

## Calendar of Events

April 29 and 30, Gamble Garden Spring tour.

May 2005 Preservation Month: *Restore America: Communities at a Crossroad.*

Sunday, May 1, 2 pm. **Sumi-e artist Drue Kataoka** will talk about her painting, *Pacific Reminiscences*, commissioned by the Pacific Art League. **Palo Alto Historical Association**, Lucie Stern Community Center, 1305 Middlefield Road.

Sunday, May 1, 1-4 pm. **Stanford Historical Society Spring Home and Garden Tour**. See page 4 and insert for details.

Saturday, May 7, 10 am-4 pm. **Los Altos Hills Lifestyles Along Historic Moody Road**. Home & Garden tour to benefit the Los Altos History Museum. Call (650) 948-0427 for more information.

Wednesday, May 11, 6:30 pm. **Breaking the Mold: British Modernism and the National Trust** lecture. See page 6.

May 12-15 **California Preservation Foundation Conference**, Riverside, CA. See page 7 for details.

Saturday, May 21, 10 am. **Presentation of centennial plaques and PAST preservation awards followed by a short tour**. In the garden at 1056 Forest Avenue.

Now through May 29, at the *Museum of American Heritage: Mechanically Advantaged: Gears, Levers & Pulleys*. For information, call (650) 321-1004 or check their Website at [www.moah.org](http://www.moah.org). Located at 351 Homer Avenue. Open Friday-Sunday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Free admission.

Ongoing—**Walking Tours of Downtown, Professorville, College Terrace, or Homer Avenue**. \$20 per docent group of up to 10 people. To arrange a tour, call (650) 328-5670. or visit [www.pastheritage.org](http://www.pastheritage.org) for contact information.

PAST Web site: [www.pastheritage.org](http://www.pastheritage.org)

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## PAST News

Palo Alto Stanford Heritage  
P.O. Box 308  
Palo Alto, CA 94302

PAST Heritage is a nonprofit organization advocating the preservation of the historic architecture, neighborhoods, and character of the greater Palo Alto Stanford area.

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# PAST News

Vol. 18, No. 4

P.O. Box 308 • Palo Alto, California 94302 • (650) 299-8878

Spring 2005

May is Preservation Month!

Restore America: Communities at a Crossroad

*Help us celebrate!*

*Saturday, May 21*

*Please join us to honor this year's Preservation Award recipients and for the presentation of plaques to owners of centennial buildings.*

*10-12 am*

*in the garden at 1056 Forest Avenue.*

*As a special treat, tour this historic Ashby Addition block of Forest Avenue after the presentations.*

## The Caroline Chronicles

The beautiful weather and the spring blossoms have me thinking about historic landscapes. If you are of the same mind you might want to head up to Filoli and check out the gardens. We are lucky to have this National Register property nearby with its lovely gardens. Closer to home you might take a walk on the Stanford campus, check out the cactus garden near the mausoleum, wander thru the old quad or walk around Lake Lagunita. And be sure to amble through the Gamble gardens and enjoy their historic charm. Their Spring tour is April 29th and 30th. I always like to visit the plant sale and pick up something unusual and preferably historic for my garden.

The Zoning ordinance update is provoking lively discussions in our Board meetings. Change is certain, but it's not always easy to predict the effects on our historic structures and districts. Change brought us the new Heritage Park, which was dedicated in March. My predecessor, Dave Bubenik, was acknowledged repeatedly for his herculean efforts in bringing it to fruition. Good job, Dave. It's a wonderful addition to historic Homer Avenue and it displays St. Thomas Aquinas, the old clinic building and the Williams House beautifully.

In May we will be celebrating Preservation Month. Take time to join us as we present plaques to 1905 houses on May 21 in the lovely old gardens that once belongs to Rosedale manor. This is a wonderful event where owners share their stories and show their pride in their old houses. Hope to see you there.

Caroline Willis  
President, PAST Heritage

## Heritage Oak Imperiled

Due to the very heavy rains, a 200+ year old Heritage Oak at the Palo Alto Red Cross Building is tilting. Some therapeutic pruning has been done. The City Arborist, Dave Dockter, and other arborists say the tree can be saved, but it will cost about \$10,000 to maintain it on an on-going basis. The Red Cross does not feel it can use such a large amount of its funds for this purpose and is hoping that the public might contribute to a fund specifically for the purpose of saving the heritage oak. Trees are part of Palo Alto's Heritage. Let's help save this one.

Donations may be sent to Palo Alto Area Red Cross, 400 Mitchell Lane, Palo Alto, CA 94301. Write "Heritage Tree" on the check's memo line.

Emily Renzel



Built in 1905 at 1517 Louisa Court for Joseph Greer.



## 30th Annual California Preservation Conference Diversity of Change— New Perspectives in Historic Preservation

Mission Inn, Riverside

May 12-15, 2005

*Five tracks of educational sessions*

- Re-Assessing CEQA
- Sites of Social Change
- Preservation and Sustainability at a Crossroads
- Understanding the Modern Age—the Next Preservation Challenge
- Southern California's Cultural Landscapes: The Lay of the Land

*Pre-conference sessions, mobile workshops, and tours include:*

- Living Masters: Sam and Alfreda Maloof Studio
- Palm Springs Modernism
- Changing Cultural Sites
- Behind the Scenes Tour at the Mission Inn with Bruce Judd, FAIA

*Network and learn about issues facing historic preservation in California.*

For more information on the activities and events visit their Website at <http://www.californiapreservation.org/calendar.html>

### PAST Heritage Board of Directors

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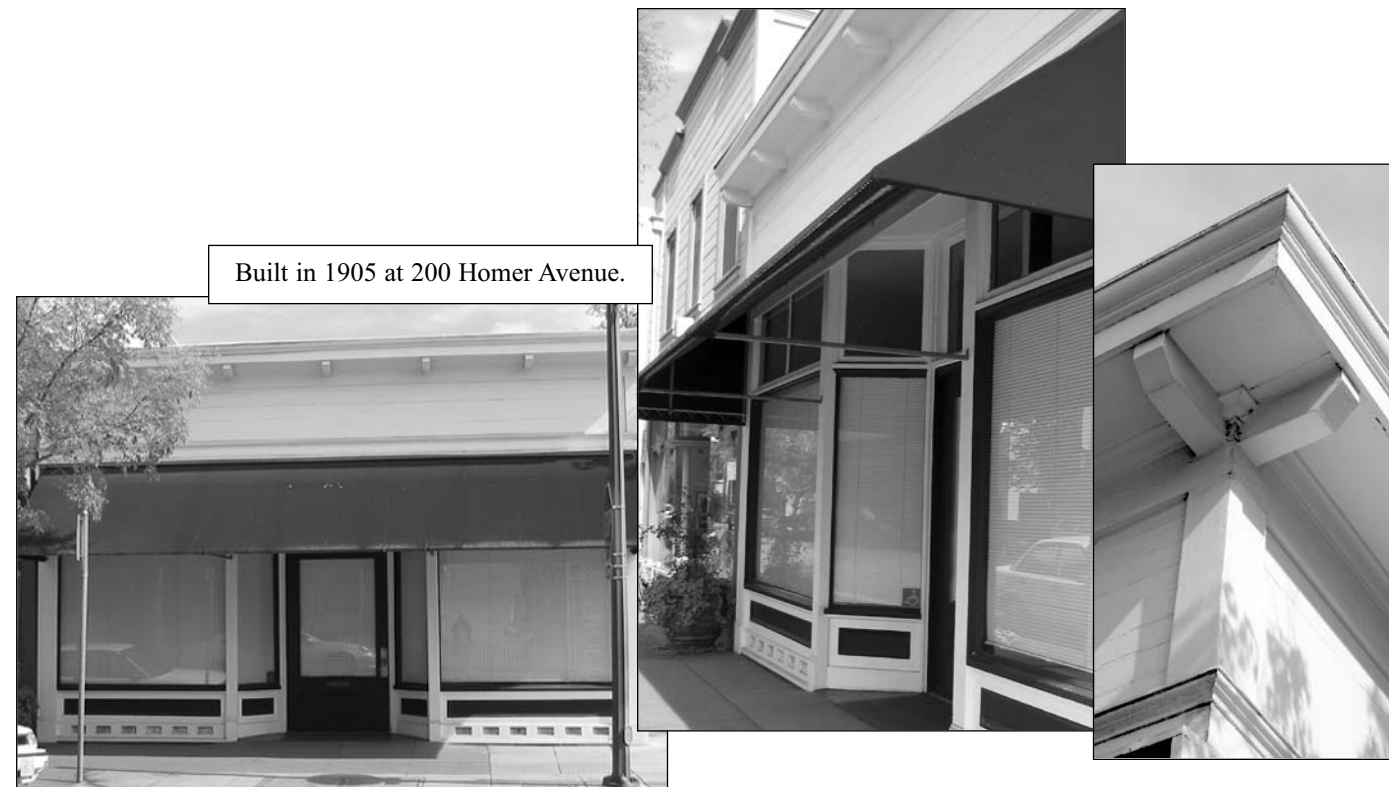
## Breaking the Mold: British Modernism and the National Trust

Upon hearing the words **British National Trust** many people think of great 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century English country houses set within sweeping landscapes interrupted by quiet lakes and romantic woods. However, the National Trust is also very interested in the preservation of 20<sup>th</sup> century houses with their interiors and contents, and over the past decade has acquired two remarkable examples of modern architecture and design, **The Homewood** in Surrey and **2 Willow Road** in Hampstead. Newly opened to the public in 2004, **The Homewood** was designed for his parents in 1937 by British architect, Patrick Gwynne, who following World War II decided to live there. Inspired in part by Continental designs such as the work of Le Corbusier and works by modern architects in Scandinavia, this masterpiece of modern design with interiors designed by Gwynne, stands in its own landscape setting and is filled with furniture designed by Gwynne himself, as well as Eames, Mathsson, and Saarinen. **2 Willow Road** in Hampstead, north London, was designed in 1937 by modernist architect, Erno Goldfinger, for himself and his family shortly before the war. The house was designed for city life and was inspired by the tradition of Georgian terrace housing. Filled with furniture designed by Goldfinger, the property also houses an important collection of 20<sup>th</sup> century art including works by Max Ernst, Man Ray, Robert Delaunay, Marcel Duchamp, Henry Moore, Prunella Clough and Bridget Riley.

Edward Diestelkamp is the Building Design Adviser of Britain's National Trust, for which he has worked since 1984. He studied Architecture at the University of Southern California, and later at University College, London University, where he obtained his PhD in the History of Art. He was involved in the acquisition of both 2 Willow Road and The Homewood by the National Trust. He teaches in New York University's program in London and is a frequent lecturer at educational conferences and symposia in the U.S. and Britain.

*Edward Diestelkamp will discuss the above on Wednesday, May 11 at the Metropolitan Club on Sutter in SF. The lecture starts at 6:30 pm with wine beforehand at 6 pm. A no-host dinner follows the program.*

For more information or reservations, please call the English-Speaking Union of San Francisco at (415) 362-6985.



## PAST Board Expresses Concern about Zoning Ordinance Update

Concerned that some of the changes proposed in the zoning ordinance update will result in development that will not only destroy historic buildings but also neighborhood character and historic context, the PAST Board took a position on the new zoning regulations regarding substandard lots. On March 9<sup>th</sup> we wrote the following expressing our concerns to City Council.

Many substandard lots are in Palo Alto's earliest and most historic neighborhoods—College Terrace and Professorville.

The proposal to allow a second habitable floor will tend to encourage demolition or inappropriate remodels. The current ordinance restricting second habitable stories on substandard lots protects historic homes because those homes often already exceed current development standards, giving their owners an incentive to preserve them.

Similarly, removal of the contextual garage placement requirement will have major impacts on neighborhood character. Contextual garage placement was one of the most significant recommendations of the Single Family Review Committee. This particular requirement is an especially important character-defining element in historic neighborhoods where most of the substandard lots exist. Substandard lots have a variety of existing parking situations ranging from rear garages and shared driveways to no on-site parking. Disrupting this pattern will have significant impacts on neighborhood character and, combined with other recommendations, the historic homes themselves.

Finally, we believe lowering the street-side setbacks on corner lots from 16' to 10' will impact nearby street facing properties, which have a 20' front setback. The side yard of corner lots is part of the contextual front setback for that street face.

It's our understanding that the Zoning Ordinance Update is intended to implement the Comprehensive Plan. A major theme of the Plan is found on Pages I-3: "Maintaining and Enhancing Community Character. The community treasures the special qualities of the City, including its historic buildings, pedestrian scale, high-quality architecture, and beautiful streets and parks. Maintaining the physical qualities of the City is an overarching consideration, incorporated in all parts of the plan...." Policy L-12 "Preserve the character of residential neighborhoods by encouraging new or remodeled structures to be compatible with the neighborhood and adjacent structures." supports this.

Part of Palo Alto's charm has always been the mix of housing, even in our most desirable neighborhoods. Encouraging more intensive development on substandard lots will likely lessen the diversity of housing and further accentuate our lack of affordable properties. Our charming bungalow courts will be a fond memory.

Please don't start a speculative boom of redevelopment in our oldest neighborhoods by enacting these changes to the zoning regulations for sub-standard lots.

## More New and Renewing Members

*The following family memberships were received since the last issue of the PAST Newsletter. Welcome!*

Martha Gates & Spencer Commons & Family  
Roger Kohler  
Abraham & Marian Scheuer Sofaer

Vicki & Larry Sullivan  
Susan & Jim Sweeney





Byron Feig



Byron Feig

## House and Garden Tour Stanford's Historic San Juan Neighborhood Sunday, May 1, 2005, 1 pm ~ 4 pm

Enjoy a rare glimpse into the history and architecture of Old Campus by visiting five beautiful vintage houses and gardens. Tickets cost \$20 per person, if purchased before April 25 and \$25 on May 1. To pre-register send the enclosed flier with a check (sorry, no credit cards.) Tickets will be distributed on the day of the tour at 593 Gerona Road, Stanford. Parking and shuttle service start at the Tresidder parking lot on campus, between Lagunita Drive and Mayfield Avenue. For information, <http://histsoc.stanford.edu> or call 650-324-1653 or 650-723-3332

To enhance your visit, pick up a copy of the newly published *Historic Houses III, San Juan Neighborhood, Stanford University*, which describes these houses and a dozen others. Books cost \$20, including tax, and will be available at the ticket pick-up.

### Tour Highlights

**A 1927 ADOBE-STYLE** house, designed by architect Charles K. Sumner. Though much renovated, the house retains its original H shape. Among the many interesting details in the house are the original copper, brass, and iron fixtures, hand-hewn beams and door lintels, and hand-made Mexican tile on the living room floor and outdoor patios.

The current owners have made careful upgrades and the original garden still thrives. Architect Sumner would be happy that the house still retains “a feeling of permanence—various parts of the house appear happy and at peace together.”

**A 1926 TUDOR PERIOD-STYLE** house designed by Charles K. Sumner. The house remains one of the few campus houses owned by descendants of the original family. With its steeply pitched roofs and a stone arch around the front door, it could be said to have a “medieval” storybook” form. Family treasures in the house include American antique furniture and a noteworthy doll collection. The current owner moved into the house in 1960. Many grandchildren are commemorated by engraved stepping-stones in the back garden.

**A 1929 TUDOR PERIOD-STYLE** home designed by architects William Binder and Ernest Curtis. Honduran mahogany was used throughout the house. To the left of the entry, French doors in a Tudor arch open to the 19 by 29 foot living room, which has an impressive carved stone fireplace and French doors to the back garden. The current owners have kept the spirit of the elegant house intact while upgrading its 75 year old wiring, plumbing and other utilities.

**A 1927 TUDOR PERIOD-STYLE** house designed by architect Charles K. Sumner. Much of the house retains its original charm, including an elegant and unusual molded concrete fireplace mantel with a cut-out pattern across it. Glass doors to the front porch provide a view an impressive ancient deciduous oak tree.

The current owners raised three children here and the yard served as a stock farm for goats, sheep, dogs and cats. Improvements, include extensive landscaping—in the garden a bird-bath in rough rocks attracts a variety of birds. The remodeled rear garden takes advantage of the sloping lot and cleverly reuses 1989 earthquake debris as a path border.

**A 1929 TUDOR PERIOD-STYLE** house designed by Charles K Sumner. The steep roof, with gently flared eaves, still has its original flat red tiles. The front door is set into an elliptical arch, a Sumner hallmark and motif throughout the house.

The current owners have made careful alterations to maintain and improve the house and gardens. A revitalized old red climbing rose again blooms spectacularly. Sitting on a stone garden bench, a remnant of a Stanford building destroyed in the 1906 quake, one can appreciate the beauty of Stanford’s houses and gardens and the enduring history of their creators.