

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October 25—**The Palo Alto History Museum Project Committee: Palo Alto Trivial Pursuit and Trunk Show.** Test your knowledge of Palo Alto and enjoy exhibits, artifacts, photo opportunities, ice cream at 1932 prices, and our own Palo Alto Trivial Pursuit with prizes! Roth Building Patio, 300 Homer Avenue, 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

At the Museum of American Heritage (MOAH), 351 Homer Avenue, Palo Alto.

Now through January 25, 2004—**Vintage Board Games and Puzzles.**

October 25—**Family Math Day**, 1-3 p.m.

For more information, call (650) 321-1004 or check the MOAH Web site at <http://www.moah.org>. Open Friday-Sunday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; free admission.

November 19—**San Francisco Cultural Geography: The Case of Juana Briones 1812-1850.** San Francisco Public Library Community Room, 100 Larkin Street, 6 p.m.

On-going—**Walking Tours.** See page 6 or our Web site 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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P.O. Box 308 • Palo Alto, California 94302 • (650) 299-8878

Autumn 2003

## 17<sup>th</sup> Annual HOLIDAY HOUSE TOUR Sunday, December 7

2-5 p.m.  
Professorville

See how owners of five historic homes in Professorville met the challenge of renovating for today's needs while preserving their homes' original character and historic integrity. All of these homes provide excellent models of how to achieve the balance between livability for today and preservation of the past for the future.

Since PAST Heritage is among the several organizations supporting the creation of a Palo Alto History Museum in a restored Roth Building, the proceeds from this year's Holiday House Tour will go toward that project.

The tour includes the 100-year-old Slonaker House, a textbook-perfect example of the symmetrical Colonial Revival style that recently underwent a 2 1/2-year award-winning restoration. The other four historic homes are a vernacular Colonial Revival, a Shingle-style house with Colonial Revival elements, and two Craftsman bungalows.

Typical of the fascinatingly eclectic residences of Palo Alto, one tour home was the early residence of the man who became known as "Mr. Palo Alto," and another boasts the living room where Timothy Leary and Ken Kesey first met.

Light refreshments will be served at one of the tour homes. Members will receive complimentary tickets in mid-November, one for individual memberships and two for those at the other levels. Extra tickets are \$20 each if ordered now (see page 7 for order blank) or \$25 if purchased after November 30 or at the door.



**PRESIDENT'S CORNER—**

I am writing this column in historic Fort Sumner, New Mexico. The adjective is apt. This is where the Navajo Nation was exiled from 1864 to 1868 in a failed plains farming experiment. Thirteen years afterward, the fabled Billy the Kid met his storied demise here.

On this road trip through the Southwest—my first in 26 years—I am struck by how freely the adjective “historic” is applied to roads, bridges, downtowns, buildings, and businesses. At one level, it reflects a commercial motive. But if that indicates that history sells, good. Overall, however, I perceive a fundamental pride in being connected with historic events and resources, especially at the local scene. In the authentically historic Southwest, history matters.

In stark contrast is the cavalier disposal our city authorized for Palo Alto’s historic Family Service Laundry building at 140 Homer Avenue. Built in 1930, it is certified for listing on the California Register, which our city government acknowledges. However, its site is needed by the proposed condominium complex at 800 High Street. More specifically, it is in the way of the condo complex's underground parking garage; it is expensive to excavate under an existing building. Our history is to be scraped for a condo’s parking garage.

In February, six City Council members authorized its demolition, certifying an incomplete CEQA negative declaration finding. (It is incomplete because it never analyzed the building’s economic status in the full 800 High Street context.) Council was in a hurry. Jim Burch put it succinctly: “Move on.”

But a referendum movement has stopped the train and given the Family Service Laundry building a new chance. One of the referendum’s specific points of contention is the demolition of this historic resource.

The referendum appears as Measure C on the November 4 ballot. A No vote on Measure C is a vote to save this resource. **No on C = Yes on preservation.** At its September meeting the PAST Board of Directors voted to endorse the referendum. I urge all PAST members to do likewise. Please vote No on C on November 4.



**PAST TO HELP FUND PALO ALTO HISTORY MUSEUM**

PAST Heritage is proud to be among the financial supporters of the Palo Alto History Museum Project, with a gift of \$5,000 this fall plus a \$10,000 pledge. The Board of Directors approved the gift and pledge in October, noting that the history museum project is consistent with PAST’s mission to “preserve the historic architecture, neighborhoods, and character of the greater Palo Alto-Stanford area through informed citizen involvement and education.” The museum will be a valuable resource for PAST and its members, providing background material useful in making recognition awards for historic homes and for docents on tours and at the Holiday House Tour. PAST also is looking forward to mounting exhibits at the museum to showcase the architects and neighborhood history of Palo Alto.

The outright gift of \$5,000 will help the non-profit Palo Alto History Museum Project develop a formal proposal to present to the City of Palo Alto for a museum in the Roth Building, designed by Birge Clark, at 300 Homer Avenue. (The 1932 Spanish Colonial Revival building was the original site of the Palo Alto Medical Clinic.) The \$10,000 will be for capital improvements and is being pledged on condition that the nonprofit receives a contract from the city to rehabilitate the building and run a museum there.

Along with support from PAST, the Palo Alto History Museum Project has the backing of the Palo Alto Historical Association, the Museum of American Heritage, the University South Neighborhoods Group, and the Palo Alto Woman’s Club of Palo Alto. Further information about the museum project is available from Karen Holman, (650) 321-6170 or

kcholman@earthlink.net.

Marilyn Bauriedel



**WANTED**

Do you have an interest in local history—plus writing and research skills? If so, you may want to work with PAST Heritage on an upcoming project.

PAST Heritage is planning a publication on the history and architecture of Professorville and is seeking a talented writer to join the project. The goal is to foster an increased appreciation of the rich history and architectural legacy of the neighborhood.

Professorville, now a historic district, was founded in the 1890s by Stanford faculty members seeking to put down roots near the new university, in the area roughly bounded by Addison Avenue, Cowper Street, Embarcadero Road, and Emerson Street. Many of the professors became leaders in the new city of Palo Alto and built gracious houses that still characterize the neighborhood. PAST often selects Professorville as the site of its annual Holiday House Tour. This year, for instance, several houses in the district—on Kingsley Avenue and Bryant and Ramona streets— will be open to tour on December 7. (See article on the front page.)

Individuals interested in discussing the Professorville project with PAST may call (650) 299-8878 or e-mail dbubenik@earthlink.net

**TIME TO JOIN PAST OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP**

Since our membership year is September to August, your dues are due. Membership in PAST includes complimentary tickets to the Holiday House Tour on December 7. Individual members receive one and the other levels two. Extra tickets are \$20 before December 1 and \$25 thereafter.

To the many of you who have already sent in your dues, thank you very much. Tickets will be mailed at the end of November.

*Please indicate interests here:*

- Advocating for preservation
- Researching centennial houses
- Mailing parties
- Host/Hostessing at the Holiday House Tour
- Helping with refreshments

*Membership categories:*

- \$25 Individual
- \$40 Family
- \$75 Sponsor
- \$100 Patron
- \$500 Lifetime

New  Renewal

Number of extra tickets to the **Holiday House Tour**: \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total amount enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone (day) \_\_\_\_\_ (evening) \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to PAST Heritage and mail to us at P.O. Box 308, Palo Alto, California 94302  
Because PAST Heritage is a tax-exempt charitable organization, contributions are tax deductible in accordance with IRS regulations.

## BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

**Anne Houghteling** juggles a demanding career as Managing Editor-Continuing Education for NurseWeek by day with her participation in the Charleston Meadows Neighborhood Association and as a relatively new member of PAST's Board in the evenings and on weekends.

At NurseWeek, which publishes a journal for nurses in 30 states, she edits continuing education books and exams on various clinical topics. She also worked as a reporter from 1981-89 for the Peninsula Times Tribune and taught English-as-a-second-language in the Sequoia Union High School District Adult School from 1989-94. Born in Palo Alto, she grew up in Los Gatos and Atherton and has returned "home" as an adult. Her interest in historic preservation dates to her reporting work, before her Times Tribune job, for the Los Gatos Times-Observer, where she worked on a series on historic homes in Los Gatos and had the pleasure of touring older houses and talking to owners. She has been a regular on PAST Holiday House tours for years. Because she resides in a 1950 Eichler home, Anne has long been interested in mid-century



modern architecture. She became vocal and active on the subject of the preservation of good mid-century buildings when there was talk of demolishing the Edward Durell Stone-designed Main Library in Palo Alto.

She began attending meetings and speaking up for the "silent" building and later voiced her support for the value of retaining the only Eichler shopping center that is part of an Eichler housing development, Edgewood Plaza in Palo Alto.

Unlike many of us, Anne prefers addressing a group, such as the City Council, from a podium as opposed to persuading people to a point of view in a small group setting. PAST Board is delighted to have her share this talent and willingness to advocate publicly for preservation. Having worked in journalism covering city government, Anne regularly keeps abreast of commission and City Council meetings on local cable TV. With her journalism skills, Anne also ably assists Carolyn George with PAST's newsletter.

*Marilyn Bauriedel*

## Walking Tours of Historic Palo Alto

Downtown  
Professorville  
College Terrace  
Homer Avenue



Monday-Saturday,  
morning or afternoon.

Donation: \$20 per docent group of  
up to 10 persons

To arrange a tour,  
call (650) 328-5670.

## ALLIED ARTS GUILD PROGRESS

The Allied Arts Guild renovation is now a few months into construction. We have made some interesting discoveries along the way. One of the most curious was that the wavy roof, which we all assumed was deflection caused by heavy tile sitting on undersized roof framing, was in some areas deliberately staged: Some rafters were installed higher than others, indicating that an aged look was planned from the beginning. In the Traditional Shops building, there was an area of redwood flooring that sat directly on earth. Remarkably, when it was removed, it showed fewer signs of decay or termites than we expected. The wood planks are 2 1/2 inches thick, so when the damaged portion of the planks is removed we will still have over 2 inches of wood left over. We have decided to put the redwood back, this time not over the dirt!

It was disheartening, though, to see the poor quality of much of the 1930's construction. Bad flashing, undersized framing, precarious attachments, poor ventilation, and dangerous wiring are among the problems we encountered. Some of the heavy timbers holding up the tile roofs were held in place by a few nails only. A two-storey wall at the Archway building was almost entirely destroyed by termites and dry rot. Though the roof tiles had proper wire ties to protect them from sliding off the roof during an earthquake, the copper ties were wrapped around galvanized roofing nails; the nails reacted to the copper ties and disintegrated! (Today we use copper nails, as well). Problems are being solved however, and the work, after a slow start, is proceeding apace.

It is amazing to see what can be preserved. There was a decorative concrete "carpet" on one of the original shops facing Arbor Road over part of which was built some brick steps. When the brick was carefully removed by the contractor, Blach Construction Company, the portion underneath was in beautiful shape, with all its original colors intact. Thanks to our excellent structural engineer, Sharon Gallant from Degenkolb Structural Engineers, and the wonders she can work with epoxy, we have been able to save all but three of the hand-carved cantilevering beams on the Archway building. There were live termites in most of them! She has also been able to strengthen the undersized decorative roof trusses throughout in such a way that the fixes are invisible, and so allowing us to remove unsightly visible fixes added over the years.

While there are many specialized craftsmen at work on the project, some of the day-to-day carpenters and laborers have had no previous preservation experience. After listening to us emphasizing the importance of saving as much original material as possible, and concentrating the work of different trades in small areas for the same purpose, it was very gratifying one day on site to hear the lead carpenter urging a subcontractor to "preserve the historic fabric."

*Grace Hinton*

*(Grace Hinton, the project architect for the Allied Arts Guild renovation, is an associate at Cody Anderson Wasney Architects, Inc., in Palo Alto, as well as PAST Treasurer.)*



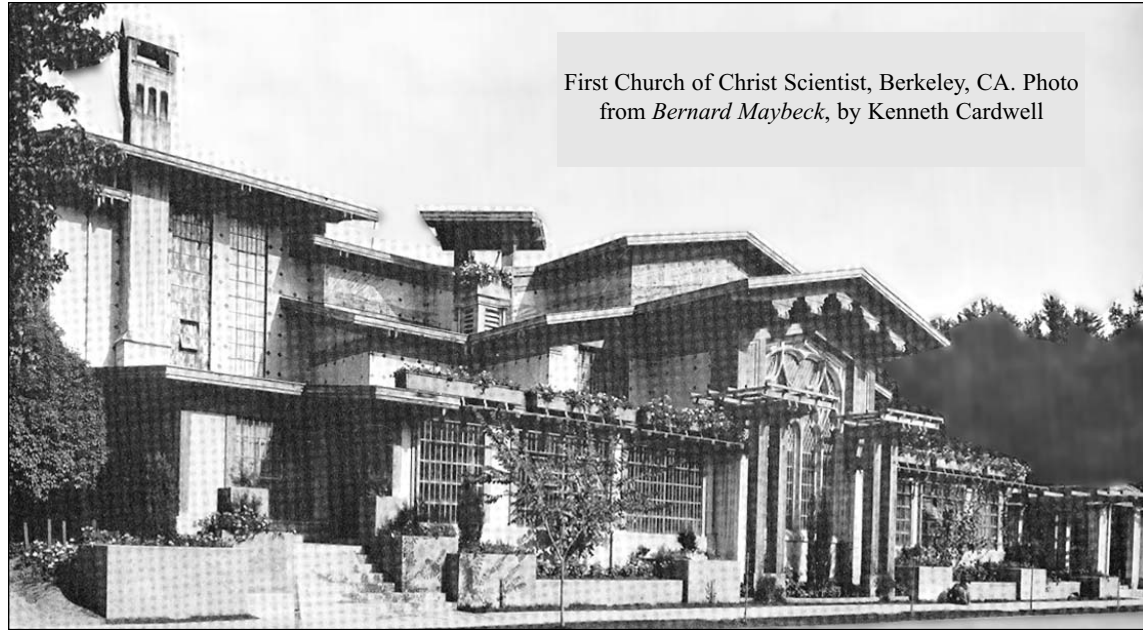
### 1903 TIDBITS

- Enrico Caruso debuted at the Met in *Rigoletto*.
- The Edison Corporation released the Western *The Great Train Robbery*.
- Among those born that year who achieved fame are Tallulah Bankhead, Dr. Benjamin Spock, James Beard, Bob Hope, and Earl "Fatha" Hines.
- The Steiff Teddy Bear was created.
- Only eight percent of the population had phones.
- Pepsi-Cola received a trademark.
- On December 17, Wilbur and Orville Wright flew their plane for 12 seconds.
- New York City established the first automobile traffic code.



## TAX INCENTIVE WORKSHOP

Federal, state, and local programs often can help owners of historic properties maintain, rehabilitate, and remodel their properties while retaining their character-defining features. The California Preservation Foundation (CPF) presented the latest information on such programs at a workshop September 26 in Berkeley titled "Incentives for Historic Preservation Projects."



First Church of Christ Scientist, Berkeley, CA. Photo from *Bernard Maybeck*, by Kenneth Cardwell

With headquarters in San Francisco, CPF is California's predominant statewide historic preservation membership organization. PAST maintains a CPF membership, and PAST Board members Marilyn Bauriedel and Emily Renzel attended the conference. Presenters brought attendees up to date on tax credits, preservation easements, grant programs, and local government measures, such as permit streamlining, allowing a nonconforming historic use on a lot, creative zoning changes, parking waivers, seismic retrofit incentives, and Mills Act contracts.

Conference participants spent the day inside the famous Bernard Maybeck-designed First Church of Christ Scientist in Berkeley, built in 1910. One architectural notable has referred to this landmark as one of four truly "American" church buildings. Sadly, it is in great need of expensive rehabilitation from water damage and structural deterioration. A committee is raising funds for the renovation work.

Highlights of the day included a wonderful collection of slides demonstrating good and bad examples of rehabilitation of historic properties and a dynamic

account by Chief Building Official Cindy Heitzman of St. Helena of her hands-on (and belly-crawling) work in her city to help owners of unreinforced masonry buildings take advantage of the State Historical Building Code. Also memorable was a detailed description of Monterey's creative efforts to offer new incentives for historic property owners. Monterey has established a "Fainted Ladies" program to provide

low-interest loans to owners of older homes who need financial assistance to maintain and rehabilitate them.

Preservation architect Alice Carey of San Francisco stole the show with her humor-filled illustrated account of how she saved over \$1 million using tax credits and other incentives when she bought, rehabilitated, and moved her office to the landmark Old Engine Company #2

in San Francisco. Surprisingly, in the birthplace of the Mills Act contract idea, she entered into the only Mills Act contract that has ever been executed in San Francisco.

Marilyn and Emily expressed the hope that PAST can work more closely with the City of Palo Alto to publicize the city's existing incentives for preservation and to create new incentives based on information they brought back from the conference about programs in Monterey, Napa, Sacramento, St. Helena, and other California cities. PAST will continue to publicize the fact that if the owner of a property included in a federal, state, or local historic inventory requests it, it is mandatory that the city use the State Historical Building Code when the owner wants to rehab his or her property. The Historical Building Code offers creative and less burdensome alternatives to the more stringent Uniform Building Code (UBC). Use of UBC requirements during a remodeling or rehab will result in the destruction of the character-defining features of a historic building.

*Marilyn Bauriedel and Emily Renzel*

## PAST'S PAST From November 1992:

### PALO ALTO STANFORD HERITAGE'S HERITAGE

In 1987 a small group of residents from Palo Alto and Stanford began working to bring the 1988 State Preservation conference to Palo Alto. They formed a non-profit corporation, which they named Palo Alto Stanford Heritage (PAST).

The two-day conference brought hundreds of preservationists to the area for workshops and tours. One day's events were focused on Palo Alto and the other on Stanford.

The success of the conference encouraged PAST's organizers to form a strong architectural preservationist organization. Its activities, including the docent-led walking tours, are designed to encourage citizens to appreciate and preserve the best of the area's historic structures and neighborhoods.

## From PAST News, October 1996:

### FORMER UNIVERSITY AME ZION CHURCH: PALO ALTO'S LEGACY by Ruth Anne Gray

In recent weeks Palo Alto citizens have expressed their outrage over the destruction of beautiful old homes being demolished in favor of bigger, more expensive, but not necessarily "better" homes. The loss of homes in the College Terrace area has moved citizens to fill City Council meetings, demanding that the Council take action. As a result a limited moratorium on the demolition of homes build before 1940 has been passed.

The former African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church located at 819 Ramona Street is threatened by the owner's insensitivity to local history and perception of value, just as the homes in College Terrace and Professorville are. This former church, now a qualified historic structure by virtue of its eligibility for admission in the National Register of Historic Places, represents the vision of the community that created it and reflects the best of Palo Alto. Like the beautiful homes of Professorville, College Terrace, and other parts of Palo Alto, preservation experts feel that the former church can be rehabilitated to its former splendor.

We are fortunate to have within our midst such a building that holds the history and life stories of so many Palo Altans. Like the beautiful homes in Palo Alto, once this church is lost, we irrevocably lose a part of ourselves as well. Let's hope that all preservationists, historians, and admirers of the past will ensure that all of Palo Alto's history is represented and preserved.

## SAVE THE DATE...

THE 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CALIFORNIA PRESERVATION CONFERENCE will be held at the Presidio of San Francisco/Golden Gate National Recreation Area from Wednesday, April 28, to Saturday, May 1, 2004. This is the same conference that evolved into our own PAST. (See "PAST's Past.")

The theme will be **BUILDING BRIDGES**.

Join the conference mailing list at [cpf@californiapreservation.org](mailto:cpf@californiapreservation.org) or (415) 495-0349. Registration will be mailed in January. Or you can register online at [www.californiapreservation.org](http://www.californiapreservation.org) in January. Volunteers are also needed!

## PRESERVATION ALERT: PARK THEATRE

A group of concerned area residents, including film buffs, has been working behind the scenes for over a year to try to

save the Park Theatre in Menlo Park from demolition. As was reported in the local newspapers, the owner took down the Park sign in 2002 and later, due to protests, received a



cease and desist letter from the City of Menlo Park, stopping the demolition. Now the popular Art Deco movie venue sits vacant, its future uncertain.

A group organized to save the Park Theatre maintains a Web site at <http://home.earthlink.net/~bkengland/parkTheatre/body.htm>. Individuals wishing to receive a bimonthly update via e-mail on the theater can add their names to a distribution list by sending a request to [saveparktheater@yahoo.com](mailto:saveparktheater@yahoo.com).

*Marilyn Bauriedel*