

The Heritage Society of Pacific Grove NEWSLETTER

Dedicated to Maintaining the Beauty and Individuality of Pacific Grove

Volume 5, Issue 7

October 2005



Antiques and Collectibles Appraisal Day

by Peggy Schmidt

The Heritage Society of Pacific Grove announces an antiques and collectibles appraisal event. It will be held on Saturday, October 22, from 1:30pm to 4:30pm at the Robert H. Down School auditorium at 485 Pine Avenue, Pacific Grove.

Bring your antiques and collectibles for valuation by a panel of experts led by Claudia McCord of the Cannery Row Antique Mall. The experts will give you information about



The panel will include experts in fine jewelry, furniture, glassware, 19th Century prints, Pacific Grove memorabilia, Asian and American collectibles, and American and European china.

This is a fund raising event to support Heritage Society projects. The appraisal cost is \$5 per item with a limit of 4 items per person.

For additional information call Peggy Schmidt at 831-372-1358.

What is it? How old is it? What is it worth? the value and history of the items. (No written appraisals will be issued.)

Calendar

OCTOBER

ANTIQUES/COLLECTIBLES APPRAISAL DAY

What is it worth?
October 22, 1:30 – 4:30pm
Robert H. Down School auditorium
485 Pine Ave., PG

CARMEL COTTAGE TOUR

October 23, 1 – 4pm
Tickets at SE corner of
Mt. View and Sante Fe, Carmel
\$25 per person
Parking at Forest Theatre
Enid Sales: 625-0566

DECEMBER

CHRISTMAS AT THE INNS

December 6 & 7
Tickets: \$20 for two-day tour

Review of Steinbeck Lecture

by Sally Aberg

Steinbeck scholar Susan Shillinglaw delighted nearly 200 Heritage Society members and Steinbeck fans alike on Friday night, August 26, with her beautifully illustrated slide lecture, "John Steinbeck's Place of the Heart: Pacific Grove."



Steinbeck's home on 11th Street

John Steinbeck's name is most associated with Salinas, but it is Professor Shillinglaw's contention that the writing he

did while living in his family's 800 square foot summer home on 11th Street in Pacific Grove laid the foundation for his later fame. It was his second home as a child, beginning at age 2; and he loved this cottage by the sea. He returned repeatedly, and he lived there with his second wife, Carol, for six years during the Great Depression.

From 1930 to 1936 Pacific Grove nurtured Steinbeck during his rise from unknown apprentice writer to acclaimed author. The house's simplicity

represented a familiar place from childhood that restored his soul and buffered him from the world. Pacific Grove's "retreat" origins provided him with the deep peace and quiet he needed to write the "book a year" that he had challenged himself to produce.

Photographs of Monterey County landscapes paired with evocative passages from Steinbeck novels further underlined the fact that Steinbeck, much like William Faulkner, was very bound to place --not only by the texture and colors of the natural panoramas all around him but also by the history and spirit of the people, particularly the working class. The soul of Monterey's fishermen and the farmlands and hills of the Salinas Valley along with Pacific Grove's perch on the edge of the Bay formed a "Circle of Enchantment" that shaped nearly every book he wrote.

That night's audience also learned how Steinbeck chose his "Flying Pig" emblem, and the little-known fact that a puppy ate his first draft of *Of Mice and Men*. His photographic memory allowed him to re-write it without much trouble.

Shillinglaw heads the Center for Steinbeck Studies in San Jose. Her latest book, *A Journey into Steinbeck's California*, will soon be published. Her talk marked the end of the Heritage Society of Pacific Grove's 6th Annual Summer Lecture series. Hats off to lecture chairman Ken Hinshaw for three fascinating and information-filled evenings this past summer. We look forward to an equally successful season next year.



801 Lighthouse Avenue

Innovators

by Ken Hinsbaw

You've probably seen the single car garage in Palo Alto that was declared historic because the early work on the Hewlett Packard computers was done there. Well, Pacific Grove may have a building equally deserving of honor for similar reasons.

In his new book *They Made America*, Harold Evans, past editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, spotlights 70 innovators who changed the way we Americans live. Some of the individuals are well known such as Henry Ford and Thomas Edison, but many are far from household names.

The author's favorite character and perhaps the most tragic is that of the late Gary Kildall of Digital Research. In the late '70s, Kildall designed the operating system that the whole personal computing industry is based on

-- the system that is still used by the majority of Personal Computers today. Author Evans tells the story of theft and betrayal by IBM and Bill Gates when they "appropriated" the design to work on the IBM PC. This program was written at 801 Lighthouse and also in a modest detached room behind the garage at 781 Bayview! Much of the information Evans uses for his chapter on Kildall comes from his close friend and collaborator at Digital Research Tom Rolander, long time PG resident and Heritage Society member with his lovely wife Lori. (They met at Digital Research, but that is another story.)

The four square style home at 801 Lighthouse has been meticulously restored by owners Kordula and Jay Lazarus. It was featured on the Heritage Society's Historic Home Tour a few years ago and is now a chiropractic office.

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Preservation 101: Four Square Style

by Ken Hinsbaw

A commonly seen and often misidentified style in P.G. is the Four Square style of home.

This is a post Victorian style that was popular from the late 1800s into the 1930s. The typical four square style is two and a half stories tall with a center dormer, a hip roof with broad overhangs with brackets under the eaves, and a central roof dormer, sometimes across the front porch.

The simple economical form lends itself to minimal ornament (as seen in 402 2nd), but also can be seen dressed with Craftsman or Victorian (543 Spruce) details. Four Square homes can have any type of exterior finish: shingles, lap siding, stone, stucco, or any combination of these materials.

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Four Square Style: 402 2nd Street

Age Debate (Opinion)

by Ken Hinsbaw

The Historic Resources Committee has had several discussions about changing the rules that it must follow in making decisions about our stock of older homes. It would be helpful if the debate be made as public as possible -- that's where YOU come in. If you have any thoughts on these issues, let your ideas be known. Attend the HRC meetings the second Wednesday of each month at 4:00 at City Hall to find out how the assessments are handled, or e-mail us with your ideas.

One of the most discussed changes over the last few years is to include a cut off date in the ordinance. A cut off date of 1927 was used by the Heritage Society in the '70s when the original survey was completed. This date was chosen because that was the last year a Sanborn map was available that could be used to verify homes against tax records. That date, however, is NOT included in the ordinance.

Some have suggested that Pacific Grove adopt the 50 year rolling standard that is embodied in the California Environmental Quality Act. This neat and tidy approach would align the written standards of the city with that of the state. However, I think it would be a "hard sell" to extend historic protection to all the buildings built before 1955. I don't think there are many who would support saving all those stucco ranch style homes. (Confession: I do love our wonderful mid-century beach cottages; they embody

informal California living at its best.)

Another approach would be to have a 50-year-rolling date that would only make structures 50 years or older eligible for consideration for the Historic Resources list. The HRC would then make the final decision as to whether a structure should be added to the list or not, adding only those newer structures with significant attributes.

I think a persuasive case can be made for incorporating some reasonable cut off date in a revised ordinance, be it 1927 or a more contemporary date. Adding a cut off date would add a measure of clarity and fairness to the HRC process. Property owners would have a better chance of clearly understanding the status of their property. The criteria could still require unusual buildings to be considered for inclusion even if they were newer.

There is some sentiment among a few vocal citizens that the whole approach Pacific Grove has taken for the last two decades is wrongheaded. Instead of the present approach of preserving neighborhoods and the collection of homes we have here, some argue that we need to worry less about protecting the modest poorly built homes, and concentrate on the better, nicely designed, more interesting homes, allowing the others to be demolished and replaced by new homes. I don't agree with these sentiments, but some respected members of our community feel this way, and their point of view should be considered as part of any debate about revising the historic preservation rules. Let us know what you think!

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Four Square Style: 543 Spruce Street

New Members

Mr. & Mrs. Marvin Elster
 Alex Yuen, Ph.D.
 Gary & Maureen Girard
 Sandra & Michael Groshong
 Robert & Terry Hood
 Sandra Jordan
 Maryanne Lema
 Don & Paula Lindsay
 Nancy & Jack Mead
 Joyce & Peter Meuse
 Linda Rogers
 Louis Schmidt
 Connie Sellards
 Susan Shillinglaw
 Carolyn Standley
 Lynn Swerrie
 Roger & Barbara Wheeler
 Gayle White

Membership Count:
1380

All opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official positions of the Board of Directors, but are meant to stimulate interest in and discussion of preservation issues.



Chautauqua Hall serving the community

Letters to the Editor

A Big Thanks!

Dear Fellow Heritage Society Members, Last March I mailed you an invitation requesting a donation to the Chautauqua Hall Restoration Fund. I was amazed by the response that I received from the Heritage Society Members that were very inter-

ested in the project. It is certainly a reflection of your commitment to historic preservation through your determination and generosity. I appreciate members that donated \$50 as much as members that donated \$500 or more. I am grateful, and rest assured that you will be impressed once you witness the accomplishment of contractor Mark Travaile and his team.

On behalf of the Chamber of Commerce and City of Pacific Grove, I thank you for your support.

Sincerely, Moe Ammar

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Thank You!

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 and Anonymous,
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