

Calendar of Events

Now through September 24— **Sailing Through History With Model Ships**, Museum of American Heritage, 351 Homer Avenue. For more information call (650) 321-1004 or check their Website at www.moah.org.

Thursday, September 21, 7:30 p.m.— **What Do You Do With a Drunken Sailor?** Dr. Fabio Lopez Lazaro, Assistant Professor of History, Santa Clara University, Museum of American Heritage, 351 Homer Avenue. \$5 admission. For more information call (650) 321-1004 or check their Website at www.moah.org.

Sunday, October 1, 2 p.m.— **Palo Alto Historical Association**. Lucie Stern Community Center, 1305 Middlefield.

Sunday, December 10, 1-4 p.m.— **Palo Alto Stanford Heritage Holiday House Tour**. Professorville.

Ongoing — **Walking Tours of Downtown, Professorville, College Terrace, or Homer Avenue**. 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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Summer 2006

Centennial Home Celebration

On May 21, owners of 17 of the 27 identified centennial homes accepted plaques commemorating the construction of their houses. In addition, six properties that add so much to the integrity of our city were honored with special certificates. The rain didn't dampen the spirits of the honorees nor the hospitality of the gracious hosts, Larry and Vicki Sullivan, who treated guests to a birthday cake honoring their centennial home! Congratulations to all the honorees.



Our hosts, the Sullivan family

Save the Date: Sunday, December 10

It's back to Professorville for the 2006 Holiday House Tour. All six homes have already celebrated their 100th birthday and all have been recently renovated. Among them is the Hewlett Packard house which is rarely opened to the public!

President's Column

As I begin my term as President, I am encouraged by the resourcefulness and dedication of the membership and Board of Directors of PAST. As always, we have many opportunities for outreach, and we are looking at more ways that we can help to preserve the historic core of our city. The **Holiday House Tour** looks to be an especially interesting one, offering a nice reward for members, old and new, as well as offering inspiration for visitors' own preservation projects. This program is an effective way to remind the community of the value that these historic properties represent to us all.

Fortunately, as we enter this period there are several other organizations working on projects for historic preservation, which we may find ways to assist in achieving their goals. There are interesting opportunities to work with **Neighborhood Associations** concerned with establishing incentives for preservation within their districts. There are on-going projects, such as the **Sea Scout Base**, which present challenges and opportunities. The Navy's position on Moffett Field's **Hangar One** may be changing and we can lend our voice on this issue. The bottom line is that there is much to do; the challenge is to make careful choices about where to put our effort.

In addition to the Board, we need the **active involvement** of the general membership. The Board is considering ways to recognize and encourage non-board participation. Currently our members serve as docents for tours, monitor city planning activities and much more. Establishing an advisory board is one possibility under discussion for effectively using this resource. We need all the help we can get, so if you have an interest or want to help, please contact me.

Ralph Britton, President

Membership is a Good Thing!

We couldn't do it without you. It is only through your commitment to PAST that we are able to work on encouraging and effecting preservation in our community. Your generosity allows us to showcase Palo Alto's historic buildings and unique heritage through our annual Holiday House Tour and through events and programs during Preservation Month. Your support is a vote of confidence as we work to further our education and preservation efforts.

We're hoping that when membership renewal letters are mailed in September, you'll continue with us as we continue *advocating a "past" in Palo Alto's future*. As an added incentive, your membership includes a ticket or two (depending on your renewal category), to our lively Holiday House Tour on December 10th. This year we'll visit six charming homes in one of Palo Alto's enduring treasures, Professorville. It's the perfect way to kick off the holidays!

Dianne MacDaniels, Membership Chair

Palo Alto Buildings on the National Register of Historic Places

Downing House, 706 Cowper Street

Fraternal Hall, 140 University Avenue

Norris House, 1247 Cowper Street

Peck House, 860 University Avenue

Pettigrew House, 1336 Cowper Street

Squire House, 900 University Avenue

Post Office, 300 Hamilton Avenue

Pedro de Lemos House, 110 Waverley Oaks

Dunker House, 420 Maple Street

Kee House, 2310 Yale Street

Allen House, 601 Melville Avenue

Professorville Historical District,
marked by plaque

Hostess House, 25 University Avenue

Ramona Street Architectural District,
marked by plaque

S.P. Depot, 95 University Avenue



1941 photograph of the newly completed **Southern Pacific Train Depot** taken next to the north-bound track just south of the station. The **Hostess House** is visible to the left of the depot. Baggage carts and several automobiles are visible in the parking lot behind the station. El Camino Park can be seen in the distance.

DOCENTS WANTED

PAST Heritage is forming a new docent training class this fall cosponsored by the Palo Alto Historic Resources Board.

We will meet for lectures and tours while exploring the architecture and early inhabitants of Professorville and Palo Alto. A commitment to give twelve tours a year is required. Please contact caroline@hawksnest.org or call Caroline Willis at (650) 325-1475

Demolition of Historic Griffin House Ruled Unlawful

The Santa Clara County Superior Court has ruled in favor of the public interest lawsuit filed last August by the **Friends of Griffin House** to save the historic Griffin House on the Foothill-De Anza Community College campus.

The suit challenged the District's plan to demolish Griffin House to build a District and Community Center (DCC) Building. The Friends had pointed out that the District's facility needs could be well met without the demolition of a prized historic resource, through rehabilitation of the Griffin House for the District's proposed uses — meeting rooms and offices — in conjunction with a new companion building. Designed in 1901 by the architects Wolfe & McKenzie, the magnificent Shingle- and Craftsman-style Griffin House has the triple honor of listing in the **National Register of Historic Places** and the California Register of Historical Resources, and being a Town of Los Altos Hills Historical Site.

Judge Leslie C. Nichols, the Superior Court's designated judge for CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) cases, ruled on June 5 that the District had violated CEQA because the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prepared for the project failed to address alternatives to demolition and failed to adequately study traffic impacts. The Court further held that the District violated CEQA because it approved the demolition of a historic building without any substantial evidence that rehabilitation could not feasibly accomplish the District's project objectives.

Friends member Jonathan Baer explained that "The District can feasibly rehabilitate Griffin House — restoring the luster to this architectural jewel and creating a showcase facility for use by the administration, students, and the community — and still meet the District's project goals. Judge Nichols agreed with us that state law therefore prohibits demolition."

"The numbers used to evaluate the economic feasibility of both rehabilitation and new con-

struction were misleading," says Steve Aced, a former Los Altos Historical Commissioner and currently a residential design and construction specialist who has worked on several historic preservation projects in the South Bay. Among other problems, in calculating the costs of restoring Griffin House the District used an obsolete and inappropriate design program. It also did not consider joint use of some facilities with an adjacent building that could substantially lower the cost per usable square foot."

Judge Nichols also ruled that the District had failed to comply with the California Uniform Building Code because it had not obtained a demolition permit from the Town of Los Altos Hills. The judge rejected the District's arguments that it was exempt from obtaining a demolition permit because it is a state agency. "This portion of the Court's ruling has broad significance," said attorney Susan Brandt-Hawley. "The Town of Los Altos Hills will now review this matter and exercise its own discretion in protection of a unique local landmark."

The National Trust for Historic Preservation, in endorsing the Friends of Griffin house effort to save the landmark, has pointed out that the historic Scheller House at San Jose State University and historic Douglass (now Stent) Hall at Menlo School and College had been similarly slated for demolition when stopped by court action for violation of CEQA. Both have now been beautifully restored — not as house museums but for adaptive reuse at their respective campuses.

"Griffin House should also now be saved," said Jon Baer, "as a functional campus building used for college programs. The timing is surely right given the confluence of the court ruling and the passage of the \$490 million bond measure. And the best information currently available is that the DCC program needs can be met through rehabilitation of the Griffin House in conjunction with a new companion building, which together would cost only 2% more than all new construction!"

Friends of Griffin House

Preservation Month 2006

Preservation Month in Palo Alto began at the City Hall Plaza with **Mayor Judy Kleinberg** making the public Declaration of Preservation Month. Many in attendance then took a docent led tour of downtown.

Other events included lectures and book signings by **Paul Duchscherer** on *California Bungalows* and **Ned Eichler** on the innovative developments of his father, Joseph Eichler. *Lucie's Legacy*, a tour of the Lucie Stern Center led by **Michael Litfin** of the Children's Theater, and a tour of the 50 year old *Fairmeadow Eicher Subdivision* led by resident **Marilyn Bauriedel**.

The awards ceremony deserves special mention. Held at a fine 1906 property, the venue abruptly changed from garden to the interior of the house when a deluge threatened to

wash out the whole event. The owners had barely returned from a trip, but immediately jumped into action so that the event could be held inside their magnificently restored house. Mayor Kleinberg also participated by presenting the centennial plaques and preservation awards. Many, many thanks are due Larry and Vicki Sullivan for their heroic effort to turn this potential disaster into a fine success!

Seven preservation awards were given for notable achievements in preserving historic houses through sensitive restoration and remodeling. Descriptions of the awards and photos of the properties honored are shown on the next two pages.

Preservation Month Committee: Aino Vieira da Rosa, Dianne MacDaniels, Betty Britton



Caroline Willis accepting Preservation Month Proclamation from Mayor Judy Kleinberg

Fairmeadow Tour

Professorville Tour

Ned Eichler

Michael Litfin with portrait of Lucie Stern

Paul Duchscherer

175 Webster Owners

11th Annual PAST Preservation Awards

Adaptive Reuse

Presented to **Kathy Kinney-Baskin** in recognition of the meticulous and artful restoration of the unique Craftsman bungalow at **141 Alma Street**, at a gateway to Palo Alto.



Residential Preservation

Presented to **Anthony Tam** in recognition of his ability to see the potential in an aging 1904 rooming house at **175 Webster Street**. Due to his foresight, it has undergone a thoughtful renovation and been reborn as a charming single family residence.



Community Preservation

Presented to the **Hewlett-Packard Company** in recognition of their outstanding dedication to the faithful rehabilitation of the 1905 house, shed and historic Hewlett-Packard garage at **367 Addison Avenue**, thereby ensuring that our community's heritage remains preserved for future generations to experience and enjoy.



Residential Preservation

Presented to **Brian Kinard** in recognition of his outstanding dedication to the meticulous restoration of **959 Waverley Street**. Built in 1899, this historical piece of Palo Alto's residential architecture has been preserved for the future.



Neighborhood Preservation

Presented to **Norman Adams** in recognition of outstanding dedication to the preservation of Eichler architecture at **291 Parkside Drive** in Palo Alto's Greenmeadow. This sensitive addition and remodel contributes to one of the earliest and best preserved of neighborhoods developed by Joseph Eichler and recently added to the National Register of Historic Places.



Residential Remodeling

Presented to **Cody Anderson Wasney Architects** for a masterful renovation of **825 Channing Avenue** that allowed expansion of the 1909 Victorian house, while preserving its authentic architectural details, thereby ensuring that the best parts of our past are preserved into the future.



Residential Preservation

Presented to **R & M Properties** for their preservation of a 1909 Victorian at **825 Channing Avenue**. Through thoughtful investment, this project balances preservation of the existing structure with the addition of new space.