



# Alameda Museum

# Quarterly



*In a self portrait Mataichi sits reading. Many of the objects in the room can be seen in the parlor photo, the statue, the potted plant, the photo albums. A portrait of his daughter Hatsuyo hangs behind him.*

## MATAICHI'S WORLD by Brad Shirakawa

**M**ataichi Ozeki (Mah-tah-ehchee Oh-zeh-kee) was unlike most people with a camera. He documented his existence in ways that few of us would consider. More than 100 years later, his pictures give us rare insights into the hightone lifestyle of an *Issei*.

He was a professional photographer after all, and pros are paid to shoot what the average person never sees. Like the photos above. His parlor indicates how quickly he adapted to America. No shoji screens, not a trace of Japanese decor can be found. Instead, a framed photo of a Caucasian

woman hangs on the wall. A two horn 78 rpm "talking machine" made by the Duplex Phonograph Company sits below it. An animal skin resides on the floor. The many wood chairs suggest a place that was suited for entertaining.

Mataichi found himself sitting in those same chairs, in photographs he shot of himself. A century before iPhones and selfies, he was quite fond of self portraits.

In the parlor a portrait of his first daughter, Hatsuyo is on the center table. He shot many studio portraits of her. Born in April 1907, she was

sent to Japan around 1912. One wonders if the photo (see page 2) was shot right before she left her American family behind. This also dates the photo of the room to around 1912.

Mataichi may have moved objects in and out of his photos. Note the porcelain bust of a young reader on the top shelf. It also appears in the photo on the right. He is found seated under another of his photographs of Hatsuyo. Inside the cabinet are books with Japanese language titles. Open

*Continued on page 2...*



*Hatsuyo's portrait taken by her father.*

*Wearing the same hat, a pensive Hatsuyo, age five, is aboard what is possibly the Chiyo Maru, where the families pose for a photo.*

*The Nakayamas were close friends and appear in other photos in the Ozeki albums.*

*Their two children were also being sent to Japan on this voyage in 1912.*

*Front left to right: Akiko Nakayama, Hatsuyo Ozeki, Yutaka Nakayama  
Back: Unknown, Kakunojo Nakayama, Mataichi & Akino Ozeki, & Tane Nakayama.*

books of photographs, likely filled with his own work, appear on the table atop the white cloth.

Note the Caucasian woman in the frame on the wall. He may have been quite comfortable with Caucasians as he was hired to photograph the Mohr family in the Mt. Eden-Hayward area, some 13 miles south of his home in Alameda.

Mataichi's pictures often reveal as much about him as those he photographed. (*Right.*) Here is his daughter, Hatsuyo, in the arms of Alfreda Mohr. Alfreda's husband, William, stands in the back row with the dark hat. The others are unknown. Mataichi and the Mohr's must have felt comfortable with each other for this turn of the century picture to have been made. So comfortable that the Mohrs would also travel all the way to his Alameda photo studio for formal portraits.

And why not? He may have been a cook for the family and could have lived on their property. The Mohrs were and still are a well-known family of farmers, who originated in the Mt. Eden-Hayward vicinity of the San Francisco Bay Area. Their business is currently located in Lodi, California.

They employed and sometimes housed Japanese farmers on their property. The photo on page 6 shows Mataichi standing at a stove, but it is unclear where this photo was made. He had previously worked in Hawaii as a cook, too.

During WWII, the Mohrs kept the belongings of those Japanese safe when they were incarcerated in the camps

in 1942. This image, like every other in this document, came from Mataichi's own photo albums.

### **Mataichi's Family**

Some American born Japanese were sent back for a Japanese education. No one looks happy in the photo above, other than the unknown man at far left. Perhaps this is why Mataichi shot so many pictures of his daughter.



*Continued on page 3...*

**Mataichi's World**...Continued from page 2



An ad from the *Alameda Daily Argus*, April 26, 1912. Notice the misspelling of the word Kodak.

It is unknown why the reference to the Office of the Assessor of Alameda County is listed.

Once she went to Hiroshima, she would not return to Alameda for 12 years, in 1924.

Mataichi married Akino Yoshida on March 9, 1906 in San Francisco. She was also born in the Hiroshima area of Japan. They had three daughters Hatsuyo, Mitsue and Yasue. In many ways, she and Mataichi were opposites.

"She was an excellent cook and always seemed so serious," wrote granddaughter Kay Yatabe. "She did beautiful, fine crochet work. When her arthritis got bad, she switched to afghans."

### The Photography Studio

The fine office furnishings and amount of camera equipment indicate that Ozeki was a very successful businessman and photographer. It is possible that the office was a part of his home, and not located inside his Park Street business at 1621 Park Street. This is at the corner of Pacific Avenue in Japantown.

The framed photo on the left side of the wall (photo above) identifies this as Mataichi's office, as it exists in his personal photo albums with other pictures he made. It is an image looking east on the estuary.

The studio image was shot after 1916 because the Kodak Vest Pocket Autographic in the case was made between 1916 and 1926, depending on the model. Beside it is the Model 1 Stereo Kodak with the "eyebrows" made in 1917-1918 only. To see the resulting photos correctly, you would need a stereo viewer.

Sitting atop the glass display table are two Seneca Scouts (the two box cameras), looking so similar to the

earliest Kodak Brownies that it is hard to distinguish the difference. One clue is the angled handle atop the camera on the left. The other is the circle at the center top of the front of the camera. You won't find that on Brownies.

The National Manufacturing Company (now NCR) register is likely a Model 8, which was first produced in 1885. A metal sign that is normally attached above the glass appears to have been removed so the machine would fit in that space.

Along the way, something happened to Mataichi's good fortune. Ozeki's granddaughter, Kay Yatabe, recalls that her mother, Mitsue, said that Mataichi was doing day work, including housecleaning. Mitsue told Kay that "Papa was so good natured that when he didn't have money, he asked people if he could borrow. He was in debt." In other words, the Ozekis were poor, as far as Mitsue remembered.

What could have happened to Mataichi, his camera gear and furniture? Could it be as simple as the Great Depression, which destroyed the lives of millions of Americans in 1929, and lasted until 1939? Why hire a photographer under those economic conditions?

"They (Mataichi and his wife, Akino) never let on that they had to throw a lot of pictures and plates away," said Kay. Regardless, enough of Mataichi's photos remain, allowing us to appreciate his life, rich or poor, a photographer... or not.

*Continued on page 4...*



***Mataichi's World...Continued from page 3***

Mataichi Ozeki had been many things in his relatively short life. An immigrant, a laborer, a professional, a laundry man and perhaps a farmer.

His daughter, Mitsue described him as *doraku* ("doh-rah-koo"); which means prodigal... a person of wasteful means, wanting to live a lavish lifestyle.

Born in Hiroshima, Japan, in 1881, Mataichi Ozeki came to San Francisco, in 1903, moved across the bay to Alameda and quickly found ways to live a life he probably could never have achieved in Japan.

He was an *Issei* ("E-say"). He was among the first of the Japanese to immigrate to the America of his

dreams, the America that would allow him to live...*doraku*.

Photographs of Mataichi, depict a man who enjoyed drink, enjoyed life and enjoyed friends. He appears to be quite gregarious.

His final day, July 23, 1939 was spent at a fishing derby where he came in second place. He was feeling rather weak when he returned home and a doctor was summoned. His blood pressure was high and he went to bed passing away later that night.

Maybe Mataichi knew he wasn't long for this world. So he laughed. He drank. And he fished. OI' Doraku fished to the last day of his life. May we all be so lucky.



**The Alameda Japanese American History Project**

is based on a US Parks Service grant, to digitize and document materials pertaining to the Japanese in the city of Alameda, pre-war to the 1950s.

The digital scans will be available online at **Densho.org** and the Internet Archive, **Archive.org** to further educate the public about the immigrant experience.

**For more information contact Brad Shirakawa at 408-431-2871**

Partners on the project are Densho, the Internet Archive, Buddhist Temple of Alameda, Buena Vista Methodist, the Alameda Library, and Rhythmix Cultural Works.

**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.*

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

Designer: Valerie Turpen

**Museum Directors**

Valerie Turpen, President

Rasheed Shabazz, Vice-President

Ron Mooney, Treasurer

Melissa Warren-Hagaman, Secretary

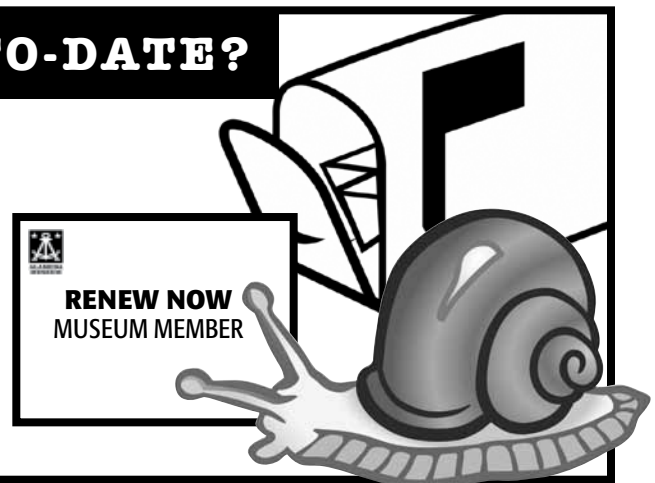
Melissa Marchi

Kalie Sacco

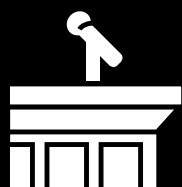
**IS YOUR MEMBERSHIP UP-TO-DATE?**

Please check the mailing label on the *Quarterly* envelope, it will tell you when your Alameda Museum membership expires. You can renew your membership by mailing the form located on page 11 of the newsletter or visit **AlamedaMuseum.org** where you can pay with a credit card through PayPal.

**Thank you for your continued support!**







## From the President's Podium

by Valerie Turpen



Our big news is that we have secured an Executive Director for the Alameda Museum. We will be making a formal announcement in late April.

Many qualified people applied for the position and the hiring committee spent several months reviewing resumes, interviewing candidates, assessing their skill set, and narrowing the selection for in-person interviews.

We are very excited to be moving ahead, as this is an investment in the future of the museum. The board will be working with the Executive Director on a strategic plan to expand our organization's potential and further engage our community in Alameda's rich history.

I would like to welcome our new board member Kalie Sacco. Kalie has a background in working with non-profit organizations and professional museum groups. She currently is the Associate Director at the Lawrence Hall of Science.

The board said farewell to Robert Matz and Zhidong Hao this year. Thank you for the time you devoted to the support of the museum and best wishes with your next adventure. Our other board members have returned for another term.

Because of postings on social media by Michael Collier and Melissa Marchi, museum visitors, vintage shop sales, and Meyers House tour attendance have increased.

A plan for community service volunteer hours for high school students is being developed by Docent Coordinator Jean Graubart and Docent Carmen Reid. Some time ago the museum had student interns working with the curator. Carmen was an intern herself in the warehouse when she was in high school.

We are starting with junior docent positions on the weekends and hope to expand to longer internships ahead involving research, exhibit development, and working with the collection. If you know a high school student with an interest in history, let them know about this opportunity. See the application on the back page.

At the Meyers House we have had a steady stream of visitors on the 4th Saturday. It takes a devoted crew at the property to keep things maintained everyday as well as on tour day. Luckily the house has remained dry during our storms which means the sump pumps are working.

This past weekend our visitors included new residents of Alameda and some longtime residents that had always meant to come by. If you have not taken the tour in awhile please come spend an afternoon with us. The docents have very good stories to tell.

**Valerie Turpen**

President, Alameda Museum

March 25: Barbara Coapman, Melissa Hagaman, Gail Howell, Margy Silver, Virgil Silver, Erich Stiger, and Ross Dileo. Image Valerie Turpen.



# MATAICHI OZEKI: A PHOTOGRAPHER'S LIFE

Images: Courtesy Kay Yatabe.



The photo above shows Mataichi on the right cooking with another Issei man, but it is unclear where this photo was taken. He had previously worked in Hawaii as a cook, too.



Mataichi seated second from left pours a drink with a few friends.



This photo was taken looking north on Park Street toward Central Avenue. The Max Franck Pianos sign is visible on the right.

The funeral of Mataichi Ozeki on July 26, 1939 was held at the Smiley and Gallagher Funeral Home on Oak Street. The Japanese community turned out to pay their respects.



This photograph with the American and Japanese flags is Mataichi's most striking self portrait. Mataichi appears to have found ways to live in both worlds, and prosper in the process for several years.



The shingled home became the children's library which stands behind the Carnegie Library. The building across the street is Malie's Upholstery now the parking lot of CVS Pharmacy. It was later moved to 2005 Alameda Avenue and the home on the right was demolished.

Mataichi and Hatsuyo appear to be on the Mohr property again. At right is Alfreda Mohr. Did Mataichi farm for the Mohrs? His clothing doesn't seem to indicate that. Regardless, he appears to have a relationship with the family that goes beyond portraits or housework.

Taking a stroll on a rural Alameda street is Akino Yoshida Ozeki in the dark dress with her daughter Hatsuyo. The other woman with a baby is unknown.



This photo must have been taken from the second floor of 1621 Park Street where Ozeki's studio was located. The image mat is imprinted with the studio name and address. This is the funeral of Alameda resident Major William Simpson of the National Guard held in May, 1911. The garage is at the corner of Lincoln Avenue. Image: Alameda Museum.



Mataichi Ozeki.



## FROM THE COLLECTION

# Tea, Wax, and the Mustache Cup

by Valerie Turpen

**MEN'S FACIAL HAIR FASHION** in the late 19th century included illustrious names like mutton chops, pertaining to the shape of the sideburns; friendly mutton chops, the sideburns connected to the mustache; goatees, chin hair connected to the mustache; Van Dykes, chin hair not connected to the mustache; and then there was the fantastic mustache alone. In order to keep the mustache looking grand the stylish male had a mustache comb, a curler, and wax to keep it securely curled.

In Britain drinking hot tea was a daily ritual and the hot water wreaked havoc on a waxed mustache. Not only did the wax melt into your drink, but it could also caused the curled corners of your mustache to droop.

What was the solution? A cup with a unique insert. This cup was believed to be designed by British potter Harvey Adams. He took a patent out for a curved ledge positioned inside a cup with a hole in it for the liquid to pass through—the mustache guard. The cups he created



*Architect Henry Meyers in the 1890s sporting a trimmed and waxed mustache. He is a prime example of a man of the times in need of a mustache cup.*



*His cup with a transferware floral decoration still resides at the Meyers House. Its mustache guard is flat with two points and an oblong hole to drink through.*



were a great success in the United Kingdom and soon porcelain factories across the European continent were manufacturing them.

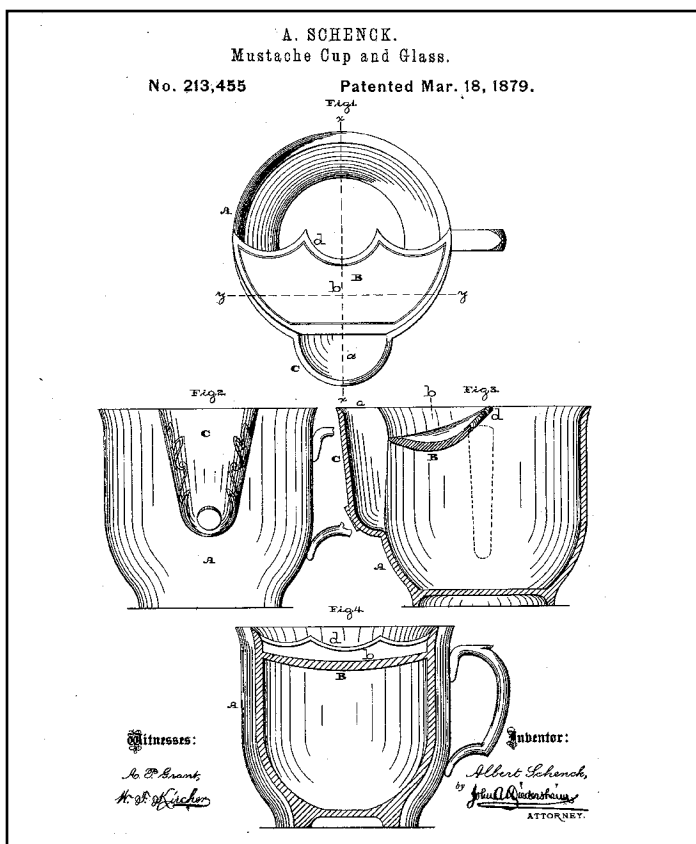
The rage eventually reached the United States with the popularity of European ceramics. Tea was not as favored in the US since the 1770s and the tea party in Boston (if you still drank tea at that time you were very unpatriotic). However the mustache cup worked as well with coffee and soups that also sent steam upward.

Many American inventors took out patents for devices involving the mustache, the strap-on mustache guard, the shield, the trainer, the holder, and on...

Albert Schenck of Philadelphia improved upon the cup with Patent No. 213,455, dated March 18, 1879 (on the left). His objection to the original design was that "the guard becomes heated either by direct contact of the fluid or the ascending vapor thereof, and it is thereby an objectionable feature. My invention consists in forming

Image: [patentsgoogle.com](https://patents.google.com)

Continued on page 9. . .



**Mustache Cup.** . . Continued from page 8



*This cup has a mustache guard with perpendicular points. This formed a ledge to keep steam from rising. The oblong hole is vertical on this version.*

a mustache cup with a spout, whereby in drinking from the cup the lips are removed from the guard without, divesting the cup of its particular service as a mustache cup."

The Alameda Museum has two mustache cups. One was used by architect Henry Meyers. It is white porcelain with sprigs of flowers and leaves. The porcelain has no mark so it is unknown if it is American or European.

The second cup is cream colored porcelain accentuated with raised gold slip. *Slip* is a technique of applying a raised decoration much like frosting through a pastry bag. The burgundy leaves are hand painted with gold tendrils added. This cup has the mark "Patent" believed to be from a German maker and belonged to the Johns family of Alameda.

By the 1920s the mustache had waned in fashion. The decade was roaring, women's skirts became shorter and they bobbed their hair. Men slicked back their hair and the mustache became pencil thin or was shaved off altogether. Only older gentlemen wore a prominent mustache—the mustache cup was put on a shelf—a relic of your father's generation.

But wait! A hundred years passed and the large mustache became popular. A fad came along called the Mustache Trend where everything was decorated with mustache silhouettes. Photo booths, a must at social gatherings featured props like funny hats, glasses, and mustaches on sticks. Also, hipsters (defined as a person who follows trends and styles outside the cultural mainstream) embraced facial hair of the 19th century once again. Today on Amazon.com you can purchase a mustache cup, a mustache guard, mustache wax, and on...



## ALAMEDA POLICE REPORTS 1898

*These handwritten report books are in the museum archives. Listed is the date, time, and location of the incident plus, the report number, and the officer referred to the case.*

**March 5, 1898 • 8 pm • #161**  
**Jas Cousedine, Section Boss**

Somebody is stealing new railroad ties from the corner of St. Charles and Railroad Avenue. Referred to Rogers.

**March 10, 1898 • 7:30 pm • #174**  
**B.C. Brown, 1557 Pacific Avenue**

Boys make a practice of playing ball in a vacant lot next to his house and they have broken several of his windows. He would like to have the police attend to this matter and drive the boys away.

**March 11, 1898 • 10 am • #181**  
**E. Maillot, Sanitary Inspector of Alameda**

Left his bicycle in rack in front of City Hall at 9 o'clock this a.m. and by 9:45 a.m. someone had stolen it. It was stolen by a boy named Husband and taken to Oakland where it was recovered by the Oakland Police this afternoon.

**March 11, 1898 • 8:45 pm • #180**  
**Mrs. A. L. Abott, 444 Central Avenue**

Someone stole her gates. Referred to Brampton who reports that the gates had been recovered and put in place.

**April 2, 1898 • 1:30 pm • #235**  
**Mrs. Merriman, 1620 Lafayette Street**

Someone has been tying a cow to her fence the last four days and it takes all of her time to kick the cow out of her garden. Would like to have an officer notify the owner. Referred to Anderson.

**April 18, 1898 • 10:30 am • #278**  
**Craft, San Jose Avenue and Pearl Street**

The people living in back of his place allow their chickens to roam at large they get into his garden and scratch up his lawn and flowers. Referred to Keyes.

**May 10, 1898 • 11 pm • #328**  
**Dr. W. J. Paugh, 1312 Mound Street**

Reported to Keyes that Mrs. O' Laughlin corner of Mound St. and Encinal Ave. has an old fashioned water closet on her premises that smells very strong and is offensive to the whole neighborhood.



# Then and Now

## c.1890

### 1525 Park Street, The Louvre

The Louvre was located at the southwest corner of Park Street and Bank Alley (Times Way today). It was built in 1876 as an Italianate. Elements of this simpler style can be seen on the side of the building with ornate caps above the window and door frames. The first business was known as the Fountain Saloon.

Architect A.R. Denke remodeled the structure in 1890 turning it into a fanciful Queen Anne. Ornaments abound and three types of bay windows accent the front facade. The entire creation is topped off with metal cresting on the roof.

The Louvre was one of Alameda's premier drinking establishments owned by Edouard Louis a native of France. He owned the building as well as other lots along Pacific Avenue which he acquired from his mother. On June 28, 1897 Louis was accidentally shot in a hunting accident in Niles Canyon. His widow Mary inherited the properties and continued to live in the rooms on the second floor of the Louvre until her death in 1909. The business was then sold to A.J. Merle.

The Louvre conducted business until January 8, 1920. That day a fire broke out at 2:44 pm in the

## 1920



**Above:** The Louvre was a drinking establishment and rooming house. The window stencils say "Sample Room" which was an upscale term for a saloon. The sign on the door frame advertises Buffalo Lager. The open storefront to the left sells cigars. Edouard Louis is likely the man in the suit standing in front with his dog. Images: Alameda Museum.

**Right:** The brick Bank Exchange shown with the arched windows survived the flames, but the Louvre was completely lost. The flames stopped at the wall of the third building in the row which was built of brick. Fire crews and the curious look at the damage.



**Below:** A lesson learned, after the fire a single story brick building was constructed on the corner.

## 2023



packing room of the Kellogg Express Company at 2418 Railroad Avenue. The flames engulfed buildings behind on the north side of Webb Avenue and swept across to Park Street destroying wood-frame buildings in its path. At Bank Alley the Bank Exchange was spared, but the Louvre was destroyed. The fire was slowed by the brick walls inside Mazzini's Hardware Store (this location was recently home to the Churchward Pub). At this point the fire was contained.

On January 17, 1920, the Eighteenth Amendment went into effect imposing the federal prohibition of the manufacture, sale, distribution, and consumption of alcohol. If the fire had not taken down The Louvre the US government certainly would have ended any sampling going on anyway.

# JOIN ALAMEDA MUSEUM

Preserving the Past for the Future  
for over 70 Years

## VOLUNTEERS: ALAMEDA MUSEUM & MEYERS HOUSE & GARDEN

Liz Allison	Nancy Martin
David Bock	Jim McGrogan
Michelle Bock	Joanne McKay
Barbara Coapman	Chuck Millar
Michael Collier	Ron Mooney
Ross Dileo	Carmen Reid
Shawn Falletti	Kalie Sacco
Pamela Ferrero	Rasheed Shabazz
Brittany Gentile	Janine Shafer
Jean Graubart	Beth Sibley
Hamida Hashimi	Margy Silver
Dana Hernandez	Virgil Silver
Debra Hilding	Erich Stiger
Andrea Hoffman	Valerie Turpen
Charlie Howell	Myrna van Lunteren
Gail Howell	Lenore Walker
Charles Kahler	Melissa Warren-Hagaman
Evelyn Kennedy	Jean Wolslegel
Melissa Marchi	Joe Young

*Volunteers are the folks who keep our doors open. There are many tasks at the Alameda Museum and at the Meyers House that require attention not only when we are open, but behind the scenes.*

*If you would like to serve as a docent at either location contact*

**Docent Coordinator for Alameda Museum**  
**Jean Graubart: 510-817-8193**  
**jeangraubart@gmail.com**

*If you would like to serve on a committee to help with museum lectures, exhibits, the website, the newsletter please contact*

**Valerie Turpen: 510-521-1233**  
**president@AlamedaMuseum.org**

### New Membership

- A one-time pass to the Meyers House

### New & Renewed Membership

- Notification of online lectures
- The *Alameda Museum Quarterly*
- Supporting historic education of the public & members

### For more information

**alamedamuseum.org • 510-521-1233**

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\*  
2nd Member Name \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \$25 Senior
- ☐ \$20 Docent/Volunteer
- ☐ Heritage Partner  
\_\_\_\_ \$200 Non-profit  
\_\_\_\_ \$250 Business
- ☐ \$1,000 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.*

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

Make check payable to: Alameda Museum

Mail to: **Alameda Museum**

**2324 Alameda Avenue, Alameda, CA 94501**

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

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

☐ Meyers House and Garden ☐ Alameda Museum

☐ Where most needed

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Phone \_\_\_\_\_



**ALAMEDA  
MUSEUM**

2324 Alameda Avenue  
Alameda CA 94501

## IN THIS ISSUE

- *Mataichi's World*
- *From the President's Podium*
- *Mataichi Ozeki: A Photographer's Life*
- *From the Collection:*  
*Tea, Wax, and the Mustache Cup*
- *Alameda Police Reports 1898*
- *Then and Now: 1525 Park Street*  
*The Louvre*

## ALAMEDA MUSEUM

### OPEN WEEKENDS

**Saturdays - 11:00 am - 4:00 pm**

**Sundays - 1:30 pm - 4:00 pm**

Interested in research? Call 510-521-1233  
or email [info@AlamedaMuseum.org](mailto:info@AlamedaMuseum.org)



## MEYERS HOUSE & GARDEN

**OPEN THE 4TH SATURDAY**

**1:00 pm - 4:00 pm**

**The last tour starts at 3:00 pm**

Cash payment only.

**\$5**

# COMMUNITY SERVICE OPPORTUNITY

We would like to welcome local high school students to participate in volunteer opportunities at the Alameda Museum.

We are currently offering immediate openings to volunteers as a museum docent and vintage shop coordinator on weekends, Saturdays or Sundays for 2.5 hour shifts.

We hope to provide a unique and meaningful experience for our youth to share the history of Alameda with our community and visitors to our city.

**Please address any questions to:**  
**[jeangraubart@gmail.com](mailto:jeangraubart@gmail.com)**

**Apply at:**

<https://forms.gle/PhDKbu35uWWrJmtK9>



The Alameda Museum  
will be closed Sunday

*April 9*  
for Holiday Observances.