A Place to Call Home: Two Centuries of California Living

On exhibit April 25 to October 6, 2013

Houses give us more than shelter. They give us a place to belong. Since the arrival of the first Spanish settlers, our homes have evolved in style, size and use, reflecting our changing lifestyles and cultural values. Over time, we’ve developed a unique sense of “California Living,” and changed the way people live in other places. This original new exhibition focuses on house architecture of the past 200 years - and beyond.

“We shape our buildings and thereafter, they shape us”
—Winston Churchill

“Two basic premises underlie the exhibition” states volunteer curator and art historian Jan Masters, “that architecture and related aspects of our built-environment reflect our core lifestyle values, and are influenced by them. And that understanding the past will help us make better choices for the future as participating members of our local communities--and our world.”

With images, text and artifacts intended to spark interest in local history as shown through the evolution of the typical single-family home in California, the exhibition includes an overview of changes in architectural styles, forms and functions, materials and use of space indoors and outdoors through our history.

The talented volunteer committee has researched many aspects of home life. “We’re exploring sociological questions, like what makes a house a home, and what makes it change?”

Continued on page 3

Museum Wins Silicon Valley Water Conservation Award
Shaped by Water Exhibition Recognized for Education

Recognizing the primacy of water to the health and economic vitality of our region and to the environment, the Silicon Valley Water Conservation Awards are presented to organizations, agencies, businesses and individuals whose programs and leadership have advanced water conservation in Silicon Valley (San Mateo County, Santa Clara County and Alameda County from Hayward south). This coalition of 19 member organizations represents a diverse cross-section of respected parties concerned about water conservation and the need for a strategic response, both to droughts and to a new era of water scarcity. The goal of the Awards is to raise awareness and celebrate outstanding achievements in water conservation through best practices, efficiency and innovation.

The Museum is honored to receive this award, and we especially thank and congratulate the exhibit team led by Linda Gass. You can see Shaped by Water right now at History San Jose through September 23, 2013.
The board of the Los Altos History Museum has taken action to address a long standing problem – not enough room to store exhibit and event materials, and the negative impact that has on meeting our mission. We’ve been growing steadily since 2001, have as many as 21,000 visitors a year, and our museum building has not grown with it. “Before the new museum opened in 2001, we already knew we’d have storage issues,” says Marie Backs, project co-manager and board member. “Closets intended for storage had to be redesigned to house HVAC equipment. We knew we’d need room to grow, but there was no choice at the time.” That time has come - we have a new storage “barn” under construction scheduled to open this April.

Why the need?

Half our mission is education through exhibits.

“We’ve got exhibit materials tucked into all corners.” says Jane Reed, board member and long-time exhibits leader. “We’ve been making do for years, and it’s affecting other core functions like collections and school tours, which also need storage space.”

When not being used, exhibit furniture is bulky to store. Cases, pedestals, and Plexiglas vitrines are expensive, but essential to protect artifacts on display—and if cared-for, they can last for decades. Past exhibit panels, well-stored, can be reused, saving thousands in exhibit costs. “We’re using spaces meant for other functions,” states executive director Laura Bajuk, “like by the tractors outside, and in the exhibit prep. room--where there is no room for prepping, and the HVAC closets.”

The other half of our mission is preserving collections. Space created by this new building will relieve pressure on the collections. Artifacts and documents in the climate-controlled “vault” in the main museum are safely and professionally housed, but some large pieces are still stored in the Smith House basement, which lacks climate control. With the new building, the closet next to the vault can be used for artifacts, not pedestals.

The second problem this new barn will solve is providing room for events equipment. 30% of our income is from Special and Rental Events. “We built the museum to host special events, because we knew we’d need to earn an income” says Bob Grimm, project co-manager and past LAHM president. The main museum was designed as a great place for a party, and we now own tables and chairs for an event for 200 people.

The bottom line is--we’ve got a lot of stuff to take care of.

Where is the Storage Barn? Within clearances defined by the City, the barn is tucked behind the main museum building, near the softball field. The apricot sulfur shed (which was full of folding chairs) will be moved to the north end of the open cutting shed, with a new foundation to prevent further dry rot and returned to use for educational purposes. Our education team is working on text and images for new labels to add to the exhibit, which has languished far too long in subpar condition.

What does the new barn look like? We modeled it on one in an 1881 handbook printed for American farmers. It’s two stories to maximize use of limited ground space and has a freight elevator and staircase. It is for storage only – no work space, no public access. (Though we’re sorely tempted to throw a little party when we finish it.)

Who’s designing and building it? We chose locally-based professionals who have the credentials and community spirit for this project. Architect (and Historical Commissioner) Walter Chapman re-did the Paul Shoup house, our first National Register building. We know his working style and like it—and his son loves our tractors. Schiller Construction submitted the winning bid; they are great to work with, and they know their stuff. Even the cutting shed and outhouse is getting a new roof while we’ve got Casto Roofing here for the project (they roofed the main museum 12 years ago). This barn will last for decades, if not centuries, it’s so well built.

How much will it cost and when will it be done? We will have it in place, serving its purpose, by April 26, 2013. The project budget is just over $180,000; we’ve been saving money for a purpose like this for years, so the board approved paying for it from invested savings. We welcome donations towards this project, especially as we see more needs on the horizon, for the permanent exhibits (inside and out) and other facility needs.

For more information, or to donate toward this project, please contact Laura Bajuk, E.D. at 650.948.9427 x10.
Masters adds, “How do houses change lifestyles, and how do changing lifestyles change our houses?”

To help tell this story, the exhibition looks at the technology of everyday life, from letters and rotary dials to tablets and smartphones. Kitchen evolution, from an open fire to microwave ovens, is explored through the history of a chicken dinner. With two centuries of home-building reflected, historic preservation and the sustainability of new buildings are featured.

A series of supporting programs and family-friendly activities will take place at the museum and at other venues in and around Los Altos from May through September.

Opening Reception: Thursday, April 25, 4-6PM

May 1-31: Satellite exhibit at the Los Altos Main Library

• Historic Preservation in a Sustainable World - panel discussion
• Preserving Landscapes – award-winning intl. landscape firm SWA
• The Evolution of the Chicken Dinner (kitchens over time)
• The House of the Future - Gary Hedden, GreenTown Los Altos
• Connections, Communications, Community - art historian Jan Masters
• Mid-Century Modern - author Heather David
• Making Miniature houses - artist Melissa Houle
• Historic Los Altos Tours

Visit www.losaltoshistory.org for details!

Volunteer Spotlight:

Volunteers Advance Planned Giving & Endowment Conversation

Meet Holly, John and Jonrie – three financial professionals who are volunteering their expertise through the Incubator Program, a two-year program of the Silicon Valley Planned Giving Council. Our goal is to create the right planned giving program for the Museum, and possibly start an endowment to ensure we can preserve the past for generations to come.

A partner in Brown Adams, LLP in Palo Alto, Holly Wong Agbayani specializes in tax and estate planning for high net worth individuals, stock option planning, charitable remainder trust planning and compliance, and estate/fiduciary taxation. Holly is past President of the Financial Planning Forum and is currently on the Board of Directors of the Foothill-DeAnza Foundation. She received her BS in Commerce with an emphasis in Accounting from Santa Clara University and is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the California Society of Certified Public Accountants.

Attorney and Stanford Planned Giving Officer Jonrie Dávila has a wealth of fundraising knowledge, a can-do attitude that inspires us, and a real affection for the Museum. “I work with a lot of nonprofits, and the Los Altos History Museum is the best organized, best managed and best led group I’ve known.” An experienced member of Stanford’s team of experts, she helps alumni with bequests or other deferred gifts, their tax consequences, and their use to benefit the university.

John Froman joined the team this year as a mentor in training. Vice President at Bernstein Global Wealth Management, John is a financial advisor with Bernstein’s private client group based in San Francisco. He provides wealth management and investment services to high net worth individuals, families, foundations and endowments customized based on the client’s resources, risk tolerance, time horizon, tax situation and estate plan, with the goal of maximizing after-tax returns.

“The Incubator Project has brought us far more than planned giving and endowment advice,” states executive director Laura Bajuk. “We’ve addressed fine points of nonprofit and tax law with them, so that we do the right thing, as well as invaluable fundraising advice… like how to preserve our savings as we spend on the permanent exhibits and the storage barn, so that we keep our safety net in place.”
Antiques Shows 4.0

Treasures from California’s Golden Past to be added to Rebooted Event

Save the Dates! June 9 & October 20, 2013 – 10AM-4PM, Hillview Community Center

Twenty-seven years ago, the California Country Antiques Show was started to help support the Museum by members who were professional antiques dealers. Under four generations of event producers, from a cozy perch under the Smith House oaks to delightfully filling every available nook of Hillview Center, it has become one of the finest shows in the West.

We welcome Sandy Raulston and Ted Birbilis as the show’s newest producers. “We are pleased to work with the Los Altos History Museum. We thoroughly intend to maintain the high quality and integrity of the shows, and our goal is to retain the exhibitors and their customers who have supported it while opening the event to other new, exciting and complimentary areas of collecting.”

The show will continue to be a venue strictly for quality antique merchandise, uniting American Country and Folk Art with treasures from California’s golden past: California Rancho, Spanish Colonial, Spanish Revival, Monterey Furniture, Mission, Old Mexico, American Indian, California & Southwestern Fine Art - and more.

Raulston and Birbilis started The Golden California Antiques Show in 2006 to celebrate the pre-WWII California lifestyle; it was a huge success from the start. In 2011, with encouragement from their colleagues, they launched Antiques, Objects & Art L.A., introducing new elements including American Country & Folk Art into their flagship show, where it has continued to be well received. “It was a natural fit for us to merge The Early California Style into The California Country Antiques Show,” they say. “We look forward to a fun and exciting new endeavor!”

Touring Sandy and Ted through the Museum and collections, their passion for the past was obvious. We welcome them to Los Altos, and encourage all of our members to come see the show on June 9. Volunteers are welcome – contact the office.

- Tom Baker and Pinky Whelan, Co-chairs, Special Events Committee

About our Partners: Sandy Raulston and Ted Birbilis are dealers/collectors who live in South Pasadena in a 1926 Spanish Revival home. They are collectors of California plein air paintings; Monterey Furniture; American Indian weavings, pottery & baskets; California tile & pottery; American Arts & Crafts Period furniture, metalwork & pottery; Mexican Folk Art pottery, tinwork, wood carvings & textiles; vintage California & Southwest photography and many other related items. They operate a retail gallery, Roadside America, located in Pasadena Antiques & Design just south of Historic Old Town in the heart of The Pasadena Antiques District.

Longtime antiques show exhibitors, they own The Golden California Antiques Show and Antiques and Objects & Art L.A., both held annually in October and March in Glendale. Sandy was an early dealer at Emma Lee Turney’s Round Top, Texas Country Antiques Fair when there were just 27 dealers. Years later, they were among the original handful of dealers who established The Marburger Farm Antique Show in Round Top. They have participated in numerous major antiques events from coast to coast over a 30 year period.

Like us on Facebook: The-New-California-Country-More-Antiques-Show

Welcome New Members!

We welcome 16 new members, and thank 295 for donating and/or renewing since the last newsletter, for a grand total of 702 members. Thank you for your support!

Neal & Sara Callahan
Kamrin Knight Desmond, Knight & Company
Hank & Danielle Drew
Nancy & Stephen Gill
Laura Gwosden
Jerome Lewis
Elizabeth Lyman
Scott Miller, Elegant Floors
Bronwyn O’Malley
Caroline Spangler
Linda Gail Thomason
Barbara Thurston
Wanda Whittaker, House of Daniel on Main
CalWater
Gifts in memory of Lillian Hansen:
Patricia Aalgaard
Nick Drago
A new book by Museum member Fritz Trapnell, our speaker on April 3, is called Trap – The Pioneering Test Pilot Who Led The Navy From Biplanes To Jets. As one of the great untold stories from the first 100 years of naval aviation, Trap tells the tale of trail-blasting experimental engineering test pilot, Vice Admiral Frederick “Trap” Trapnell, who provided critical leadership through one of the most perilous and thrilling periods of aviation history.

In a flying career spanning 1927 to 1950, Trap was responsible for guiding naval aviation through its evolution from biplanes to high performance propeller planes and into jets. At the start of WW II, when Navy fighters were outperformed by their opposition, Trap led the expedited development of two superb fighter types that came to dominate the air war against Japan—the Corsair and the Hellcat. From 1943 until the end of the war, Trap served in the Pacific campaign. In 1946, he was appointed Commander of the Naval Air Test Center, Patuxent River, with responsibility for all aircraft testing associated with the transition of naval aviation into the new jet age. Not only was he recognized for defining the operating requirements for carrier-based jet propelled aircraft, but he personally conducted the preliminary tests of all the Navy’s first generation jets and was instrumental in founding the U.S. Naval Test Pilot School.

This presentation, which features 40 rare aviation photographs, shines a light on why Trap has been called the “godfather of current naval aviation” as well as “the foremost test pilot in a century of U.S. Naval Aviation and a legend among the worldwide test-pilot community.”

About our speaker: Frederick “Fritz” Trapnell is the son of Vice Admiral Frederick M. “Trap” Trapnell, for whom Trapnell Field at NAS Patuxent River gets its name. He grew up in Coronado, California, spent two years on active duty in the U.S. Marine Corps as an enlisted Aviation Electronics Technician, and attended the California Institute of Technology, from which he graduated with a Master’s degree in Electrical Engineering. He had a fifty-year career in computer and software engineering and engineering management – starting with IBM and retiring in 2007 from Hewlett-Packard. He is a life-long aviation enthusiast with a special affection for the Navy. He wrote a novel about an American pilot in the Battle of Britain and has recently completed a biography of his father.
Museum’s Oral History Program to Resume

Meet Kristin Morris, a new employee at the Los Altos History Museum who is excited to start work with the oral history committee and exhibit teams. “Lisa Robin-son, our collections manager, is so active in her volunteer life between here, the San Lorenzo Valley Museum and the Computer History Museum, that she decided to change from employee to volunteer status,” says executive director Laura Bajuk. “She’s here one day a week, and remains the head of the collections staff. With support from Kristin and Collections Assistant Stefanie Midlock, we have a great team.”

A fifth-generation Californian, Kristin has a MA in history from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and did her thesis on oral history. In addition to attending classes, Kristin worked for the Wistariahurst Museum in Holyoke, Mass. interviewing the family of William Skinner, a prominent silk manufacturer. Their permanent collection includes decorative art, paintings and prints, textiles and a rich manuscript collection of family and local papers. The history and culture is similar to our own J. Gilbert Smith House.

Kristin has previously held curatorial positions at History San Jose, San Francisco Airport Museums and the Campbell Historical Museum and Ainsley House. “I have known Laura for a long time and am delighted to work with her at a museum that has a lot of community support.” Kristin said. “I love doing oral history and looking forward to get the interview program going again.” Kristin and her husband Henri Berger and daughter Ivy, settled in to their 1957-built Los Altos home in January 2013.

Clyde Noel

COMING THIS SUMMER: Robin Chapman has been researching the apricot industry for over a year, and some of our collection and some apricot recipes will be featured in her new book due for release in May, California Apricots: The Lost Orchards of Silicon Valley.

PRESIDENT’S PEN

A new mission statement was adopted at the December board meeting:

History inspires imagination, stimulates thought, and transforms society. The Los Altos History Museum preserves and shares our local history to enrich our community and to shape a more informed future.

The support of museum members makes it possible for us to fulfill our mission and to connect with the community through outstanding programs such as our third and fourth grade educational tours and exhibits like Bear in Mind.

Our Board Retreat held at the beginning of the new board term focused on fiduciary responsibility of board members pertaining to LAHM financial operations. The benefits of the discussions held are ongoing.

Recently the Board of Directors approved a policy to hold in reserve an amount equal to one and one-half the annual operating budget averaged over the last three years. This prudent financial decision means we will ensure the financial wellbeing of the Museum and enable operations to continue should there be a revenue decline due to unforeseen events.

Another retreat outcome was the formation of an ad hoc committee to evaluate our fundraising events such as the Luau, Crab Feed, and Fashion Show. As we look at the effectiveness of these gatherings, we are considering the dollar amount raised, volunteer commitment, target audience, and relationship to our mission.

Thank you for contributing to the Museum financially, for attending our wonderful events, and for the many hours you spend as volunteers.

- Ginger Beman, President
**Member Tour:** April 3  
**Moffett Field & Presentation by Fritz Trapnell**

**On Exhibit:** EXTENDED through April 14, 2013  
**Bear in Mind: the Story of the California Grizzly**

**Education:** April 1-May 3  
**3rd Grade Tours**

**Education:** May 14  
**Ice Cream Social** for Essay Contest winners

**Special Event:** May 10  
**Fashion Show Luncheon,** University Club, 11:30 AM

**Education:** May 10-24  
**4th Grade Tours**

**Museum/Community:** June 19 - 5:30-7 PM, patio  
**Chamber Mixer at the Museum** (Museum/Rotary/Kiwanis)

**Special Event:** June 9, 10 AM-4 PM  
28th Annual California Country & More! **Spring Antiques Show,** Hillview

**Special Event:** September 14 & 15, 10 AM-4 PM  
**Train Days**

**Special Event:** October 20, 10 AM-4 PM  
28th Annual California Country & More! **Fall Antiques Show**, Hillview

**Special Event:** November 13 (tent.)  
**Catch the Spirit,** Museum, patio & Smith House, noon-4 PM

---

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**Wednesday, June 26**

**Annual Meeting of the Members:**  
4:00 PM  
Join us for the election of officers and directors, and to thank our outgoing board members.

Then stay for the:  
**Volunteer Recognition Party:**  
4:30 - 6:30 PM  
All members are invited to come celebrate volunteerism, and share a lovely afternoon with wine and nibbles.

**Have a volunteer to nominate for outstanding services?** Contact Brigitte Ahlfeldt via Aja at the office: 650-948-9427, ext.14

---

Address Correction Requested

History inspires imagination, stimulates thought and transforms society. The Los Altos History Museum preserves and shares our local history to enrich our community and to shape a more informed future.

**Museum and Store Hours**  
**Thursdays to Sundays,** Noon–4:00 PM  
We are closed New Year’s Day, Easter, Fourth of July, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

**General Inquiries**  
(650) 948-9427

**Collections Research**  
(650) 948-9427 x11

**Facilities and Event Rentals**  
(650) 948-9427 x12

---

www.losaltoshistory.org