamedaMuseum.org](http://AlamedaMuseum.org). Your ballot for the Museum Board of Directors 2021 should have arrived and the League of Women Voters will be tallying the ballots and notifying the museum in December of the election outcome.

All the best for our museum family as the year ends. Let's look forward to the possibilities in 2021!

**Valerie Turpen**  
President, Alameda Museum

# A FEW MORE HINTS

• • FROM THE ARCHIVES OF THE ALAMEDA MUSEUM • •



**A**

**A:** The scow schooner "Caroline Dixon" photographed by Edgar Cohen in 1905 is shown with a load of wood being delivered to the match factory at the foot of Oak Street.

**B:** The yearbook portrait of Ida Clinton who attended Alameda High School, graduating in 1911. Ida's family came west, settling in Alameda in 1889. She was nearly 100 upon her death in 1989.



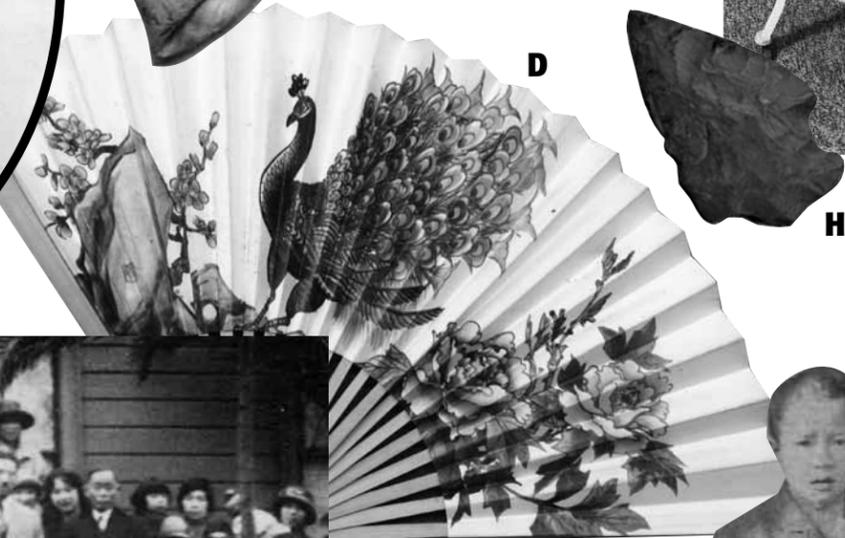
**B**

**C:** Ida Clinton's ragdoll whose skirt flips between a light skinned figure and a dark skinned figure.



**C**

**D:** A fan commemorating the opening of Towata Park in 1991. The park was named in honor of John S. Towata in recognition of his many contributions to the community of Alameda. Towata was born in Alameda in 1909, attended Porter School, and graduated from Alameda High School in 1926. The flower shop he ran with his wife, Anna, on Santa Clara Avenue is designated as a historical building.



**D**

**E:** The Japanese Language School on Pacific Avenue. The children attended public schools in Alameda, but also attended classes here to learn about their culture and language.



**E**



**F**

**F:** Dr. W. O. Smith, Nurse McCleer, and Dr. Guerra in the rooftop solarium of the Alameda Hospital in 1929.

**G:** The medicine cabinet of Dr. Arthur Luis Guerra now resides in the Alameda Museum. Born in Guadalajara, Mexico, he established his medical practice in Alameda in 1923.



**G**

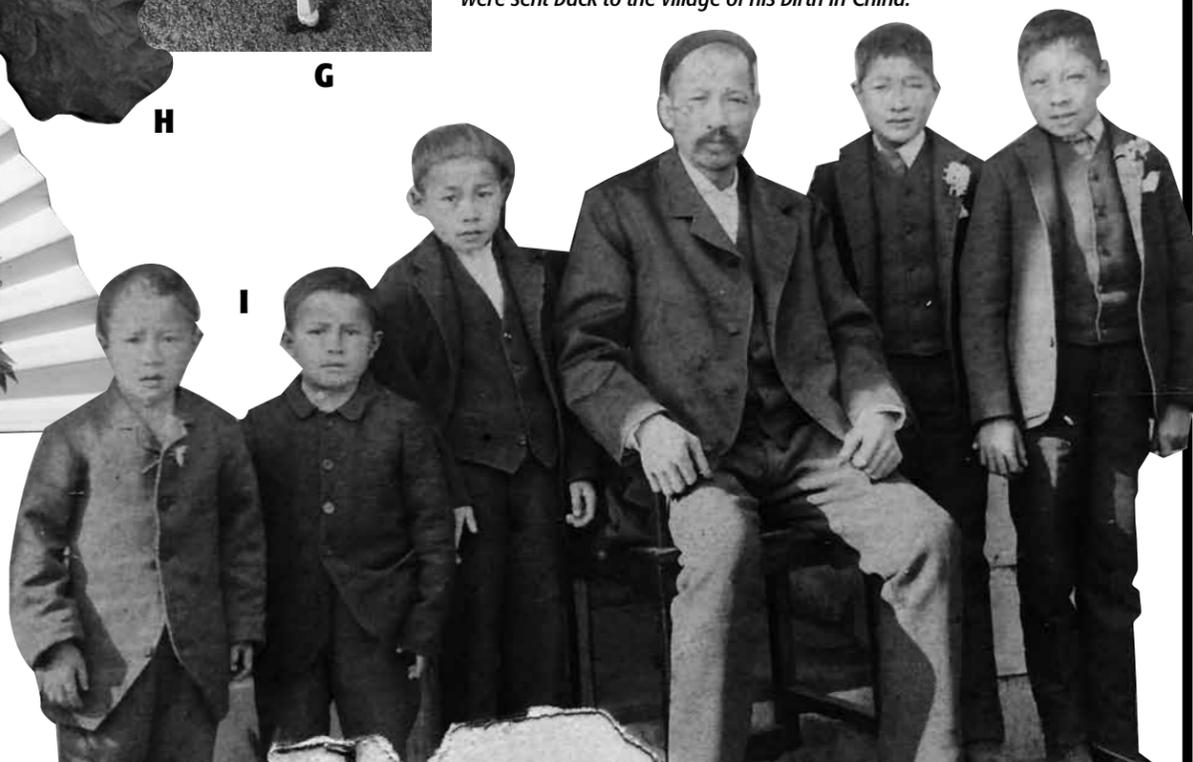
**H:** An arrowhead from the Sather Mound. These artifacts were housed at the Alameda Free Library until the establishment of the museum.



**H**

**I:** Chinese immigrant Jung Ah You came to California as a young man during the Gold Rush. He was an early settler of Alameda in 1856, growing vegetables and working as a cook. His children attended Alameda schools, participated in the rowing team at the Alameda Boat Club, and were registered to vote. Upon Ah You's death in 1902 his funeral was attended by the Chinese and Caucasian community before his remains were sent back to the village of his birth in China.

Jung Ah You and his children (not identified in order) Ah Sing, Ah Mow Low, Ah Bin, Ah Pun, and Ah Tuck. His wife also survived him, but her name is not known.



**I**

**FROM THE COLLECTION**

# This Trusty Tool Helps Clean Your Cast Iron

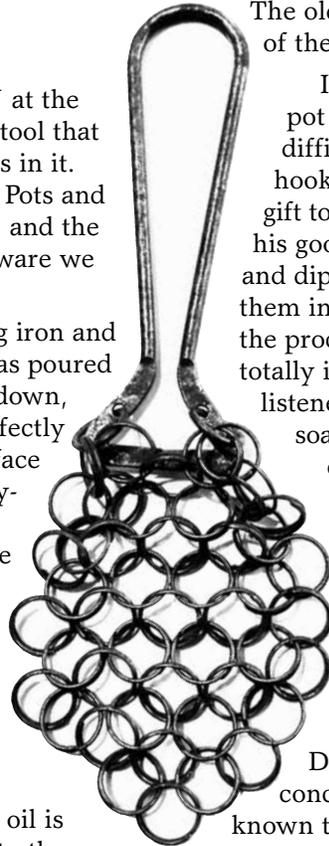
by Ron Ucovich

**THE VICTORIAN KITCHEN DISPLAY** at the museum has a new addition. It is a kitchen tool that looks like a metal flyswatter with large holes in it. This tool is called a chainmail pot scrubber. Pots and skillets in the 1800s were made of cast iron, and the cookware was very different from the cookware we use today.

Cast iron cookware was made by melting iron and steel together in a forge. The molten iron was poured into a sand mold, and after the iron cooled down, the mold was broken, and out popped a perfectly shaped piece of cookware. The cooking surface was then polished until it had a shiny, satiny-smooth finish. Modern cast iron pans are made in a steel mold, and this eliminates the polishing step. Modern production methods can leave the cooking surface looking very smooth, but in reality, the surface is still rough and pitted. Cast iron cookware that is 100 years old is far superior to what is manufactured today.

Before a new cast iron skillet is used for cooking, it must be seasoned. A thin coat of oil is applied to the surface, and the pan is put into the oven at 350°F for about an hour. The oil will break down into polymerized fatty acids, which will leave the pan with a slick, non-stick surface, and it will protect the pan from oxidation which can leave iron deposits in your food. High levels of iron in your diet can cause many types of health problems, as well as leaving an unpleasant aftertaste in your food.

To care for a cast iron pan, the polymer coating must remain on the cooking surface. The pan should never be washed with detergent, and should never be soaked in water. If the pan should ever start to oxidize, it is very difficult to arrest the rusting process. The more the pan is used, the more the protective coating will accumulate. Eventually, it will begin to flake off and affect the color and flavor of your food, and this is what the chainmail pot scrubber is for... it scrapes off the excess polymer buildup, leaving behind a clean, highly polished, non-stick surface.



By the early 1900s, aluminum pans were replacing cast iron. The problem is that this new cookware blackened very easily. In 1913 the Brillo Company was born, and began to produce scouring pads made out of steel wool. Aluminum cookware was considered state-of-the-art. It was durable, light-weight, easy to store, and easy to clean. The old fashioned chainmail scrubber became a relic of the past.

In 1917, Mr. Edwin Cox, a door-to-door aluminum pot salesman from San Francisco, was having difficulty selling his wares. He needed a gimmick to hook potential customers and decided to offer a free gift to any housewife who would allow him to display his goods. In his kitchen, he took some scouring pads and dipped them into a soapy solution, and baked them in his oven. When they had dried, he repeated the process several more times until every pad was totally impregnated with dry soap. Every woman who listened to his pitch received one free sample of the soap pad. Pot sales skyrocketed, and unexpectedly, even the women who didn't buy his pots asked where they could purchase more soap pads. Within a few months, demand for the pads outgrew his ability to manufacture them in his kitchen. Mr. Cox stopped selling his pots and pans and opened a business manufacturing soap pads. He called his pads "Save our Saucepans," and on the box it said S.O.S.

In 1938, the DuPont Chemical Research Department serendipitously created a waxy white concoction that was the most slippery substance known to mankind. It was non-corrosive, chemically stable, easy to make, and had an extremely high melting point. They named it Teflon. This revolutionary product eliminated the problem of scrubbing and seasoning that you had with cast iron. The surface was non-sticking, and the pans were easily washed with soap and water, and they were dishwasher safe.

But, don't throw out your old cast iron skillet yet. Cast iron is excellent for frying, broiling, or searing meat at high temperatures. Teflon breaks down at high temperatures, and when it does this, it releases toxic gases into the air and into your food. Teflon also scratches easily, which means that your pans may last only a couple of years, while cast iron can last for generations.

Now, what should you do with your old cast iron skillet? Keep it! Use it, and take care of it. Don't wash it with soap and water, and never put it in your dishwasher. Only one problem: If you drop it onto your foot, it will break... that is, your foot will break, not the skillet. And, as for your antique chainmail pot scrubber... that, you can throw away. The only thing it is good for is nostalgia.

# Alameda's Past Tucked in Museum's Warehouse

by Dennis Evanosky

**TREASURES LIE IN WAIT** at the Alameda Museum. Not just the displays out front, but those locked in its warehouse. Secrets and details hide in file cabinets, lurk on shelves and lie all rolled up in drawers. Curiosity and a deep interest in knowing all the details of a particular story are the keys to this information kingdom.

Within this kingdom are details that can help polish a history story or get closer to past politics as an election unfolds. For example, what happened when a fire broke out on Park Street in 1920? Did all of Park Street burn to cinder and ashes? Did those backing Measure A in 1973 really just focus on saving Victorians or did they have something else in mind?

The museum's warehouse held the answers to both these questions. Documents in the museum helped uncover the details of the Park Street Fire, including a map that showed the extent of the fire. It showed that the fire did not burn all of Park Street, but most of Webb Avenue between Park and Everett Street. In fact, it almost burned Fire Station #1 that stood on Webb next door to today's Sandwich Board.

The fire started in an express company warehouse in what is today an empty lot near the Speisekammer restaurant. The details found at the museum accounted for more than even the most exacting historian would want to know.

The museum plays an important role as the repository for the city's historical records. These include logbooks from the Alameda Fire Department. These books spell out what happened to each and every building involved in every blaze in Alameda. We know the names of the owners, the tenants, the type of the buildings and the businesses therein.



*Alameda Fire Department logbooks detail where fires happened, names of the owners, the tenants, the type of the buildings and the businesses therein.*



These include, of course all the buildings touched by the 1920 fire. Several were saloons, including the attractive "Louvre," that stood at Park and Bank Way (today's Times Way). The fire closed these saloons earlier than planned. The blaze destroyed the saloons on January 7, 1920, just ten days before Prohibition took effect and would have shut them down, anyway.

Alameda and Oakland fire departments teamed up with fire crews from the Southern Pacific Railroad to extinguish the blaze. A railroad station stood at the site of today's Oil Changers, and the crews were able to tap into the station's water supply

The fire spread along Lincoln and Webb avenues. The railroad crews helped stop the fire from spreading

to the homes and businesses north of the tracks that ran down today's Lincoln Avenue. The most interesting discovery found tucked in the warehouse collection was the detailed report that the Fire Prevention Bureau of the Pacific made in the months following the conflagration.

Of great interest to any historian is the collection the newspapers published in Alameda, most of which are not digitized and unavailable online. These include nearly every issue of the *Alameda Times-Star*. The staff of the modern-day *Alameda Sun* turned to the *Times-Star* to research 1973 attitudes that led to the passage of Measure A. Of great interest was the lack of mention of saving the city's Victorians and a greater interest in stopping Ron Cowan's original plans for Bay Farm Island. Whether uncovering fires or the political mindset during an election, answers abound among the treasures at the Alameda Museum.

# Deciphering Our Urban Landscape

by Judith Lynch



▲ The building that is Ralph's today.

A different kind of class has been quietly offered at Mastick center for a few sessions, **Reading the Street, Visual Analysis of History**. A valuable lesson in understanding Alameda Island heritage can be gleaned from recognizing building details, sidewalk clues, street trappings, and architectural eras.

"I was always curious about the why of everything when I was a child and I still am. Armed with this knowledge, I use all kinds of clues to understand context, enriching my outdoor experience," smiled class veteran Diana.

After teaching and writing about local architecture and history for many years, author-amateur historian Judith Lynch noticed that virtually no vintage buildings

here are intact. Rather they have been subjected to changes—gentle or abrupt—due to fashion, economics, growing families, and development. The territory around the buildings also changed—replacement of older houses with apartments, upgraded fire hydrants, new streetlamps, sidewalk repairs and ephemeral whimsy expressed in chalked messages.

Current students Carol and Ray say "We always have questions and are good at noticing our surroundings . . . now we are learning about the 'whys' behind the surface!"

Judith's next free class at Mastick is more conventional, with slides and neighborhood walks, **12 sessions total next spring**.



Through a combination of intense observation, definition of the context on the block, and archival research, Reading the Street students learned that "Ralph's" now sullied by stucco, used to be an elaborate store built in 1879 according to Alameda Museum documentation. The building is on the left in the historic photo. Images: Before, Western Railroad Museum. After, Richard Gamble Knight.

..... **For more information email [judithlynch7@gmail.com](mailto:judithlynch7@gmail.com)**

## Presidential Election

The 1920 United States presidential election was the first election held after the end of World War I and the first election after the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment allowing women to vote. Incumbent President Woodrow Wilson hoped for a third term, but party leaders were unwilling to re-nominate the ailing and unpopular President. Former President Theodore Roosevelt had been the front-runner for the Republican nomination, but he died in 1919. The major parties turned to little-known dark horse candidates from the state of Ohio, a swing state with a large number of electoral votes. Republican Senator Warren G. Harding and Democratic Governor James M. Cox chose Calvin Coolidge and Franklin Delano Roosevelt as their running mates.



**William G. Harding**



**James M. Cox**

## 100 Years Ago

According to Wikipedia, the total vote for 1920 was roughly 26,750,000, an increase of eight million from 1916. The Democratic vote was almost exactly the vote from 1916, but the Republican vote nearly doubled. The great increase in the total number of votes was attributed to the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment.

However, just 36% of eligible women turned out to vote compared with 68% of men. The low turnout was partly due to other barriers to voting, such as literacy tests, long residency requirements and poll taxes. Inexperience with voting and persistent beliefs that voting was inappropriate for women may also have kept turnout low. The gap was lowest between men and women in states that were swing states at the time. There, barriers to voting were lower.

# Archive Work Continues Behind the Scenes *by Staff*

**ALTHOUGH THE MUSEUM REMAINS CLOSED**, the effort to digitize our catalog system, funded by a grant from the Rotary Club and using only volunteer time, is proceeding at full speed. As the first step, we are entering a record for every card in the card system. This includes most of the objects on display at the Meyers House and in the museum, or in storage, as well as documents and photos in the archives. (The remainder are objects used to fill out a display, are kept as spares or for repairs, or for curator reference or educational purposes).

The board chose a software firm providing the user interface as well as the storage for the records—so no volunteer or employee of the museum is needed to maintain a computer, arrange for hardware or software updates, or to manage backups. The firm recently let us know we set a record—creating over 14,000 entries in 8 months. Vice President Myrna van Lunteren, who, with the aid of Director Lynn Houlihan, has taken the lead on this, thinks she’s about 3/4 done with this step.

The second step will be to add the location and where feasible a photograph for every one of those thousands of objects. This will be a task for next year...

Once the system is digitized—hopefully mostly by early 2022—it can be used to provide information on objects on display in the museum, or aid patrons of the museum in research. Docents who are interested in learning to use the system will receive training. Any documents or objects of interest to researchers will still need to be accessed or viewed at the museum, through an appointment with the curator (via phone) or through contacting [info@alamedamuseum.org](mailto:info@alamedamuseum.org).



## VOLUNTEERS: ALAMEDA MUSEUM & MEYERS HOUSE & GARDEN

- Margie Benko
- Ginnie Boscacci
- Gene Calhoun
- Dora Calhoun
- Janine Carr
- Katherine Cavanaugh
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- Robert Welch
- Helen Wittman
- Jean Wolslegel
- Joe Young
- Stephen Yslas

*Volunteer docents are the folks who keep our doors open. An enthusiastic group, they greet the public and help run the gift shop. Do you have three hours to make new friends? Come and spend that time with us!*

**Contact Jean Graubart, Docent Coordinator**  
**510-217-8193**  
**[Volunteer@AlamedaMuseum.org](mailto:Volunteer@AlamedaMuseum.org)**



**ALAMEDA  
MUSEUM**

2324 Alameda Avenue  
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- *Alameda's Past Tucked in Museum's Warehouse*
- *Archive Work Continues Behind the Scenes*



**Time To Renew!**

**Check the renewal information listed above your name and address on the envelope your *Quarterly* arrived in.**

That date will be the year through which you have paid. If the year is 2020, please send in the renewal form included in this mailing. Or you can pay by credit card online at **AlamedaMuseum.org**. The renewal form included also gives you a chance to update any contact information and make a donation! We are also inquiring if you would like to receive the *Alameda Museum Quarterly* in electronic form rather than printed and mailed. This is an option we are considering in the new year. The Alameda Museum depends on your membership and support to continue archiving, researching and maintaining the history of our city as we have done since 1948.

**Thank You!**

Due to Coronavirus  
**ALAMEDA MUSEUM  
& MEYERS HOUSE**  
are currently closed.

**IF YOU MISSED OUR  
POP-UP EXHIBIT IN THE  
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