



ALAMEDA LEGACY HOME TOUR

*A Self-Guided Tour of the Interiors
& Gardens of Eight Historic
Homes that Preserve the Past
for Contemporary Living.*



**Sunday,
September 26, 2010
11:00 am to 5:00 pm**

HOSTED BY: The Alameda Museum
& The Alameda Architectural
Preservation Society

SPONSORED BY: Little House Cafe



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WELCOME TO THE TOUR



HOSTED BY: The Alameda Museum & The Alameda Architectural Preservation Society



SPONSORED BY: Little House Cafe

This year's event features eight homes from Central Alameda to the East End, highlighting a mix of historical periods and architectural styles. Participants will partake of exterior charms, lush garden settings, and varied interiors in this offering of dwellings built between 1883 and 1913. Most of the residences have had a recent renovation or are in the final stages of one. Some are restorations and some are adaptations. On the tour you will see and learn about the different approaches to contemporary living in a vintage home.

The map on the back cover of this guidebook also serves as your ticket. Please present the map to the docent at the front door of each home. We kindly ask that you remove your shoes or wear shoe covers provided if instructed to do so at the front door. The map on the back gives an indication of the distances between homes.

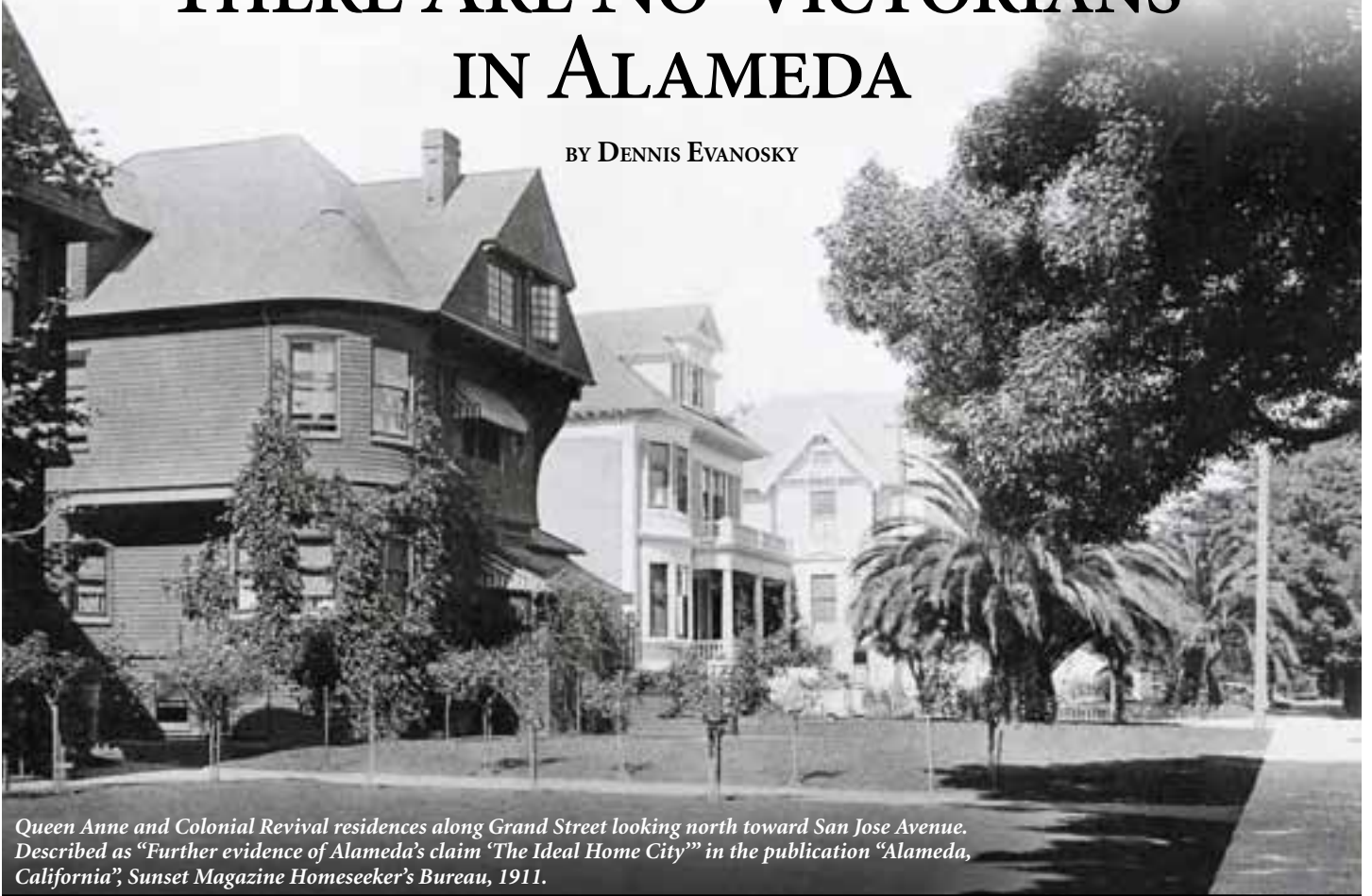
The tour functions as a fundraiser for The Alameda Museum and The Alameda Architectural Preservation Society. These two non-profit organizations educate and inspire people who are interested in the history and preservation of historic architecture in Alameda.

HOUSE TOUR RULES

- 1) No food, drink or gum inside.
- 2) No smoking or tobacco products.
- 3) No high heels or hard-soled shoes. Please remove shoes or wear shoe covers if requested.
- 4) No Photography inside (including video and cell phones with cameras).
- 5) Children must be accompanied by an adult at all times. Only babies, when carried, do not require tickets.
- 6) No strollers are allowed inside the homes. Please park strollers at the bottom of entrance steps, out of the way of the other guests.
- 7) Docents are provided to make your tour more enjoyable; please comply with their requests.
Please do not expect them to watch small children, hold items, or let you view closed areas of the homes.
- 8) Light refreshments are available at House #1. Restrooms are available at House #5.
- 9) Please remember that homeowners have graciously volunteered their homes for the tour.
Please show your appreciation for their generosity by respecting their possessions and privacy.

THERE ARE NO 'VICTORIANS' IN ALAMEDA

BY DENNIS EVANOSKY



Queen Anne and Colonial Revival residences along Grand Street looking north toward San Jose Avenue. Described as "Further evidence of Alameda's claim 'The Ideal Home City'" in the publication "Alameda, California", Sunset Magazine Homeseeker's Bureau, 1911.

Alameda boasts a grand collection of architectural styles, and not a single one of them is "Victorian." I fondly remember David Nicolai, the former director of Oakland's Pardee Home Museum, introducing my tours there. David always began his introduction with a question. "How many of you know what architectural style this house is?" He smiled as the hands of the tour participants eager to answer shot into the air.

"And don't say 'Victorian,'" he continued, as we both attempted to hide our smirks. Raised hands suddenly and sheepishly disappeared. "In fact," he said to the puzzled faces before him, "there is no such thing as a Victorian style; there are only Victorian-era styles." Nicolai finally informed the company that Enoch Pardee hired the architectural firm of Hoagland & Newsom to design the home in the Italianate style.

Italianate is but one of eight distinct domestic architectural styles that appeared on the streets of Alameda while Queen Victoria sat on the British throne. The styles, in chronological order, are: Gothic Revival, Italianate, Stick (or Eastlake, if you prefer), Second Empire, Queen Anne, Shingle, Colonial Revival and Craftsman.



The time of Queen Victoria's reign set the boundaries for any style that bears her name. Any homes built in these styles while she ruled the British Empire are Victorian-era styles. The key is "while she ruled." Victoria took the British throne as queen regnant (a queen ruling in her own right) on June 20, 1837, the very day that her uncle, King William IV,

Queen Victoria defined the era in which she reigned. Her name is invoked to describe any architectural style that came across the drawing boards from 1837 to 1901.

died childless. She celebrated her eighteenth birthday less than a month earlier on May 24. Victoria ruled for sixty-three years until her death at the age of eighty-one on January 22, 1901. No domestic architectural style that appeared on the scene before Victoria took the throne or after she died should be described as “Victorian-era,” and, more narrowly, nothing built in any style before her coronation or after her death should be considered “Victorian-era.”

And no one should ever describe a home as simply “Victorian.”

THE VICTORIAN-ERA IN ALAMEDA

The tale of Victorian-era domestic architecture began in Alameda in 1854 when John Nelson Webster removed the pre-cut timber to build the Gothic Revival-style Webster House from the bowels of the ship the *Henry Harbeck*. The story ended just forty-seven years later (and twenty-two days into the twentieth century) when Queen Victoria breathed her last and her son Albert Edward took the throne as Edward VII.

Edward reigned for a relatively brief period until his death on May 6, 1910. Styles that prevailed during his reign, predominantly the Colonial Revival here in the United States, are correctly referred to as “Edwardian.”

The strong British influence on the American architectural scene came to an end with the increasingly stronger role the United States had in world politics in the first two decades of the twentieth century.

In 1907, during Edward VII’s reign, President Theodore Roosevelt sought to demonstrate America’s growing military power. He ordered the United States Navy battle fleet to sail around the world. (The impressive armada arrived in San Francisco on May 6, 1908, and stayed for two months until July 7.) This show of America’s might consisted of sixteen battleships and their escorts divided into four squadrons.



Unlike the Webster House, Alameda’s more famous Gothic Revival-style home, no icicles drip from the plain bargeboards on the Abram and Caroline Rich home on today’s Fourth Avenue. The couple moved in on May 20, 1865.



Franklin Pancoast paid the prodigious sum of \$4,000 for this Italianate-style home on today’s Everett Street. Enoch Pardee’s Oakland home built in the same style may have influenced this Alameda squatter.

Almost nine years later, on April 2, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson sent American Doughboys “over there” to fight on the side of the Allies. This move tilted the European balance in favor of the Allies in World War I, and helped them end the war against the Axis on November 11, 1918.

Roosevelt’s “Great White Fleet” and Wilson’s commitment to his European allies not only gave the United States firm footing on the world stage, but also helped break the bond the American architectural scene had with Great Britain. After Edward VII’s death, no domestic architectural style prevalent in the United States would ever again bear the name of a British monarch.

A VICTORIAN-ERA STYLE PRIMER

Alameda mirrored the rest of the country in imitating styles popular during Queen Victoria’s reign from 1837 to 1901. The first two—Greek Revival, rooted in Southern Europe, and the northern European-influenced Gothic Revival—were on the wane when John Nelson Webster built Alameda’s first home in 1854.

Alameda’s domestic architecture has no examples of Greek Revival, a style especially popular with large plantation owners in the South. Webster built his home in the Gothic Revival style. The home’s gables, icicle bargeboards and porch all echo this style.

Bear in mind that there were no rulebooks; architects and builders often mixed elements. For example, while the Schnabel home on Santa Clara Avenue has windows in the

Second Empire style above the roof line, the bay windows below are characteristic of the Italianate style.

HERE'S WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN EACH OF THE VICTORIAN-ERA STYLES

Gothic Revival-style homes have high-peaked gables often with finials atop the gables and pendants below them; lacy trim on the eaves and the edges of the dormers; and a porch across the front of the house.

You can distinguish Italianate homes by looking for low-pitched, often flat roofs; asymmetrical shapes that imitate sprawling villas; bay windows with hoods and fancy detail; wooden quoins that imitate stonework on the buildings' corners; façades rising above the roofline; and heavy, often elaborately carved supporting brackets under the eaves.

Stick or Eastlake-style homes have "sticks": flat board banding and geometric ("Eastlake") ornamentation; patterns and lines rather than three-dimensional ornamentation; clapboard wall surfaces; rectangular-shaped windows; steep gabled roofs; and decorative braces and brackets.

Second Empire-style homes are rare in Alameda. Look for: steep mansard roofs; dormer windows with elaborate details; colored roof shingles; cresting—decorative ornament along the top of the rooflines.

Queen Anne-style homes reign supreme on the Island City. They have asymmetrical shapes; porches extending across the front and along the sides; turrets and towers (a turret has no foundation; it seems to dangle from the side of the house); surfaces decorated with "gingerbread," fish-scale



Edward Childs built this home in 1880 for Adolph Schnabel. Childs' design combines elements of the Italianate style with the Second Empire style's mansard roof. The home is now an office building called "The Mansard Building."



Robert Harvey built his Park Avenue home in the "modern" style adding square windows, rather than the bay windows inherent in the Italianate style. He also dressed the home with geometric ornaments and anticipated the Queen Anne-style with fish-scale shingles. Today we call Harvey's "modern" style "Stick" or "Eastlake."

shingles; patterned masonry or half timbering; and ornamental spindles and brackets

Shingle-style homes have wavy and patterned shingles covering the surfaces; rough-hewn stone on lower stories and stone arches over windows. Architects and builders often clad Queen Ann-style and Colonial Revival-style homes with shingles

Colonial Revival homes have vertical façades; pillars and columns; Palladian windows; dormers; temple-like entrances (often porticos topped by balustrades); and simple, classical detailing.

You can distinguish Craftsman-style homes by looking for hand-crafted woodwork and stone; porches tucked beneath tapered columns; low-pitched roofs with overhanging eaves; and exposed rafters.

A new type of home appeared in Alameda after Queen Victoria's death. The bungalow is not a style, but a type of building rooted in Bangla, India. Common elements help define a bungalow. Look all around and you'll see these modest one to one-and-one-half story homes with low entry porches. They echo two of the Victorian-era styles—Craftsman and Colonial Revival—and are also built in newer post-Victorian-era styles like Mediterranean and Tudor Revival.

HOUSE #1 1430 SANTA CLARA AVENUE

1893 ❖ Queen Anne

ARCHITECT:
Henry Mohns & Co.

BUILDER:
J. J. Boyle

COST:
\$4,000



ORIGINAL OWNER:
John F. Kessing

CURRENT OWNER:
Brian Geasa

Henry Mohns was an architect and builder making a living in Alameda and San Francisco. He was born in Germany in 1845 and immigrated to the U.S. in 1866. He held many positions related to the building trade including President of the Alameda Building and Loan Association, member of the Alameda Improvement Association, and worked as a partner in the firm Mueke & Co—agents of the Sven Fire Insurance Company. In the beginning, Mohns privately bought and sold property that he developed with cottages and two story houses.

In 1893 he opened an office in Alameda at Mastick Station—Henry Mohns & Co. which handled general real estate, building, renting homes, collecting rent, and issuing insurance. On February 23, 1893 the *Alameda Argus* noted, Mohns was “one of the best known and most esteemed citizens of Alameda, and has long been identified with the material growth and progress of our city of beautiful homes.”

That year Mohns built 1430 Santa Clara for John F. Kessing hailing from Prussia. Born in 1830, he immigrated to the U.S. as a young man of fourteen. He was married to Marie Karrenberg also a native of Prussia in 1858.

Kessing and his wife were in their later years when they moved into the house. Their children Annie J., Cornelia M., John F. jr., and Alice were adults. The youngest child was Lawrence age ten. Previously living in San Francisco, the

Kessing family wanted a large city-style house with wide hallways, 12 foot ceilings and larger rooms.

In 1900 Kessing described himself as retired from real estate business. His daughter, Alice had married and her husband William E. Haynes had moved in adding to the household of Mrs. Kessing, Lawrence, now 17, and a servant Nettie Painter.

John F. Kessing died in May 1905 and his widow and son continued to live at the estate for many years. In the 1930s Lawrence and his 90 year old mother began renting rooms to elderly boarders. The Haynes purchased their own home around the corner at 1521 Morton Street.

This lovely home on its dominant corner lot is a textbook example of the Queen Anne style—asymmetrical shape with entrance porch on the right, a veneer of rustic siding

and notched shingles, ornamental spindles and brackets, and a tower. The tower begins with a rectangular base culminating in a curved second level with a witch's cap roof.

The front of the house has an array of pattern in the dentils, decorative friezes, reeded columns at the windows, and a neo-classical swag decoration that was coming into favor in the 1890s. All of these detailed ornaments have been highlighted with a well-planned color scheme.

The eastern side of the house features a large square bay topped by an arched attic gable. Decoration abounds in the trim, window frames, and brackets.

The porch is adorned with sets of classical reeded columns leading to the double door entrance. It retains its original cast iron cresting mimicked in the fence around the property.