



PAST NEWS

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www.pastheritage.org

Fall 2025

A Look Back at PAST's 35 Years of Preservation Advocacy

Long a center for innovators and entrepreneurs, and possessing a blend of old-world charm and modern vibrancy, Palo Alto seemingly has it all with an attractive downtown, picturesque tree-lined streets, and well-preserved historic architecture.

Much of the city's character lies in its preserved architectural districts, such as leafy Professorville and the Spanish Colonial Revival-style buildings of its business section which contrast with its modern tech identity.

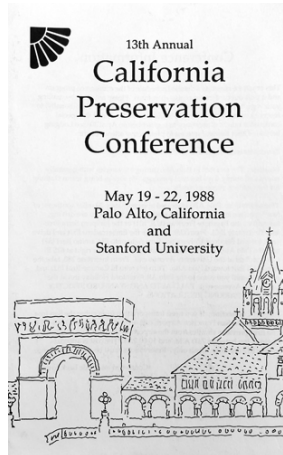
Palo Alto Stanford (PAST) Heritage was formed in 1987 when the area was selected by the California Preservation Foundation for its state conference in May of 1988. Following that conference, PAST registered as a nonprofit to advocate for the preservation of historically significant architecture and neighborhoods in the Palo Alto-Stanford area.

In 1994, to celebrate Palo Alto's Centennial, the city presented bronze plaques to owners of 100-year-old houses, beginning a tradition that PAST eventually assumed in 1996 and continues today.

Most recently, PAST has focused on educating the local community about the importance of historic preservation through our website (www.pastheritage.org), newsletters, published books, and spring and fall walking tours of historic neighborhoods. We also host an awards ceremony in May during the National Trust for Preservation's

Preservation Month which recognizes centennial homes and owners, contractors, and architects who have done outstanding work in the historic rehabilitation of private and public structures. The ceremony also recognizes individuals in the community for outstanding preservation efforts through our Bo Crane Memorial Preservation Award, which was dedicated to our late president, Robert (Bo) Crane.

For a detailed timeline of PAST that highlights major accomplishments and milestones, visit our website at www.pastheritage.org/timeline.html. ♦



President's Letter

PAST has had a productive 2025 so far. We have focused on our mission to support the preservation of the historic architecture, neighborhoods, and character of the greater Palo Alto–Stanford area through informed citizen involvement and education. One way we do this is through our popular free walking neighborhood tours (*see pp. 5-6 for fall tour schedule*). We have been organizing, staffing, and publicizing the program and are pleased to offer seven different tours next month, including one of the upper portion of the College Terrace neighborhood, two in the Crescent Park neighborhood, and one of the historic Greenmeadow Eichler neighborhood. These tours reveal a deeper history of our historic neighborhoods and are an enjoyable, leisurely way to learn more about what has made Palo Alto the unique city it is today.

This year we sold and installed six Centennial Plaques for homes built in 1924 and it is rewarding to see how enthusiastic homeowners are to receive their plaques. Also this year we changed the wording on the plaques to read “Heritage” instead of “Historic” to more clearly indicate that the plaques are merely a reminder—not a statement of any official historic status that would impose restrictions on property owners. The new plaques continue to be cast in solid bronze and make an impressive and elegant addition to any house.

From time to time PAST receives articles written by longtime Palo Alto residents recalling times gone by. The letters are fascinating to read, although we do not usually have space to include them in our newsletter. We also receive photographs, maps, building plans, and commemorative memorabilia from our members and other citizens, and we direct all of these materials to the City of Palo Alto Archives managed by historians Steve Staiger and Darla Secor of the Palo Alto Historical Association (www.pahistory.org).

Several historical booklets are available from PAST, including four from our late president, Bo Crane. These include **The Life and Times of Dennis Martin**, **Ticket to Rock**, **Birge Clarke Selected Projects**, and the **Palo Alto/Stanford Heritage Guide Book**. Other pamphlets and booklets are available upon request.

We are also working with the Museum of American Heritage (www.moah.org) and other local organizations to explore how we can collaborate more effectively to support our common missions of preserving our rich heritage.

Philip Roberts, Board President

email: president@www.pastheritage.org

Support PAST by becoming a member. 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

John Hanna Passes Away at 93



Hanna was a graduate of Phillips Academy Andover, Stanford University, and Stanford Law School. He launched a distinguished legal career spanning 65 years as one of California's leading land use and real estate lawyers.

In December 2021, the Palo Alto Historical Association (PAHA) hosted a program featuring the Hanna House on the Stanford campus. A highlight of that program was an interview with Hanna filmed in the Hanna House where he grew up. In the interview, John shared family memories in the house and personal stories of visits made by the Frank Lloyd Wright. ♦

Local resident and business executive John Paul Hanna, who grew up in the famed Frank Lloyd Wright-designed Hanna-Honeycomb House on the Stanford campus, died on August 6, 2025. He was 93.

Born in 1932 to educator parents Jean and Paul Hanna, Hanna attributed his lifelong love of art and aesthetics to being raised in the Hanna House, the home his parents had built on the Stanford campus beginning in 1937. Wright's insistence on excellence in both "form and function" is said to have had a profound effect on the younger Hanna at an early age.

The singular house was Wright's first design in the San Francisco Bay Area, and his first work with non-rectangular structures. The house was chosen by the American Institute of Architects as one of 17 buildings by the architect to be retained as an example of his contribution to American culture.

After living in the house for 38 years, the Hannas gave the property to Stanford University in 1974, to house scholars in international education, but instead, it housed four university provosts.

The house was recognized as a National Historic Landmark in 1989.



The Hanna-Honeycomb House, the Frank Lloyd Wright masterpiece at Frenchman's Road on the Stanford Campus

Pre-1925 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. PAST Heritage has plaques in stock going back as far as 1893 for houses that do not already have a plaque. Plaques for homes built in 2024 or earlier are \$225 for members and \$260 for nonmembers, 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 1925, and you want to learn more, contact president@pastheritage.org and we will help you research your home.

To date, PAST Heritage has arranged for close to 300 plaques for homes in Palo Alto and Stanford dating as far back as 1891. The plaques confer no official status with the city or state (and no limitations for homeowners), but are an interesting reminder of our shared local heritage to anyone passing by who notices the plaques. ♦

Palo Alto Stanford Heritage (PAST) seeks enthusiastic volunteers to join our Board of Directors, help plan our annual awards program, or serve as walking tour guides. 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 2025 Walking Tour Schedule

Join us for a fun and friendly walk through town. Tours start at 10 a.m., generally no more than 90 minutes, and cover under 1.5 miles of easy walking. Bring water and sunscreen. Visit www.pastheritage.org to check for changes to tours and schedules.



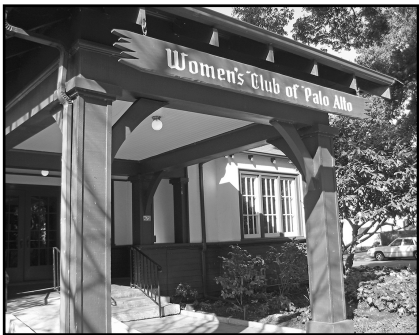
Saturday, October 4 — Crescent Park Tour
Meet opposite 526 Seneca Street at University Avenue

Manors, mansions and Italian Renaissance homes are all on the menu of this tour of the lovely Crescent Park Seneca Street area of Palo Alto.



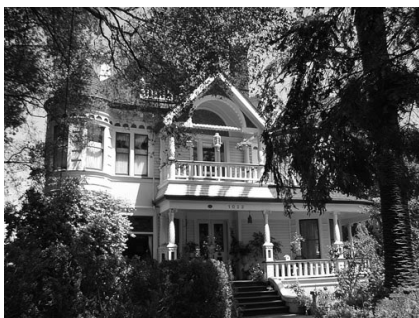
Sunday, October 5 — Beyond Professorville Tour
Meet at 1325 Cowper Street

Fine examples of Colonial Spanish Revival, Craftsman, and Queen Anne architecture including the magnificent 1925 Birge Clark-designed Casa Abierto, Casaquerida, and the Palo Alto Club.



Sunday, October 12 — Homer Avenue Tour
Meet at Woman's Club of Palo Alto, 475 Homer Avenue (corner of Homer and Cowper)

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



Saturday, October 18 — Boyce Ashby Addition Tour
Meet at 1001 Forest Avenue

Admire some of Palo Alto's most elaborate and oldest houses developed outside the former city limit of the 1890's. Includes the grand 1896 Queen Anne Herzinger House on Forest Avenue, now under major restoration.



Sunday, October 19 – 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 Professorville neighborhood is the first historical district in Palo Alto.



Saturday, October 25 – Upper College Terrace
Meet at 2275 Amherst Street

Developed at the same time as Stanford University and originally mapped as “Palo Alto,” the terrace portion of Upper College Terrace is mostly in the upper half of the tract, bordering campus to the west.



Sunday, October 26 – Greenmeadow Tour
Meet at 4010 Nelson Drive

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its pristine mid-century modern-era Eichlers, this unique community in south Palo Alto provides a good look at the suburban utopia envisioned by developer Joseph Eichler in 1954.

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

Fall History Happenings

**GAMBLE GARDEN HISTORIC HOME
& GARDEN**
gamblegarden.org

September 20
9:30 a.m. - “American Table: Exploring the Foods
of the Americas”

LOS ALTOS HISTORY MUSEUM
losaltoshistory.org

September 24
9 a.m. - 4 p.m. **TRAIN DAY**

PAST HERITAGE
www.pastheritage.org

October 4 - October 26
Fall Walking Tours (*see pages 5-6 for tour
details*)
All tours start at 10 a.m.

PALO ALTO MUSEUM
www.paloaltomuseum.org

*Opening Spring 2026... watch for more
information*

MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HERITAGE
www.moah.org

September 21
3 p.m. - “Harvesting History: Celebrating
Heirloom Foods”; heirloom foods talk, cooking
demonstration and guided walk through the
MOAH garden

STANFORD HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
historicalsociety.stanford.edu

October 16-18
9:30 a.m. - Alumni Oral Histories at Stanford
Alumni Week



The Birge Clark-designed Palo Alto Museum is
slated to open in Spring 2026

Fall History To-Do List

- Oct 4 Crescent Park Walking Tour
- Oct 5 Beyond Professorville Walking Tour
- Oct 8 PAST Heritage Board Meeting
- Oct 9 Historic Resources Board Meeting
- Oct 12 Homer Avenue Walking Tour
- Oct 18 Boyce Ashby Walking Tour
- Oct 19 Professorville Walking Tour
- Oct 25 Upper College Terrace Walking Tour
- Oct 26 Greenmeadow Walking Tour

PAST Heritage Board of Directors

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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