

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October 2—**Palo Alto Black and White Ball at the historic Lucie Stern Community Center.**

Opening October 8 at the Museum of American Heritage: **Number, Please: The Evolution of the Telephone.** For more information, call (650) 321-1004 or check the MOAH Web site at www.moah.org. Located at 351 Homer Avenue.

Open Friday-Sunday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; free admission.

December 12—**Holiday House Tour** featuring Stanford campus homes.

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 for contact information.

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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

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Late Summer 2004

2004 PAST Preservation Awards



Adaptive Reuse Award—
640 Waverley Street

Neighborhood Preservation Award—
334 and 342 High Street

Residential Remodeling Award—
1060 High Street

Save This Date!

TOO SOON TO EVEN THINK ABOUT THE HOLIDAYS? Is your calendar but a blank page for the month of December? Well, get out those red marking pens... it's time to mark December 12th as the date PAST ventures onto the Stanford campus for its annual **Holiday House Tour**.

The PAST Board is excited to be working with the **Stanford Historical Society** for this year's tour. They have most graciously facilitated a rare glimpse of five historic houses on San Juan Hill, a winding, woody residential area that affords many of its hilltop residents splendid views.

So, start looking for a festive pair of walking shoes and plan on joining PAST Heritage on a very special Holiday House Tour this December 12th from 2 to 5 p.m. Please look for further details toward the end of September on our Web site at www.pastheritage.org ↪

Dianne MacDaniels



PAST BOARD TAKES ACTION

The California Performance Review (CPR) Commission has recommended elimination of the State Historical Resources Commission (SHRC).

WHY IS THIS A CONCERN? Most of the funding for historic preservation at the state level in California comes from a federal grant from the Historic Preservation Fund. This \$1.2 million annual grant is the primary source of funding for our own California State Office of Historic Preservation. In order to receive this funding, California must establish, fund and retain a historic review commission like the State Historical Resources Commission. The SHRC, which passes on recommendations of California properties for the National Register, among other things, was the body that recently approved the Greenmeadow and Green Gables neighborhoods' applications to be on the National Register of Historic Places. The SHRC's annual budget is \$17,000. If the State eliminates the SHRC, the California State Office of Historic Preservation will not be funded by the federal government and will thus die unless other state funding comes along. This outcome would pose a dire situation for California's rich historic and archaeological resources.

The PAST Board wrote the following letter to the Governor and CPR to protest this recommended cut of the State Historical Resources Commission. The CPR will hold a hearing Sept. 17 on its recommendations for reorganizing California's government.

Office of the Governor
Constituent Affairs
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814
Attn: CPR Commission

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger and Commission Members:

We are writing to express our considerable alarm and opposition to the California Performance Review Commission's recommendation to eliminate the State Historical Resources Commission (SHRC).

The SHRC is the keystone of California's program for protecting our state's precious and threatened historical and cultural resources. We believe that the SHRC's tiny annual budget of \$17,000 is a huge bargain. Reducing state spending by such an insignificant amount, it seems to us, will do next to nothing to cure California's fiscal ills but will result in the State's loss

of over \$1 million annually in federal money to fund the California Office of Historic Preservation. The federal government mandates that California appoint and fund a "State Review Board," such as SHRC, to approve nominations to the National Register of Historic Places, in order to be eligible for the federal grants that make up the lion's share of the Office of Historic Preservation's budget. In effect, your proposal, if carried out, would wipe out the Office of Historic Preservation with one stroke – if funding were not replaced with state General Funds. This is truly throwing out the baby with the bath water!

The effect of losing the SHRC, and in turn the Office of Historic Preservation, would be to bring down, like a house of cards, a network, thoughtfully built over more than 150 years, of historic and archaeological preservation efforts all over the state. The work of local preservation boards and commissions and preservation officers in numerous California cities and counties that have become Certified Local Governments would grind to a halt. These local entities are dependent upon the expertise, encouragement and, to some extent, financial support that comes through the State Office of Historic Preservation. This disastrous result would come at a time when this delicate network of partnerships among historic preservation workers statewide—government employees and thousands of volunteers alike—has consolidated and standardized "best practices." These ensure that there is consistency in what is determined to be historic and worthy of saving as our heritage for future generations. Without the Office of Historic Preservation and its vital work, California would be viewed by all the other states as having abandoned California's irreplaceable historic heritage. Rebuilding the expertise contained within the Office of Historic Preservation and its vital links around the state would be extraordinarily costly, if not impossible, if this outstanding agency were to disappear.

As the directors governing a local organization with a membership of 300 Palo Alto and Stanford residents who are vitally interested in passing on the legacy of California's historic built environment, we protest loudly the recommendation of the California Performance Review Commission to give up the SHRC and, in so doing lose California preservation's leader, educator and inspiration, the Office of Historic Preservation.

PAST Board of Directors

The Caroline Chronicles

I am delighted to be the new President of Palo Alto Stanford Heritage. I have been involved with PAST since 1989 when I first became a docent. Gail Woolley taught that first docent class, and it was a wonderful introduction to Palo Alto's rich and exciting history. Learning about Professorville and its original residents gave me some insight into why Palo Alto always insists on doing things just a little differently. As President, I hope to continue learning about Palo Alto's history and its built environment, and I'm looking for new ways in which we can do this together. I am delighted to have an enthusiastic and energetic Board with many new faces. We are exploring ways to bring preservation to the forefront in Palo Alto with workshops and organized tours of neighboring historic resources.

Out of our annual Board retreat in July, three priorities emerged. First, we would like to stay in closer contact with you, our members. One way we hope to do this is with an email list, so we hope that when you renew your membership you will share your email address with us so that we can contact you in a more timely manner. We also hope to come togeth-

Staying Cool the Old House Way

During the typical six to nine days a year in which Palo Alto experiences sweltering 90-degree weather, there is an excellent and simple method to cool your old house. This method was designed before air conditioning and is both efficient and free. It has been used in a 1905 home for the past 25 years to successfully create a temperate environment.

The natural ventilation techniques of the past centered on moving already cool air through the home and exhausting it after it has absorbed the heat that makes us uncomfortable. This cool air can also be captured at night when temperatures are at least 15 to 20 degrees cooler than during the day. Typically, the coolest air is to the west of your house in the early morning, and to the east in the evening. If you have a basement, you will find its temperatures are also much lower at all times. Because hot air rises, there are air currents in motion even when there is no wind; therefore, if you open windows and doors that are low on the cool side of your home and high on the warm side, you will create an air current drawing cool air in and releasing warm air out. As the direction of the sun changes during the day, the intake and exhaust windows and doors should be switched. To intensify the effect, a fan can become an extension of this old fashioned convection cooling process by forcing the air to move faster. It should blow from your lowest source of cool air (i.e., window or basement staircase). Of course, each night all of the windows and doors of the rooms you desire to keep cool should be opened so that the largest amount of cooling air flows through.

These old houses were intelligently designed with ventilation in mind in both summer and winter, so we encourage you to enjoy, admire, and apply the old wisdom that was used in their construction.~

er more to share our ideas. Second, we are intent on learning more about preservation and sharing this information with the community. The Board is working on organizing a preservation workshop for early next year. Please let us know if you would like to help with this effort. And finally, we are looking at using the Web more effectively. There is an impressive amount of information on how other locations are implementing preservation, and hopefully soon it will be just a click away from our enticing and entertaining Web page.

I hope that you will join the PAST Board and me as we rededicate ourselves to the preservation of the historic architecture, neighborhoods, and character of the greater Palo Alto Stanford area through informed citizen involvement and education.

Please introduce yourself to me as a PAST Heritage member as we meet up throughout the year. I look forward to speaking with you and to strengthening preservation efforts in Palo Alto together.

Sincerely,

Caroline Willis

President, PAST Heritage

Historic Resources Board Update

At the PAST Board retreat in July, Historic Resources Board (HRB) Chair Beth Bunnenburg shared the following:

The HRB commented on the National Register nomination of the Green Gables and Green-meadow Eichler subdivisions as historic districts. The Palo Alto HRB and the State Historical Resources Commission voted to support the nomination and it is being forwarded to the National Park Service in Washington, D.C., for evaluation.

Beth briefly reviewed the current Palo Alto preservation ordinance (most of which was enacted in 1986). Although downtown commercial properties have some protection and regulation, the ordinance for single family homes relies on voluntary compliance. Therefore, the major effort at the city level is to look at incentives for preservation. Recent developments are:

- ◆ **Flood hazard regulations** have now been amended to bring them into conformance with FEMA regulations. Locally designated Category 1 or 2 structures will be exempted from flood hazard regulations. National Register structures are already exempted.
- ◆ Discussions are in process to rewrite portions of the **zoning ordinance** that pertain to single family residential zone regulations. Historic Inventory Category 1 or 2 structures would be allowed up to 250 square feet of additional floor area if the modifications meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards.
- ◆ Discussions are underway about **basements**. Possibly Historic

Inventory Category 1 or 2 properties will not have to count basements in the FAR even if the basement is more than 36 inches above ground.

Beth also discussed other methods of historic preservation, such as:

- ◆ The **Mills Act** for tax relief for extremely significant properties
- ◆ Granting or public purchase of **preservation easements**
- ◆ Other property tax or building permit **fee relief** for historic properties
- ◆ **Transfer of development rights (TDRs)**.

Public education is especially important in building a support base for any of these programs.

BOARD COMPOSITION:

The seven members of the HRB are appointed for three year terms. Meetings are at 8 a.m. on the first and third Wednesdays of the month at City Hall and are open to the public. Watch the *Palo Alto Weekly* for agendas and meeting dates or call the Planning Department at 329-2144.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- ▶ A demonstrated interest in and knowledge of history, architecture or historic preservation.
- ▶ One member shall be an owner/occupant of a Category 1 or 2 structure or of a structure in an historic district.
- ▶ Three members shall be architects, landscape architects, building designers, or other design professionals.
- ▶ At least one member shall possess academic education or

practical experience in history or a related field.

PRIMARY DUTIES

- ▶ Reviewing and making recommendations to the Architectural Review Board on proposed exterior changes to commercial and multiple-family buildings on the Historic Building Inventory.
- ▶ Reviewing and making recommendations about exterior changes to Category 1 and 2 single-family residences on the Historic Building Inventory.
- ▶ Researching and making recommendations to the City Council on proposed additions and on reclassification of existing buildings on the Inventory.
- ▶ Performing other functions as may be delegated from time to time to the Historic Resources Board by the City Council. ~

WANTED: STAFF WRITER FOR THE *PAST NEWS*. Do you often make small discoveries about Palo Alto that others would love to know about? Tidbits, trivia, and other items of general interest are what we are looking for. Don't be shy, a phone call will do the trick! Call Carolyn George at **(650) 494-0561**.

Presentation of Preservation Awards and Centennial Plaques, Saturday, May 8, 2004 at 1200 Bryant Street

Built in 1904, this home was first occupied by artist **George Loftus Noyes**, a highly respected Boston landscape painter known for his "en plein air" method. The designer is unknown, but perhaps it was Noyes because we know that he taught summer school at Stanford in 1904.

His biography mentions that he lost many possessions in the earthquake of 1906, but his home survived.

Professor Frank Angell, a member of the original Stanford faculty, was a long-time resident and steward of the house. (He previously resided at 1005 Bryant.) Angell was head of the Psychology Department and Stanford's first track coach. In 1933, President Ray Lyman Wilbur paid him tribute as the "Father of Stanford Athletics," and Stanford's track was dedicated as Angell Field.

The third owners were **Harold and Cornelia Burdick**, known to national radio audiences as "Night Editor" and "Sister Kate." Mrs. Burdick was active in the Palo Alto Community Theater.

During the 1950s and 60s, the home was owned and attended to by **Paul and Enid Pearson**. Mrs. Pearson was a member of the Palo Alto City Council.

Abe and Marian Sofaer, the present owners, were kind enough to share their 1904 setting with us for the presentations and continue to treasure and attend to the house and its heritage. ~



Abe and Marian Sofaer share with the audience some interesting tidbits about their home after receiving their 1904 plaque.

Membership Renewal

Soon you will be receiving your membership renewal letter. When you renew your membership, you will receive a ticket or two (depending on your renewal category) to our exciting **Holiday House Tour** of five Stanford campus homes. We appreciate your support of PAST's work on historic preservation. We hope you will renew your membership and come to the House Tour on December 12th. ~

Emily Renzel, Membership Chair

2004 PAST Preservation Award Winners



**NEIGHBORHOOD PRESERVATION AWARD—
334 AND 342 HIGH STREET**

Carlyle (Tad) and Louise Wilson for rehabilitation of these two homes, thus maintaining the historic character of the 300 block of High Street.



**ADAPTIVE REUSE AWARD—
640 WAVERLEY STREET**

Rebecca Vitale and Suzanne Miller for seeing the charm of a simple 1902 Craftsman style house and having the foresight and imagination to thoughtfully refurbish it into **Thistle**, a lively retail shop.



**RESIDENTIAL REMODELING AWARD—
1060 HIGH STREET**

John Hermannsson, Architect
Davey Hubay, owner at time of remodel, for a house addition that combines sustainable building practices with historically sensitive remodeling.