

The Heritage Society of Pacific Grove NEWSLETTER

Maintaining the Heritage and Individuality of Pacific Grove



FALL 2014
Volume 14, Issue 4

Calendar of EVENTS

February 22- 2 pm

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

ANNUAL MEETING

Chautauqua Hall

16th St at Central Ave

\$5, Members Free

April 11-12 - 10-5 pm

GOOD OLD DAYS

Heritage Society Booth

Lighthouse Ave Near 17th St

Free

ONGOING EVENTS

Open Saturdays - 1-4 pm

KETCHAM'S BARN

The Heritage Society's Museum

605 Laurel Avenue Pacific Grove

Thursday - Monday - 1-4 pm

POINT PINOS LIGHTHOUSE

80 Asilomar Boulevard

2014 Historic Home Tour a Success

by Jean Anton



Interior of Northrop Home
Photo: Jean Anton

The Heritage Society sponsored another successful home tour in October, with approximately 300 people visiting the six homes and four public

buildings on the tour.

We would like to thank the docents who spent their Sunday afternoon welcoming guests to the homes on the tour and providing information about the architecture, furniture, and artwork found in these special homes.

A huge thanks also goes to the homeowners for allowing us to put their lovely homes on display for everyone to experience and enjoy. Thank you Wilda and Lowell Northrop, Glynis and Tony Greening, Polly Moore and Stuart Builder, Ken Hinshaw and Margaret McGovern,

the Beard Family, and Craig Johnson.

Plans are already in the works for next year's tour which, as is traditional, will be held the first Sunday in October. We look forward to another fun home tour next year. We hope to see you all there!



Point Pinos Lighthouse
Photo: Jean Anton

Pacific Grove's New Community & Economic Development Department Director

by Michael Groshong

For many years the City of Pacific Grove had a person who served as the Community Development Director. This person supervised the entire Planning Department, the Building Department and the Housing Department and was the final word on planning matters before they went forward to the various boards and City officials. This was an important position, as so many decisions that impacted historic homes went through this office.

Some years ago, in an attempt to streamline City Hall, this position was eliminated and a Senior Planner replaced the Director. This person was not in a position to oversee the Building or the Housing Departments, so these had been supervised by City Manager, while this senior planner concentrated on planning issues.

After many years, the City re-created the old position of Director. Interviews were held and an energetic person in the name of Mark Brodeur was hired. Recently, Steve Honegger and I had the opportunity to sit down with Mark and talk about his past

New Director, continued on page 3

Oh No! Not Termites!

by Michael Groshong

Your beautifully renovated Victorian was just awarded a prestigious Heritage Home Award by the Heritage Society of Pacific Grove. Now, basking in the glow of that award and relaxing in front of the fire with a glass of your favorite nectar of the grape, you know that life is, indeed, pretty good. But your euphoria is interrupted by a strange sound. Is it your imagination? Are tiny termites chewing on your beloved Victorian?

It is possible. If so, you are not alone. Most homes in P.G. either have, or have had, problems with termites. Such is the price of living in such a beautiful location.

To understand what might be eating your home, you need to learn about the two major types of termites. The first is the native subterranean termite and the second is the smaller drywood termite. Both are destructive but, due to sheer numbers, the subterranean variety could be considered a larger problem.

This variety lives in underground colonies and depends on worker termites leaving the colony in search of food. This food supply can vary, but a colony living beneath a large and tasty P.G. home does not have far to travel for their dinner. The workers do not like to emerge from the ground unprotected, so they “build” mud tubes that reach from the soil to the nearest piece of edible lumber. In homes with stucco siding that extends to the level of the soil, workers have an easier task in that they simply crawl up between the stucco and the home’s siding and begin their activities away from prying eyes. All new or newly remodeled stucco homes must have the stucco stop well above the soil level to prevent this “termite toll-road” from occurring.

Other common entrance points in a wood sided home are where soil built up until it was even with or above the siding of the home. This allows the same easy access as



Termite Damage Photo: Bart Everson

with the older stucco homes. Piling firewood against the house is almost as bad. If trees or shrubs grow directly against your wood siding, then if the tree is attacked by termites they have clear access into the structure.

The last common access point is called “earth-wood” contact. How many of us have a nice redwood fence or other structure that is connected directly to a home? Well, today’s redwood is not impervious to termites and can be used as an avenue directly from the soil into your structure. Structures such as these should be physically separated from the home or have a metal barrier between the structure and your home’s exterior siding.

Termites, continued on page 3

- Correction -

In the previous newsletter, the article ‘Historic Preservation Ordinance’ should have read: [Disclaimer: a Heritage Society green plaque does NOT put a house on the HRI.] The word NOT was mistakenly omitted. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.

Historic Resources Committee (HRC) Update

by Claudia Sawyer

The Historic Resources Committee consists of seven members with knowledge of historic preservation and an interest in the cultural resources of Pacific Grove. One member is a representative of the Heritage Society of Pacific Grove.

The Committee was created by ordinance to hear and make determinations regarding additions and deletions to the historic resources inventory (HRI). At present, the HRI needs updating because some properties listed no longer demonstrate the architectural features that placed

them on the inventory. The Committee plans to address HRI integrity and accuracy with the assistance of the newly elected council.

The Committee also intends to investigate and pursue certified local government program (CLG) status. CLG certification demonstrates a local commitment to historic preservation and would give the city of Pacific Grove opportunities to apply for funding via grants. The cities of Carmel and Monterey are both CLG certified and have each received several grants.

New Director

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experiences with preserving heritage homes. He has had a wide range of experience and many thoughts were discussed. One observation that was of interest to me was that many cities across the country have formed "Local Historic Districts(LHD)".

The thought of such a district had never crossed my mind, so I did some research and found that they had been formed in such diverse places as New York City and Butte, Montana. The Department of Interior has an extensive library of issues surrounding LHD. The City of Cambridge, Mass defines an LHD as "areas in which historic buildings and their settings are protected by public review. Historic District ordinances are local laws that are adopted by communities using powers granted by the State. Historic districts comprise the city's significant historic and architectural resources. Inclusion in a historic district signifies that a property contributes to an ensemble that is worth protecting by virtue of its historic importance or architectural quality".

Some outstanding examples of such districts are the Pike Place Market District in Seattle formed in 1971 to rescue it from an urban renewal project, the "Oakwood" district in Raleigh, North Carolina formed to ensure the long-term protection of 19th and 20th century residences and the Gas Lamp Quarter District in San Diego.

As per the Department of Interior, "Many towns, cities and counties nationwide have said yes to LHD designation. More than 2300 districts have historic preservation commissions that conduct design review and many work with multiple districts in their jurisdictions! Why are the number of historic districts growing yearly? Residents know their historic districts are far more than attractive places for tourists to visit, shop and have lunch. They are one of the best ways to keep the look and feel of the place they call "home" through a local design review process."

Sounds great! However, the New York Times just had an article about a certain neighborhood in Brooklyn called Bedford Stuyvesant (Bed-Sty). Not everyone in that neighborhood thought that a LHD designation was a great thing. The most convincing arguments had to do with money and red tape. Changes to the exteriors of buildings in a historic district must meet certain standards and be approved in advance by the landmarks commission. Critics of the proposal contended that improvements could prove costly and time-consuming. Since the average

household income in the Bedford neighborhood is slightly over \$50,000, critics say that the burden will fall most heavily on longtime minority residents, many of whom are elderly and live on limited incomes.

Opponents worry that historic designation will also lead to an unwelcome spike in property values that could force out working-class and middle-class residents due to costly repairs for home owners and more expensive rents for renters.

The issue of a LHD is not quite so cut and dried as it first seems. Is a LHD appropriate for Pacific Grove? Would the positives outweigh the negatives? Does the Architecture Review Board and Planning staff do enough to preserve the character of our historic buildings? What do you think?

For much more information courtesy of the Department of the Interior, go to : <http://www.nps.gov/TPS/education/workingonthepast/index.htm>

Termites

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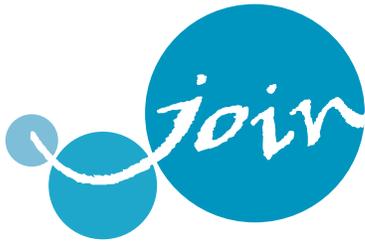
Termites are stealthy, so their damage can go undetected for years. If you suspect you have subterranean chewers, there are some telltale signs you can check for. These include: ripples or sunken traces on your wood surfaces, termite swarms (drywood termites) in the spring time, or holes, indentations or soft spots in the woodwork.

The best choice is to hire a respected local company to conduct a pest inspection. This consists of an inspector doing a thorough walk around the exterior, noting any "earth-wood" contact or other problem areas. The inspector will access the "crawl-space" under your home to check for more "earth-wood" contact or any of the above mentioned tubes extending from the soil into the home. Then, the inspector will probe suspect surfaces with a special tool. The probe will enter and identify affected areas.

When the inspection is complete, a written report will be presented showing any and all problem areas and, generally, an estimate of the cost to remedy the problem(s).

What is the best treatment to prevent further infestations? What about the drywood and dampwood termites and powder post beetles that you might be hosting in your house? Well, those are all in-depth subjects of their own and will be covered in future articles.

In the meantime, keep your home safe by keeping firewood away from your house, minimizing earth-wood contact and pruning bushes and trees, so that they don't touch your house.



The Heritage Society of Pacific Grove is dedicated to documenting and preserving the history and legacy of Pacific Grove – plus we have a lot of fun. Membership fees start at \$15 a year.

To join or obtain more information, stop by The Barn at 605 Laurel Ave any Saturday between 1:00 and 4:00 pm; check out our website – www.pacificgroveheritage.org ; or call us at (831)372-2898. Join the fun!



Have minimal time but still want to volunteer? We are looking for folks who are willing to give 4 -8 hours a month working at the beautiful Point Pinos Lighthouse in our gift shop. You will have a chance to meet new visitors, assist in product development and be an integral part of our ongoing fund raising efforts to refurbish and preserve our historical Lighthouse. Training will be provided.

If you're interested email dennistarmina@gmail.com or call Dennis at 831-643-1943. Hope to hear from you. Please have a Peaceful and Happy Holiday Season.

The Heritage Society of
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Message from Board President

DAVID VAN SUNDER

As we get ready to head into a new year, I've had time to reflect on the past year and discuss the new year with the Board. Now, I want to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers that made this year so successful. I'm excited about everything that we will do next year as a Society to preserve the heritage of Pacific Grove. Here's to a wonderful 2015 that will ensure that we can always look back in pride at the history of Pacific Grove that shaped the wonderful community we live in today!



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NEWSLETTER

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