

Alameda Museum

Quarterly

THE STORIES BEHIND THE CLOTHES

by Nancy Martin

William F. Murray was the Mayor of Alameda from 1931 to 1935 and notable for his Depression-era civic activities such as the dedication of the Alameda Theatre on August 16, 1932 and the co-founding of the Regional Park District. After his death, his wife donated memorabilia recording her husband's political career to the Alameda Museum. Though most of the accession is made up of documents and political flyers, one item, a streamlined bias-cut dress evening gown made of black crepe and blush-colored taffeta, is attributed to Mrs. Murray, his wife. It features wide crisp ruffles along the bustline that extend dramatically past the shoulders. A matching belt with a gold clasp inset with seed pearls accentuates the waist.

That Mrs. Murray kept the dress for more than fifty years before donating it to the museum suggests its personal significance. Our records indicate that it was "purchased at Kahn's Movieland Shop, Oakland, Ca" and it stands out not only for its extravagant style but as one of the few dresses in the collection with labels. She kept the tag as well: a cardboard cut-out in the shape of a star—in reference to the silver screen—printed with the words, "Copy of dress worn by" and in the space, handwritten, "Lupe Vélez, in Fashions of 1934." *Continued on page 2...*





Stories Behind . . .Continued from page 1

My internship this summer at the museum is part of the ongoing project to photograph and record the location of all the objects in the collection. Though the display area of the museum focuses on Victorian items, a significant number of gowns stored in the warehouse were worn by prominent figures from Alameda of the 1920s and 30s.

Because the primary function of the museum is housing the objects over interpreting them, often the details are sketchy. Nevertheless, the process of uncovering the stories behind these clothes, the everyday lives of the people who wore them is an exciting puzzle. Every detail, including the thread used and the construction method, must be considered when putting together the pieces.

Searching for evidence about where Mrs. Murray may have worn

the dress, I noticed that she was only addressed formally through her husband's name, Mrs. William Murray, and as an individual, aside from being the donor, only rarely appears in the records. As I continued the research, I learned that during the 1930s, Hollywood-style ball gowns were available to purchase and may have been one way for women to explore the expansion of their traditional roles. Through appearing in Hollywood dress replications, they could communicate a different side of their identities.

In 1933, several Hollywood film production companies partnered with fashion designers to recreate film costumes for public consumption. Costumers like Adrian and Orr-Kelly famously launched their careers designing for Hollywood stars Greta Garbo, Joan Crawford, and Lupe Vélez through Hollywood studios. Their gowns were reproduced at lower

costs, using cheaper materials and construction methods, and sold in separate cinema shops within department stores at price points that appealed to middle-to-upper class women.

Film production flourished during the 1930s as an escape from the realities of the Depression. A press photo advertising the musical comedy *Hollywood Party*, released on June 1, 1934, displays the original dress designed by Adrian and worn by Lupe Vélez.

In 1934, Vélez played two additional leading Hollywood roles as well as performing on Broadway. Typecast as a Mexican spitfire, Vélez' roles generally consist of comedic scenes emphasizing her accent and fiery temperament.

What were the aspirations for women to wear Hollywood replications? Why would Mrs. Murray, mayor's

Continued on page 3 . . .

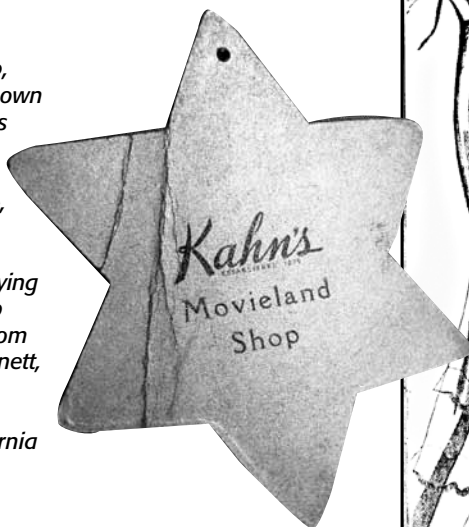
Saturday Surprises at Kahn's

ESTABLISHED 1879

The gown worn by Mrs. Murray carried the silver star shaped tag (right) of Kahn's, Movieland Shop, Oakland. Today the location is known as the Rotunda Building due to its exquisite stained glass dome.

This ad from the Oakland Tribune, April 27, 1934, showcases two dresses worn by actress Pat Patterson in "Bottoms Up" playing at the Fox Theater. You could also purchase autographed hosiery from stars such as Fay Wray, Joan Bennett, and Ginger Rogers!

Images: Nancy Martin and California Digital Newspaper Collection.



Two new stars in our Movieland Dress Shop

\$19.75

You can see the originals of these worn by Pat Patterson in "Bottoms Up" . . . now playing at the Fox-Oakland! One is a smart cocktail frock, with contrasting sleeve . . . the other is a smart Summer dance frock of mousseline de soie, in pastel shades! Just two of the heavy of stars at \$19.75.
Kahn's, Movieland Shop, Second Floor

It's smart to wear autographed hosiery

If you're in doubt as to the correct shade or type of hosiery to wear . . . take the advice of Hollywood's best dressed stars! We have their favorite types . . . every pair autographed by the star . . . every pair a smart choice!

Fay Wray endorses
a sheer chiffon stocking with a jacquard lace welt, for afternoon or evening. 95c

Joan Bennett endorses . . .
a service-shoes chiffon, that is particularly smart for every-day wear. \$1.15

Ginger Rogers endorses . . .
a sheer chiffon for dressier daytime occasions . . . that despite its sheerness has a splendid durability. 79c
Kahn's, Hosiery, First Floor



Stories Behind . . . Continued from page 2



A scene from *Hollywood Party* with Vélez as the Jaguar Woman, shown here with Laurel and Hardy. The comedy included appearances by Jimmy Durante, the Three Stooges, and even Mickey Mouse. Image: Wikipedia.

wife, mother of four, housewife choose this dress at this time? Scholars who study changes in dress note that this trend may have signified a change in female roles from caring for family, home, and husband towards exploring more daring, empowered, and alluring personas displayed by Hollywood females and their elegant gowns.

Film production style also played a role in inviting women viewers individually to try on new roles through their dress. In this era, scenes were often filmed Busby Berkeley style as montages portraying female models in synchronized sequences. In the opening scene of *Hollywood Party*, chattering phone operators appear on the screen skewed and multiplied into

kaleidoscopic imagery. In this era, uniformity was presented as positive and tied to mechanism and modernity through which women could see themselves. Movie-going women could find comfort in conforming to the replications of themselves presented in a film along with the fantasy of individuality by donning the dresses of Hollywood stardom.

Though Mrs. Murray takes up little documentary space, the associations of her dress are of glamour, celebrity, and impersonation. For many women, 1934 was an era of expanding female options. Via the purchase and saving of the copy of a gown worn by a Hollywood celebrity, she is visible today through more than the written records of her spouse.



Margy Silver and Gail Howell

MEYERS HOUSE & GARDEN OPEN AGAIN!

August 28 was the big day with docents Margy and Virgil Silver, Gail Howell, Michele and David Bock, Valerie Turpen, and Melissa Warren-Hagaman showing visitors around. We had some old friends come by, but most were people who had passed by before, but never stopped in.

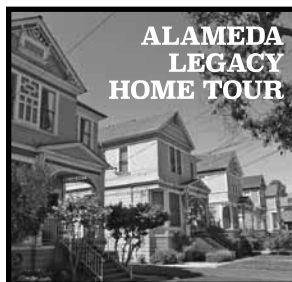
It was a beautiful summer day and the grounds looked good. Mulch was refreshed in the flower beds the week before to help with water conservation. Shrubs and trees were trimmed on the grounds.

The house was beautiful when the shades were pulled up for the first time in 18 months. This took a lot of work with the vacuum, dust-cloth, and broom. All outbuildings on the estate received some refreshing touches, as well.

Masks were worn by all and there was plenty of hand sanitizer to go around. Please check the website for updates on visiting.

4th Saturdays, 1:00 - 4:00 pm
Last tour at 3:00 pm

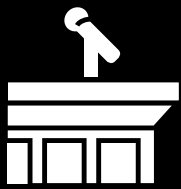
AlamedaMuseum.org




**ALAMEDA
LEGACY
HOME TOUR**

ALAMEDA ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Don't miss this self-guided walking tour of Leonardville and the Bronze Coast, narrated by Denise Brady. Download the app and join us with your family and friends on **Sunday, September 26**, from **10am to 4pm**. Go to **alameda-legacy-home-tour.org** to reserve your tour and find out all the details.



From the President's Podium *by Valerie Turpen*

n Saturday, June 12 docent Charles Kahler arrived to open the doors and change the desk calendar for the first time since March 15, 2020. We have now been open on Saturdays and Sundays since. Our visitors are a variety of people—locals, travelers, first-timers, regulars, entire families enjoying a day around town. People were excited to enjoy the outdoors and locations they were previously unable to visit. As our pandemic life changes daily, we continue to be cautious and follow health protocols to stay safe.

Sales in the gift shop have been good. Weekly we receive a variety of interesting objects as donations and items are brought out from warehouse storage to refresh the inventory.

I cannot express my gratitude enough to the supporters of the museum who devote their time to keep the doors open. That is a basic fact, we cannot open if we do not have docents. You all have your expertise, whether it is relaying Alameda history, arranging shop displays, engaging visitors in conversation, pricing donations,

the list goes on... Your efforts are appreciated! Several docents are bringing friends and relatives to share their shift. Please consider others who would like to meet new friends and be a spokesperson for Alameda and the museum. It only requires 2.5 hours!

In August the museum was visited by three siblings from the Frank Amaral family who built the six seat cycle displayed in the museum entry. They grew up in Alameda and had some great stories about their youth here. Patti, Mari and Bill were a fun group to visit with. They also generously lent their support to the museum.

It was a bit of a surprise, but after 50 years as Curator, George Gunn has decided to retire. Not many of us have the tenacity to devote ourselves to a cause for that amount of time, especially when starting in our 20s. Not only has George shepherded the collection at the museum, he has also managed the displays in the Meyers House and throughout the property.

Thank you George for your insight, dedication, and perseverance in preserving Alameda's history.

Also, long-time Curator Assistant, Joe Young is retiring. He has worked with George in the warehouse for many years, entering items into the collection, researching their history, creating exhibit signs, and so much more. The collection numbering system and card catalog has been a precise process, until recently, done by hand. Much of this due to Joe.

Thank you Joe for your commitment to the museum and its collection! (See page 9.)

Let's look to the future and the many ways we can share Alameda with our community and visitors alike.

Valerie Turpen
President, Alameda Museum



A masked Charles Kahler was the first docent to open the museum in over a year on June 12, 2021.



The Amaral siblings Patti, Mari, and Bill came to the museum to see the six-seated cycle made by their father Frank and uncle Ed.



The Rotary Club held their first in-person meeting in the Meyers House garden in June.



Melissa Warren-Hagaman joined the team at the Meyers House August 28 to invite the public in once again.

BE A MUSEUM DOCENT

MAKE SOME NEW FRIENDS

Please contact the
Docent Coordinator

Jean Graubart

510-217-8193

volunteer@AlamedaMuseum.org

The Alameda Museum Quarterly is published four times a year and is available in electronic form on the museum website.

Alameda Museum
2324 Alameda Avenue
Alameda, CA 94501
alamedamuseum.org
510-521-1233

Designer: Valerie Turpen
Web: Myrna van Lunteren

Museum Directors

Valerie Turpen, President

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THANKS TO OUR HERITAGE PARTNER

Alameda Sun

MOVING PICTURE SHOWS

Entertainment took a new turn when live stage performances gave way to performances captured on celluloid. Across the nation theaters transitioned their entertainment venues from vaudeville to nickelodeons, the first type of indoor space dedicated to showing projected motion pictures. These were usually set in converted storefronts and clientele were charged a nickel to watch. As the moving picture industry evolved, films became longer, sound was added and elaborate interiors and exteriors became part of the draw.

Presented here are some of the entertainment venues of Alameda. Several met their demise by the wrecking ball, others still stand, hidden under architectural transformations. The only theater in the city that still shows movies to the public is the Alameda Theatre on Santa Clara Avenue.

Additional Former Movie Theater Locations

- Bay Theatre, 1206 Lincoln Avenue
Faith Baptist Church
- Rio, 1413 Park Street
Storefront
- Park Theater, 1336 Park Street
Edward Jones Investments
(Behind Tomatina)
- Naval Air Station Theater
2700 Saratoga Street
Michaan's Auction Theater
- Island Auto Movie
801 Atlantic Avenue
Residential Tract
- Southshore Twin Theatre
2245 Shoreline Drive
Shopping Center Parking

Images: Alameda Museum except where noted.



← **Oak Theater**
2308 Santa Clara Avenue
This building began as a blacksmith and wagon shop. It opened as a nickelodeon in 1911. The featured matinee in the image is "The Parting of the Trails", 1911. Advertisements promoted the show would be changed daily and Summerland lots (on the Russian River) were to be given away. This building was torn down in 1950 for what is now the CVS parking lot.

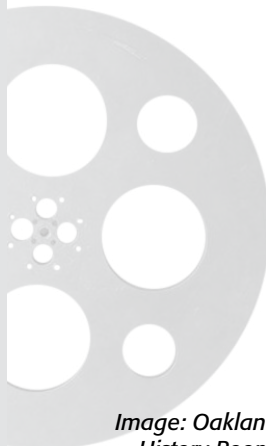
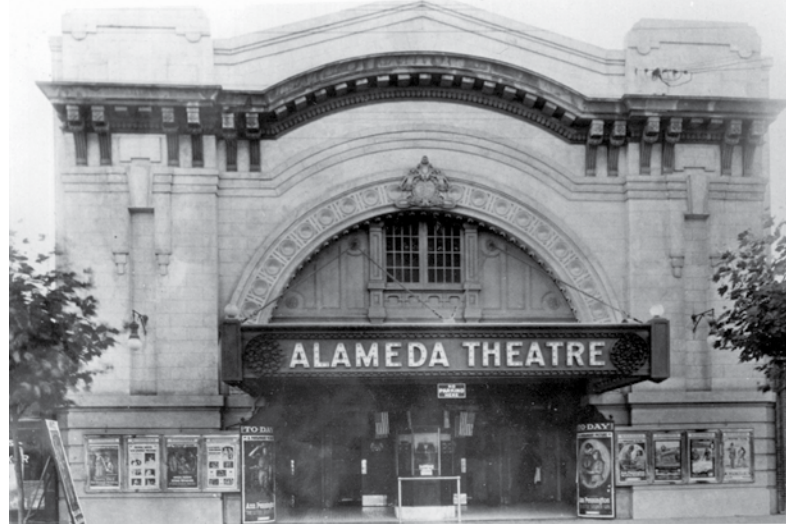


Image: Oakland History Room.



↑ **Alameda Theatre, 2420 Santa Clara Avenue** Opened in January 1913, this as a "photo-play" theater included a stage and an organ for live music. The accommodations were elaborate with leather seats, fine carpets, and tapestry. The theater, then named the Rialto closed about 1927. After hosting a bowling alley and a dry cleaners the building was converted to a bank in 1977. Modern additions were made and the entrance changed to face Park Avenue. Although obscured by a street tree, the grand arch is still visible with a replicated ornament.



↑ **Webster Playgraph, 1455 Webster Street** After its opening in 1910, the Mission Revival style theater was later known as the Regent. It closed in 1922 and the City opened the first West End Library here until 1936. When the new library opened at 788 Santa Clara the old building was sold. It was reborn as a theater in 1942, reopening as the Times. Eventually it closed in 1958 and was demolished in 1962, one of three lots developed as a Sizzler steakhouse, later a sushi restaurant.



◀ **Strand Theater, 1318 Park Street** The Hamblen, named after operator James Hamblen, opened April 1918 on Park Street near Encinal. It contained a stage and a grand organ. Movies were offered six days a week with vaudeville acts on Sunday. The enterprise sold twice in a short time and by December 31, 1918 it was renamed The Strand. The theater was sold several more times, eventually closing in 1950. It was torn down in 1964 and is now the driveway to the Alameda Fire Department's central station at Park and Encinal. The building to the left, built in 1924 as the Hotel California, still stands at 1320-28 Park Street.

A tin bucket from a promotional contest "A Bucket of Cash, Lucky Star Night", Neptune Theatre, held every Thursday and Sunday night. Theaters gave away various items to entice customers to the show.



↓ **Alameda Theatre, 2317 Central Avenue**

Governor James Rolph Jr. and Mayor William F. Murray were amongst the dignitaries attending the opening of the Alameda Theatre August 16, 1932. The "Alameda Times Star" recorded 5,000 people attended the event featuring family friendly movies. The Art Deco palace was built by the Nasser Brothers, who owned a chain of movie houses in the Bay Area. Designed by architect Timothy L. Pflueger, the front was molded in concrete with relief decorations and huge grilled medallions. The neon sign reached 70 feet into the sky. The structure closed in the 1980s and spent 30 years in use as a roller rink, music club, and gymnastic center. In 2008 the structure was renovated to the grand state that we enjoy today.



↑ **Neptune Theatre, 714 Central Avenue** Built in 1920 by Robert Strehlow, owner of Neptune Beach, it was the premier theater in the West End. The understated façade did not compete with the more eye-catching resort buildings. The Neptune entertained moviegoers for over four decades before closing in 1962. It was demolished for El Taco in 1972 (now Mountain Mike's).



◀ **Vogue Theater, 2521 Santa Clara Avenue**

Opening the summer of 1936, it was designed in the elegant Streamline Moderne style. Owned by L&O Theatres of San Francisco, it was later purchased by the Nasser Brothers in the 1940s. The last film was shown here in 1959. The building was purchased by the Calvary Baptist Church in 1962 who remodeled the interior to better suit their needs. The exterior acquired touches of 1960s adornment and the neon sign on the central pylon was removed and replaced with a cross.



FROM THE COLLECTION

Mementos of an Early Film Star

by Valerie Turpen

WRAPPED IN TISSUE are a small pair of red canvas dancing shoes decorated with gold and red sequins. These were worn by Eugenia Clinchard in a stage performance in 1911 at the MacDonough Theatre, Broadway & 14th Street, Oakland.

Eugenia was born in Alameda July 5, 1904 to Frederick Clinchard and his wife Elsie Honnef. The couple were married in Nebraska in 1904 and relocated to California after their honeymoon.

Clinchard was an employee at the Alameda Post Office for thirty-five years. Eugenia and her younger brother, Fred, attended the Glenn Taylor School on San Jose Avenue and went on to graduate from Alameda High School.

The young girl's exuberant personality and talent for song and dance was apparent at an early age. She performed in plays at the Adelphian Club, sang and danced at The Chutes water park in San Francisco, and by age five was working the vaudeville circuit in the Bay Area. A news clipping of 1911 proclaimed, "Her clever performing has won her the well deserved title of 'The Child Wonder.'"

Around this time, Gilbert M. Anderson, Director and George E. Spoor, Financier, of the Essaney Film Manufacturing Company of Chicago, Illinois purchased property in Niles, Alameda County. This became the location of their silent film empire.

Anderson apparently heard of Eugenia's performing abilities and cast her to basically play herself. The child first appeared in *A Frontier Doctor* and *Papa's Letter*, where she stretched her acting abilities to play a boy. Anderson soon became the lead actor billed as "Broncho Billy", the hero of his western drama series. Clinchard went on to play a part in eleven Broncho Billy silent films, including *Broncho Billy and the Sheriff's Kid*, *Child of the West*, *The Sheriff's Inheritance*, and *The Crazy Prospector*.

In 1914 the actress appeared in her final movies: *Broncho Billy, the Vagabond*, and *Broncho Billy's Christmas Spirit*. Family lore has it that father Fred Clinchard felt movie sets were too dangerous for a child after the star was almost hit by a runaway coach on set. At that point she returned to the safer venue of the live stage.



A film strip featuring Eugenia Clinchard and pooch watching over the distraught mother.

December 16, 1926 Eugenia Clinchard married Walter George Pearch, a sea captain working in the marine shipping industry. In the 1940s after having two children the couple divorced and Eugenia moved south to the Los Angeles area. In 1955 she married Robert R. Horton.

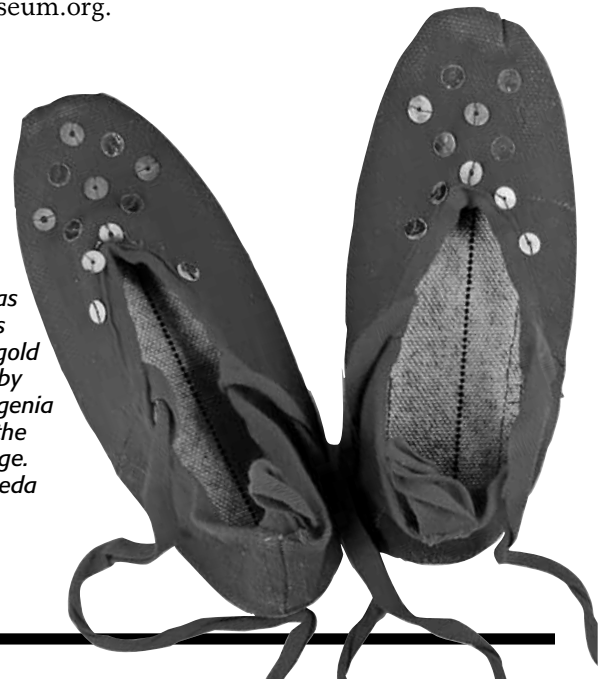
The Alameda Museum archives include correspondence between Genie Horton and Archie Waterbury, museum Vice-President, in 1983. The typed letter from Sherman Oaks holds a pleasant exchange between the star and the museum. "I have to smile to myself Mr. Waterbury...I never thought I would end-up in a museum."

The actress donated a collection of photos, news clippings of her career, a tambourine, small leather gloves from Dent's of London, and her red dancing shoes. She promised to drop by when visiting her brother Fred W. Clinchard who still resided in the Bay Area.

Most of us have never heard of child star Eugenia Clinchard, but her son George Pearch jr. found fame as Wally George, an American conservative radio and television commentator in the 1980s. Her granddaughter, known as Rebecca De Mornay launched her film career with Tom

Cruise in the film *Risky Business* in 1983. It is obvious the art of entertaining runs in the family.

The best way to catch the antics of Miss Clinchard in a Broncho Billy film is to take a trip to the Niles Essaney Silent Film Museum in Niles, California. Check their website for times and upcoming theater events at nilesfilmmuseum.org.



Tiny red canvas dancing shoes with red and gold sequins used by child actor Eugenia Clinchard on the vaudeville stage. Images: Alameda Museum.

Retirements Announced

by Myrna van Lunteren

THE ALAMEDA MUSEUM BOARD OF DIRECTORS are sad to announce the well-deserved retirement of two key figures of the Alameda Museum: Curator George Gunn and Curatorial Assistant Joe Young.

In the *Quarterly*, Spring of 2014, Joe explained how his involvement with the museum started; visiting the museum in 1995 for the first time upon his retirement, he let slip the information to Curator George Gunn that he was a collector of vintage photos. George, astute as always, immediately convinced Joe to organize, evaluate and conserve the museum's photo collection. This took over five years.

Since then, Joe has been working behind the scenes in many capacities; researching the value of rare books and of other objects eligible to be sold in the gift shop; creating signage for objects on display in the museum; and, after retirement of the long-time steno-typist previously doing this task, creating the accession index cards as dictated by the Curator. Other tasks in which I have seen Joe's capable hands: ordering supplies and organizing them; documenting the subjects of the photo collection and paper ephemera collection; writing thank-you notes; contacting other museums with objects that would fit in their collection, etc., etc.

In addition, Joe has contributed objects from his own collection of Alameda memorabilia, including some vintage Alameda-related photos, documentation on local photographers, memorabilia of Sambo's restaurant, and last but not least, a self-published book *Picture Perfect.....of favorites* from Joe's own photo collection.

Joe will be sorely missed, but has mentioned we might still ask him questions in his area of expertise...Which we'll be sure to do.



Joe Young has devoted over 25 years of work to the museum archives.



Curator George Gunn has been collecting archives of the City of Alameda for 50 years. His tireless efforts have preserved our local history for generations to come.

Curator George Gunn of course is irreplaceable. Earlier this year, an article appeared in the *Alameda Sun*, by editor and past Alameda Museum President Dennis Evanosky. The occasion was George's 50th year as curator. George tells us he first started with the museum even earlier, when he was just 21 years old!

Dennis mentioned that George oversaw two moves of the museum, was influential in preserving the Meyers House and Gardens, was helpful in providing names of Alameda historic figures to be honored in street names, arranged for the placing of plaques commemorating the location of the home of Gideon Aughinbaugh (co-founder of Alameda; 600 block of Taylor Avenue) and the Mastick family home (900 block of Pacific Avenue).

Of course, George's books, listing early Alameda homes still present today, are an invaluable resource to anyone doing research in Alameda, or buying one of these properties.

The museum owes a great deal to George Gunn. At times, George was the only one keeping the organization going. He has been instrumental in helping—at a guess, thousands—of people over the years. Immediately after reopening, visitors would come in to the museum just to say 'Hi' to George, disappointed when they found he had taken a leave of absence.

George has been instrumental in picking up where the previous curators left off (between 1948 and 1972), and saving objects representing Alameda's early history. His knowledge of early families and houses is phenomenal, his knowledge of historic objects equally so. George implemented the process for documenting donations; he has been indefatigable in securing volunteers for the Meyers House tours; creating interesting displays, and managing estate sales. The museum will go on thanks to George's efforts all these years.

We wish George and Joe all the best in retirement and hope to continue to see their faces often at the Museum.

A Look at the Museum Textile Collection *by Staff*

DURING THE WEEK while the Alameda Museum is closed to the public, Nancy Martin has been working with the textile collection this summer to fulfill internship credits needed in her Ph.D. program. To better understand her expertise and research involved, Nancy was asked about her background in textiles, her education, and her plans for the future.

Why did you choose the Alameda Museum for your internship?

It was a matter of both convenience and familiarity. I had done volunteer work for the museum in 2014 as part of a course for my MA through SFSU. I worked with George Gunn and sewed labels into the textile items. I was excited about the scope of the collection and always knew I would come back to it someday. When I learned I was required to do an internship for my program, I thought this would be perfect. It is an easy commute, since we live in Alameda, and I knew the collection needed my attention. The internship is required for my Ph.D. program. I am working towards a doctorate in the specialization of Dress, History, and Culture with a minor in Museum Studies, at the University of Minnesota, in the Apparel Design Program.

What exactly are you doing with the textile collection?

After speaking with Myrna van Lunteren, museum Vice President, I decided that my goal for the summer would be to assist in her project, which is photographing all the items in the collection and documenting their location in the new digital database. We are re-organizing the collection by object type rather than the donor. This is crucial for being able to both locate objects and also to storing them archivally. I am working through the textiles and at this point

have photographed everything hanging on the garment racks. The boxed items are stored on shelves and I am organizing those by type as well. I am finishing up Textile Bay 4 now will complete Bay 5 in the next few weeks.

What items are you finding in the textile collection?

There is a wide range. I am most surprised about the dresses from the 1920s and 30s. These are in the "one-piece dresses" category and there are three full racks of them. They are really fun to look at! Because of my background in sewing and pattern making, I am so happy that these have been saved. It's very easy to see the historical changes in silhouette from the Victorian two-piece dresses, to the flapper 1920s style, to 1930s bias cut. We have very few dresses from later than 1950 and I noticed that, aside from pantalettes and softball

uniforms, there is not a single pair of women's dress pants. There are a lot of bathing suits from Sunny Cove and Neptune Beach, Red Cross Uniforms, christening gowns, wedding dresses, capes, capelets, and furs, and napkins, handkerchiefs, and doilies. There are quilts—a bicentennial quilt—stitched by the Alameda adult schools and several Victorian Crazy Quilts. There is also fabric, and dress trims. One of the prominent Alameda families, the Haslett's, had saved yardage of silk from Japan and the Philippines. We have the bodice where that fabric was used, as well as yardage of the fabric after it was embroidered. According to the database, there are about 1,000 objects in the textile collection.

What is the oldest item in the collection?

I had to look in the catalog for this, but it appears to be the William Worthington Chipman vest currently on view in the Perkins Gallery. This is from around 1850 and was worn on his wedding day. It was donated by Carol Heche, granddaughter of Chipman, whose name shows up as a donor regularly. All of her garments include a hand-sewn label reading "return to Carol Heche."

What do you look for when examining clothing?

When photographing the items, I try to put them on the mannequin if possible. That way I get to look inside. I always look for labels, because that can narrow down the date. The labels say a lot about the garment. For example, there are a few items that have a California reference. One is a dress that along the inside band is printed, "This is your California Shirt Dress." Another was "Pat Premo, California." These are brands I am not familiar with. When I am analyzing a garment for research, I also look for evidence of wear. For example, in



Flapper-style, one-piece black lace dress, with handkerchief hemline. This dress was worn by resident Dorothy Dyer. Image: Nancy Martin.

Continued on page 11. . .



Nancy Martin examining a tail coat and preparing it for a photograph. Image: V. Turpen.

the Lupe Vélez dress, we learned that Mrs. Murray had not worn the dress as she remembered it. I speculated that maybe she never wore the dress. But clear evidence such as holes at the hem and perspiration stains verified that she had. In my field of dress research, it is the clothing that provides the evidence and historical documentation that substantiates it.

How are the items stored?

Both in boxes and racks. The hanging garments have special hangers with padding so they retain a shoulder shape. In the boxes, we use non-acidic tissue to separate the pieces. This is to protect against the dye bleeding from one garment to the next. The boxes are archival non-acid as well. Acid breaks down the fibers, and it is interesting to notice how the different fibers hold up over time. Linen is the best, cotton next, and silk is the worst. During the 19th century, silk production included "weighting" the silk so that it would appear more sumptuous. This process replaced the gum/sericin with a filler. Sadly, weighted silks break down considerably in a process called shattering. The fabric just disintegrates, and there is no way, currently, to either prevent it or preserve it.

What's next for you?

My goal for the next year is to complete my Ph.D., and to continue teaching and researching in a university setting. On September 1, I will be traveling to Minnesota to take my last two courses. Because of Covid, I have been able to do most of my coursework remotely. Now that schools are reopening, though, I have to be on campus. In the new year, I plan to be back in Alameda and beginning to work on my dissertation. I will likely include some items from the museum in my dissertation. The opportunity to touch garments, to look inside, to investigate things like fasteners, hems, and internal seams finishes, has been a huge benefit towards understanding how clothing was constructed in the past. The purpose of my work is to investigate the meaning behind clothing. What significance does it have for the person who chose to wear it, or what does that say about the time in which it was worn? Dress tells a story, and I want to be the one to tell it.

This textile archival project is in need of additional acid-free boxes and tissue. Consider a donation at AlamedaMuseum.org THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

The Brain Game:

Collective Nouns Related to Buildings

During Medieval times, according to *An Exaltation of Larks*, a 1968 tome by James Lipton, books of "Venerary" instructed young gentlefolk in proper descriptions of groups, such as pride of lions, host of angels, and flock of sheep.

Some of us enamored of architecture concocted a whole new list, and dozens contributed to our new Brain Game since 2019. A fledgling recruit just sent an entry totaling about 50 items! A choice few are listed below.

We are not seeking any more players currently, so many thanks Edmund!

Edmund's Bits

A battle of bargeboards

A sadness of carports

A dancing of dormers

An effervescence of entablatures

A frothing of fountains

A garden of gargoyles

An indecency of peek-a-boo windows

A resume of rafters

An itching of shingles

A tripping of toekicks

A vaccination of veranda
(which makes no sense at all but it's timely)

...

Judith Lynch





ALAMEDA MUSEUM

2324 Alameda Avenue
Alameda CA 94501

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IN REMEMBRANCE

Diane Coler-Dark

A supporter of many Alameda organizations, Diane became president of the Alameda Museum in 1999. She devoted herself to its many needs: gift shop sales, new exhibits, estate sales, lecture presentations, Meyers House events, and the Alameda Legacy Home Tour.

She was adept at fundraising and her Matching Funds Grant with the City – *Bang for the Buck* – helped the museum survive. Diane oversaw a total refurbishing of exhibits in 2007 after a flood that led to the Neptune Beach permanent exhibit we have today. She ran a tight ship until stepping down at the end of her term in 2009.

Diane played a important role in preserving the history of Alameda, her home town. We would like to acknowledge her commitment and support.



Alameda Museum Board of Directors

ALAMEDA MUSEUM

OPEN WEEKENDS

Saturday

11:00 am - 4:00 pm

Sunday

1:30 - 4:00 pm

Interested in research?
Call 510-521-1233 or email
info@AlamedaMuseum.org



MEYERS HOUSE & GARDEN

2021 Alameda Avenue

OPEN

4th Saturday

1:00 - 4:00 pm

3:00 pm last tour

\$5



This Fleur-de-Lis stamped in concrete is the trademark of Garner Marshall; this very rare sidewalk artifact is behind Alameda Hospital. Note the old-fashioned phone number. Image: Judith Lynch.

**Reading the Street:
Visual Analysis of History**

Love to walk and looking for a weekday jaunt? Join author-amateur historian Judith Lynch for a free class, featuring one slide show and three gentle walking tours at **Mastick Center, 1155 Santa Clara Avenue.**

Enrollment is limited to 20 Mastick members; **please call 510-747-7506** to sign up. Mastick membership is free to anyone 50+. You need not live in Alameda to join and enroll.



**Introductory Slides and Discussion
Wednesday October 6, 1:00 - 2:00 pm
Mastick Center, room to be announced.**

Overview of the ideas to be explored, recognizing building details, comparing different kinds of houses, learning about vintage streetlamps, hydrants, and sidewalk stamps, while being regaled with local lore along the way.

**Walks Wednesdays
October 13, 20, 27, 1:00 - 2:00 pm**