Palo Alto Stanford Heritage (PAST), in cooperation with the Palo Alto Historical Association (PAHA), will host its 27th presentation of Centennial Plaques to owners of 1922 buildings. We will also present Historic Preservation Awards to recognize preservation projects that renovate, rehabilitate, or restore local historic buildings. Our featured speaker is Architect Daniel Garber, FAIA, partner at Fergus Garber Architects. Dan’s topic is *Birge Clark – The Early Years, His Time and Influences; 1922 to 1933*. PAST and PAHA are celebrating Birge Clark on the 100th anniversary of the founding of his architectural practice in 1922.

Birge Clark’s long career was almost solely conducted in Palo Alto. It was varied enough to include single and multiple family residences, commercial structures, and prominent institutional buildings. Well known works include the Lou Henry Hoover House on the Stanford campus, the Medico–Dental Building across from City Hall, and the President Hotel. Other important designs are the Palo Alto Fire and Police Station (Avenidas), Kathleen Norris House, Roth Building (Palo Alto Medical Clinic), US Post Office on Hamilton Avenue, and the Lucie Stern Community Center.

This program is part of PAST Heritage’s mission to promote the importance of preserving the historic architecture, neighborhoods, and character of the greater Palo Alto and Stanford areas. PAST Heritage holds a Centennial Plaque and Historic Preservation Awards program each year during the month of May as part of National Preservation Month.

Please join PAST and PAHA to celebrate the preservation of Palo Alto’s unique historic character.
Homes built in 1922 have achieved centennial status and are eligible to acquire a centennial plaque to honor them. The following structures have been identified as completed in 1922 that continue to reflect the era.

Photos taken by Nicole Dymmel, and Brian and Carolyn George.
1855 Cowper Street
1505 Emerson Street
1729 Emerson Street
1818 Emerson Street
205 Everett Avenue
764 Forest Avenue
833 Forest Avenue
859 Forest Avenue
918 Forest Avenue
605 Guinda Street
811 Guinda Street
1135 Guinda Street
820 Hamilton Avenue
840 Hamilton Avenue
900 Hamilton Avenue
North Palo Alto PAST Walking Tour
By Bo Crane

North Palo Alto, between Alma and Middlefield, one of Palo Alto’s least heralded neighborhoods, provided affordable housing in the early 20th century for many employed nearby on University Avenue.

The tour begins at the intersection of Byron Street and Palo Alto Avenue. (Parking is limited by dead ends on both streets.)

Among the residences is a large greenhouse, built in 1923, by Frank Mills of Mills the Florist,

Palo Alto Avenue follows San Francisquito Creek’s curves except where the streets cut off extended bends. The entire shelf along the creek was granted to the City in 1907 and named for its grantor as Timothy Hopkins Creekside Park.

Palo Alto Avenue winds to a pedestrian/bicycle bridge over the creek, which replaced a vehicle bridge used by the Hopkins property. Author John Steinbeck reportedly lived in a cottage on the property while he was at Stanford in 1925. Steinbeck sized his cottage as “seven square feet”!

The tour returns along Ruthven and Hawthorne Avenues to end on Byron Street.

Discovering Centennial Buildings

Each year as PAST plans for its May Preservation program the challenge is to find eligible 100-year-old buildings. We start with reviewing all the building permits for the selected year. A source for the permits is the permit lists published by the Palo Alto Times. Using this information, we check the yearly Palo Alto City Directories stored in the archives at Cubberley K7. The directories show addresses and residents of Palo Alto homes and businesses. If the address is not in the directory for the permit year it implies that the building was not completed during that year. We then check directories for later years to discover when the building was inhabited. After creating an address list of potential centennial buildings, we visit each location to determine if the building appears to be eligible for centennial recognition. This year we started with over 80 potential buildings and ended with 60. Photos and addresses for 1922 buildings are included in this PAST Heritage newsletter. They will be recognized during our May 7th program. Centennial plaques are available.

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Rain or shine! – All tours start at 10 a.m.

Tours are free, although donations are always welcome! Join us for a fun and friendly walk through town. — Please check the Palo Alto Stanford Heritage website for any updates. Tours are generally 1½–2 hours long and cover up to 1 1/2 miles.

We look forward to seeing you!
Spring PAST Calendar

April 29  North Palo Alto Tour
May 6  Mayfield–Salvatierra Tour
May 7  Joint meeting with PAST and the Palo Alto Historical Association: Centennial Plaques and Preservation Awards, Palo Alto Art Center 1313 Newell Road, 2 p.m.
May 13  Downtown Birge Clark Tour
May 20  Mayfield Tour
May 27  Beyond Professorville Tour

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PAST News
Palo Alto Stanford Heritage
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PAST Heritage is a nonprofit organization advocating the preservation of the historic architecture, neighborhoods, and character of the greater Palo Alto Stanford area through informed citizen involvement and education.