

PAST Remembers Robert “Bo” Crane

We deeply mourn the loss of Palo Alto Stanford Heritage (PAST) Board Chair Bo Crane (Robert L. Crane, Jr), who passed away on August 21, 2024 at home after a brave 6-year struggle with ocular melanoma. He was 74.

Bo was an avid local historian and author of many and varied publications—many about local history and architecture.

In addition to chairing our board, he served on the boards of Palo Alto Historical Association (PAHA), and Menlo Park Historical, contributing to their newsletters, writing several books, and leading countless walking tours of historic houses. Many people might recognize Bo’s name from the Daily Post’s Mystery Photo column, which he contributed to regularly with both guesses and photos.

Bo lived his entire life in Palo Alto, graduating from Palo Alto High School in 1968 and Stanford University in 1972, where he majored in English and Creative Writing.

He joined the homebuilding company Ditz-Crane, founded by his father and George and Jack Ditz in

1972, and he worked in residential construction and management until his retirement in 2012. Thereafter, he devoted himself to the history of Palo Alto and Menlo Park.



Bo was also a lifelong athlete who wrestled and played football at Paly. At Stanford he played Freshman football and later rugby and soccer.

He became a passionate cyclist, completing 100,000 miles by 2023. He also coached AYSO soccer for 14 years and served as AYSO Commissioner for Palo Alto.

Bo is survived by his wife, Kristen Arnold Harrison of Palo Alto, his former wife, Susie Standlee Crane, also of Palo Alto, and their daughter, Ellen, of Nashville, TN.

A memorial will be held on October 20, from 3-6 p.m., at Lucie Stern Community Center.

Those who wish to honor Bo can make a memorial contribution in his name to Dr. Prithvi Mruthyunjaya’s research into the genetics and treatment improvement for ocular melanoma at Stanford Medicine ♦

President's Letter

With the loss of our recently elected Board President, Bo Crane, who passed away on August 21, PAST is left with huge shoes to fill.

Bo was a passionate and fundamental supporter of the organization, with his deep personal knowledge of Palo Alto and Stanford. He developed and led walking tours of our neighborhoods and was a prolific writer of articles and books on local heritage. His endless enthusiasm for sharing his knowledge of local history was infectious.

So generous with his time, Bo worked hard to provide our organization with detailed information to help us continue our goal of educating the public on the value of our heritage.

The PAST Heritage Board is dedicated to continuing Bo's walking tours with three tours scheduled in October (see page 3). We are also actively seeking volunteers who are interested in becoming neighborhood walking tour guides. For more information, contact **president@pastheritage.org**.

PAST continues our Centennial House plaque program and our research at the request of homeowners to uncover the history of their homes. We also serve as your advocates to the Historic Resources Board and the City of Palo Alto for matters relating to the historic value and designation of buildings. To help with this work, and to fund our operating expenses, we need your annual or lifetime membership contributions. While our all-volunteer board covers most of the expenses we incur to support our mission, insurance and office expenses are not covered — save by membership dues.

I urge you to continue your membership, begin a new membership, or consider donating to our nonprofit organization to help us. If you want to join us, we need more board members and volunteers interested in our mission — let us know by contacting **president@pastheritage.org**.

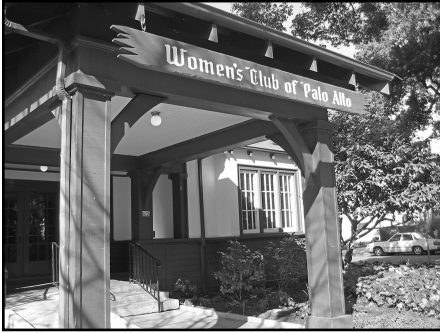
We appreciate and value your continuing support.

Philip Roberts, Acting President

Visit **www.pastheritage.org** or email **webmaster@pastheritage.org** to request a membership form, then mail your form and check to: Palo Alto Stanford Heritage
P.O. Box 308
Palo Alto, CA 94302

Fall Walking Tour Schedule

Join us for a fun and friendly walk through town. Tours start at 10 a.m., generally take around 90 minutes, and cover up to 1 1/2 miles of easy walking. Remember to bring water and sunscreen. Visit www.pastheritage.org to check for updates to tours and schedules.



Saturday, October 19 – Homer Avenue Tour

Meet at the Woman's Club of Palo Alto, 475 Homer Avenue (corner of Homer and Cowper)

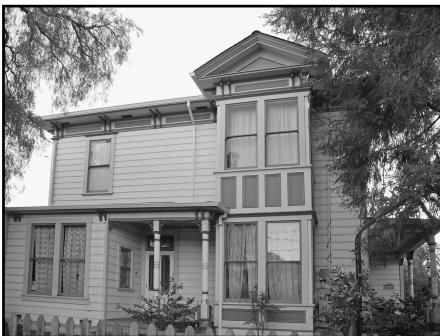
Old laundries, the church from the movie Harold and Maude, and charming Victorian cottages are highlights of this Homer Avenue walk.



Sunday, October 20 – Professorville Tour

Meet at 1005 Bryant Street (corner of Bryant and Addison)

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, this beautiful and iconic tree-shaded neighborhood is the first historical district in Palo Alto.



Saturday, October 26 – Lower College Terrace Tour

Meet at 2310 Yale Street (the house is perpendicular to Yale Street)

Neat cottages and handsome residences characterize this College Terrace neighborhood which is adjacent to the Stanford campus.

All PAST walking tours are free and open to anyone. Donations to support the mission of Palo Alto Stanford Heritage are always welcome and appreciated.

Restoring an Architectural Treasure

By Lee I. Lippert, AIA, Architect

There's a saying that "beauty is only skin deep," but Palo Alto's stunning Victorian-era A.G. Herzinger House is undergoing historic preservation and restoration that is beautifying this landmark home from the inside out.

The Herzinger House, at 1023 Forest Avenue (formerly 1007 Forest Court), and one of Palo Alto's oldest homes, is currently undergoing extensive, painstaking rehabilitation to restore it to its former beauty.

Built in 1896, the Victorian Queen Anne-style house is a Category 2 resource on the City of Palo Alto's Historic Inventory. It was designed by architect C.H. Barrett and built by M.P. Madison. When the house was first constructed, the property was located in unincorporated Palo Alto, on the tract later known as the Ashby Addition. At that time, Boyce and Hale streets marked the Palo Alto city limits. After being annexed to the city of Palo Alto, Forest Court was renamed Forest Avenue. In 1955, the property was subdivided.



Historic photo of A.G. Herzinger House

A decade after the house was completed, the three-story Victorian home survived the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, but not without substantial damage. An original bell-shaped belvedere (an open porch on the third story) was destroyed. Historians believe the belvedere was torn from the house when the original unreinforced masonry chimney flue collapsed during the earthquake. In the original photograph of the home it is apparent that the belvedere was connected to the original brick arch-topped chimney with an iron connector rod. The masonry chimney flue was rebuilt but the belvedere was not. There was a second arch-topped chimney flue on the west side and this is thought to have collapsed at the same time.

The home is currently undergoing re-roofing and seismic upgrading. Early on, the renovation team identified that the original roof rafters were significantly over span. Using the existing 12:12 slope roof pattern, new 2x8 roof rafters at 16"o.c. were introduced. However, the process of strengthening the roof tripled the weight, creating new seismic load complications and challenges. The team solved this by bringing the seismic roof loads down internally to the foundation through a series of shear walls and steel moment frames.

The existing original basement and crawl space was unreinforced masonry, which created other complications when anchoring the shear walls and moment frames to the foundation. Further, the home is located in a flood hazard zone, and the

unreinforced masonry foundation was deteriorating. This jeopardized the home's structural integrity.

The team decided to replace the entire unreinforced masonry basement and crawl space with a new concrete stem-wall, mat-slab, and waterproof membrane. The new roof framing, shear walls, moment frames, basement, crawl space, and foundation have now been completed, and re-roofing is finally underway. During the rehabilitation work, the team discovered the original historic 1896 roof material was Western Red Cedar wood shingles with a 5-inch exposure on spaced sheathing. These materials were visible from the underside of the attic.

When the house was built, in 1896, it was common to employ cedar shingles because they could be easily custom cut, steamed, and shaped to conform to the conical turret, curved cantilever balcony roof, and bell-shaped belvedere roof elements. Today this art has been lost, and the finished product is undesirable because the building code requires the roof diaphragm to be shear plywood or other suitable solid structural substrate.

The new solid plywood sheathing does not allow cedar shingles to breathe. In addition, present day insurers often refuse to insure cedar shingle roof homes. Unfortunately, the original roof had previously been covered over with asphalt composition shingles, which is the preferred re-roofing material today.

Parden Construction has completed the new roof framing, shear walls, moment frames, basement,



Stained glass window unearthed during the renovation



Herzinger House in the present day

crawl space, and foundation, and re-roofing is finally underway.

The team also discovered an existing quarter-round leaded stained glass window concealed in the wall to the right of the front masonry chimney flue. The lead has sagged over the years, and the window is currently being restored and re-supported with pencil rods.

The A.G. Herzinger House is currently in review with the Palo Alto Historic Resources Board, with a hearing scheduled for 8:30 a.m., October 10, 2024 at Palo Alto City Council chambers. ♦

Spring Awards Program Celebrates Outstanding Preservation Work

Held at the Palo Alto Art Center on May 5, Palo Alto Stanford Heritage (PAST) and the Palo Alto Historical Association's 28th Centennial Plaque and Historic Preservation Awards program once again honored outstanding preservation work in the city.

This year's Preservation Award went to **Palo Alto High School** for extensive renovation and modernization completed there. The annual award recognizes projects that rehabilitate or restore local historic buildings.

Additionally, Amy French, the city liaison to the Historic Resources Board (HRB) and Michael Makinen, a long-time member of the HRB, accepted Lifetime Achievement Awards for their significant contributions to preserving local history.

The annual awards program also recognizes homes in Palo Alto on their centennial anniversary. This year homes built in 1923 were

recognized with centennial engraved bronze plaques.

The plaques were first awarded by the HRB in 1994 as part of the centennial of Palo Alto's incorporation. Since then, plaques have been made available annually to any home that has attained the age of 100 years.

Steven Eichler, grandson of California housing legend Joseph Eichler, spoke about Eichler homes and Palo Alto's historic Greenmeadow neighborhood, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its prevalence of pristine mid-century modern-era Eichlers. The 22-block neighborhood, which celebrated its 70th anniversary this year, provides a good look at the suburban utopia Eichler envisioned when he developed in the area in 1954.

Watch the video of the entire awards program, including slides of 1923 centennial homes and the Palo Alto High School renovation at <https://vimeo.com/945339625> ♦



Michael Makinen with PAST board members Carolyn Camozzi George, Gogo Heinrich, and Brian George, accepts 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award



An Eichler home in Palo Alto's Greenmeadow neighborhood

Pre-1923 Centennial Bronze Plaques Available Now

If you own a home built 100 years ago or earlier, handsome bronze plaques are available to display on the exterior of your home.

The plaques commemorate the build date of your house as it exemplifies the heritage of Palo Alto and Stanford. We have plaques **in stock** going back as far as 1893 for houses that do not already have a plaque. They are \$145 each and PAST delivers them and helps with installation.

If you don't know the build date of your house but believe it was constructed before 1923, and you want to learn more, contact president@pastheritage.org and our historians will help you research your home.

To date, we have arranged for 285 plaques for homes in Palo Alto and Stanford going back to 1891. The plaques confer no official status with the city or state, but are an interesting reminder of our shared local heritage to those who pass by and notice the plaques. ♦



Palo Alto Stanford Heritage (PAST) is seeking community members to join our Board of Directors. Applicable experience includes (but is not limited to) community leadership, writing, research, teaching, architecture, photography, videography, and web skills. If you are interested in architecture, history, research, or making a difference in the community, contact president@pastheritage.org for more information.

Fall History To-Do List

- Oct 9 PAST Heritage Board Meeting
- Oct 10 Historic Resources Board Meeting
- Oct 19 Homer Avenue Walking Tour
- Oct 20 Professorville Walking Tour
- Oct 26 Lower College Terrace Walking Tour

PAST Heritage Board of Directors

Acting President	Philip Roberts
Secretary & Newsletter	Susan Borton
Treasurer	Lee Lippert
Historian	Steve Staiger
HRB Representative	Gogo Heinrich
Webmaster	Carolyn George
Directors at Large	David Bower Brian George Nick Marinaro Simon Pennington



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 through citizen involvement and education.

www.pastheritage.org

Annual membership is \$40. To join, mail a check to PAST at PO Box 308 and include your contact information including name, local address, email, and phone number