



# CONTINUITY

Volume 28, No. 2

Preservation Action Council of San Jose  
Dedicated to Preserving San Jose's Architectural Heritage

Summer, 2017

## COVER STORY

1 San Jose Signs Project Celebrates!

## PRESERVATION ISSUES/NEWS

- 2 Executive Director's Message
- 4 Willow Glen Trestle is Historic!
- 5 Winchester House Featured
- 5 Planning Director Moves On
- 6 Radar Tower Threatened Again
- 7 On the RADAR
  - St. James Park
  - Mel Cotton's Building
  - First Church of Christ Scientist
  - Firato's Ravioli Sign
  - Former Greyhound Building
  - Stephen's Dancing Pig Sign

## PAC\*SJ NEWS

- 8 Wolfe & Higgins Home Tour
- 9 About Aug. 26 Home Tour
- 12 In Memory, Sharon McCauley
- 13 PAC\*SJ Calendar
- 13 75 Years Later-Exec Order 9066
- 14 Meet Our New Board Members
- 14 Niles Canyon Railroad
- 15 PAC\*SJ Gala Party, Aug. 25th
- 15 May Yard Sale Reaches \$7000
- 16 Wolfe & Higgins Book Arrives
- 16 Notable Quotable

## PRESERVATION ARTICLES

- 17 Exploring SJ Landmarks
  - Schurra's Candy Shop
- 19 Membership Form
- 19 PAC\*SJ Board Vacancy
- 20 Board and Staff Roster

## San Jose Signs Project Celebrates!

On Sunday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, PAC\*SJ was proud to host the first Bay Area screening of the documentary film NEON! Nearly 300 guests gathered at the **San Jose Improv**, 62 S. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, to view the movie and have an opportunity to purchase the new *San Jose Signs Project* guidebook.

The film discusses neon signs through the years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and celebrates the color, beauty and vibrant history of the neon sign from an international perspective. Neon signs may soon disappear and be replaced by L.E.D. signage. Neon is 100 years old but the

craft and construction has changed very little, making neon one the greenest forms of light ever produced. Neon is an amazing and enduring force of color and light in the visual landscapes of our lives.

Although Nikola Tesla's early innovations dealt with gas lighting inside glass tubes in the 1890s, Georges Claude, a French inventor and chemist, was the first person to create an actual neon lamp in 1910. The popularity of neon signs boomed in this country by the 1920s.

*(Cont'd p.3)*



*Heather David, researcher and developer of the San Jose Signs Project, Brian Grayson, PAC\*SJ E.D., and Lisa Wangness, designer and editor of guidebook.*

---

# Executive Director's Message

---

May was Historic Preservation Month in California and around the country, and we celebrated with the release of the *San Jose Signs Project Guide*. Nearly 300 people gathered to be among the first to purchase the guide which highlights many of San Jose's wonderful historic signs. The event was held at the historic Improv Comedy Club which is housed in the beautifully restored former JOSE Theater. The event also featured the Bay Area premiere of the documentary film, NEON.



*Brian Grayson in front of  
First Church on St. James St.*

Photo: Silicon Valley Community Newspapers

San Jose's outstanding sign collection is in danger due to neglect and development. With the recent release of the *San Jose Signs Project Guide*, we have started to document San Jose's rich history of signs. Some have already been lost, some are in disrepair, and others are in danger. We hope by calling attention to the signs we can better protect them. The more people who know about them and are concerned by their deterioration, the more pressure that will be brought to bear on the caretakers of the signs and the City's decision makers.

We will continue to advocate on behalf of our historic resources, whether they be buildings or signs. We welcome your support to help us fulfill our mission of preserving the architectural heritage of San Jose.

There are many people to thank for helping bring the *San Jose Signs Project Guide* to reality but special thanks go to our outstanding graphic designer, Lisa Wangsness and the Guide's researcher and author, Heather David.

Heather brought her vision for the Guide to us and we were pleased to fund the project from our Jo Drechsler Legacy Fund that was established when Jo passed away in 2006. He lived in the historic Naglee Park neighborhood and was a lover of history. Friends and family donated to the fund in his memory with the funds designated to be used in a manner that would properly pay tribute to Jo. The *San Jose Signs Project Guide* does just that and we are pleased to fund this project in Jo's memory.

We also continue our efforts to save our historic structures. Unfortunately, San Jose continues its march towards thinning out our historic resources from the cityscape. The latest one

ready to fall is the former Greyhound Bus Station on South Almaden Avenue. The building, likely eligible for designation as a San Jose City Landmark, is in the way of downtown development. Various options were reviewed that would allow all or parts of the building to remain as part of a new development.

Unfortunately, none of the alternatives were deemed feasible because they did not meet the City's goals and objectives for development. The only option to move forward was the one that includes demolition of the landmark eligible structure.

The developer has agreed to include elements reminiscent of the Greyhound Bus Station style of architecture, a mural in a Works Progress Administration (WPA) style or an art piece that represents the previous use. Also, a Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) will document the Greyhound structure, the construction method for the existing building and the previous use and significance of the site. In addition, after discussions with PAC\*SJ, the developer has voluntarily agreed to contribute \$30,000 to the City to be used for historic preservation purposes such as historic surveys.

But, we are growing tired of the City not doing more to protect our dwindling historic resources. It is not enough to let our historic buildings be demolished and be replaced only with a plaque or commemorative display. If, as a last resort, a historic building is going to be demolished, the city should require financial compensation for the loss. Money won't make up for the loss of the historic resource but at least it would help strengthen the city's historic preservation programs which have been underfunded for years.

If the City had a complete inventory of its historic resources, buildings could be identified very early in the process. We could then have discussions with the Planning Department about which buildings are the most important ones to be protected.

Until the City gets serious about protecting our ever-shrinking inventory of historic resources we will continue to lose these buildings to the detriment of the character of our city, and there will be little to show for it except a plaque, some photographs, or maybe an interpretative exhibit.

Although the loss of the Greyhound Bus Station is inevitable we hope its demise will raise the level of discussion with the City to better protect our historic resources in the future. If that happens then the building will not have "died" in vain.

*(Cont'd p. 7)*

# Signs Project (Cont'd)

Our program began with a brief introduction and thanks to key sponsors, delivered by Heather David. Then André Luthard spoke briefly on the historic and cultural significance of the 1904 JOSE Theatre (now the Improv) and the preservation success story of PAC\*SJ's battle to save the JOSE in the 1990s. The JOSE is the oldest theatre in San Jose.

Three door prizes were given out and then the NEON film was introduced by Heather. Following the film three more door prizes were handed out, appreciation was expressed to those who made this event possible and finally Heather closed with, "Buildings and signs don't save themselves. People save buildings and signs. If you care, you must get involved." One way is to join PAC\*SJ!

The *San Jose Signs Project* guidebook, fresh off the press, was created by Heather David, who researched the material, authored the text and photographed most of the guidebook signs, and Lisa Wangsness, the graphic designer and editor. The guidebook features 25 historic signs in San Jose along with their stories and a tour map. It is a tribute to our local neon signs, many threatened from development and neglect.

The guidebook was funded by a generous grant from the Preservation Action Council of San Jose's Jo Drechsler Memorial Fund. Jo was a passionate supporter of San Jose history, an antique sign enthusiast and an admirer of anything old and vintage. There couldn't be a better way to let his memory


live on than supporting this guide which is just the first step towards preserving San Jose's unique sign heritage.

Copies of the *San Jose Signs Project* booklet can be purchased from PAC\*SJ by mailing a check to PAC\*SJ, 1650 Senter Rd., San Jose, 95112, or calling 408-998-8105 with a credit card, or going to [http://www.preservation.org/pac\\_donate.html](http://www.preservation.org/pac_donate.html) and paying via PayPal. Please note on your check or PayPal payment "Signs Guide." The price for the booklet is \$10.00 + \$3.00 shipping & handling, a total of \$13.00.

The San Jose Signs Project would like to thank **The San Jose Improv Comedy Club** and General Manager, Houman Khosravan, for generously providing our project launch event space. And, many thanks to the film director of NEON, Lawrence Johnston, for generously allowing us to screen his illuminating film. Since its release in 2015, this documentary has been making its way around the globe. Finally, kudos to Heather David who envisioned this project and brought it to fruition. ☞ -Gayle Frank



*Fresh off the press. — "The San Jose Signs Project, A Guide to the Vintage Signage of San Jose."*

  
**CONTINUITY**  
is published quarterly by the  
**PRESERVATION ACTION COUNCIL OF SAN JOSE**

The opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of PAC\*SJ itself.  
Editor: Gayle Frank

Please submit your letters, comments and suggestions to  
[info@preservation.org](mailto:info@preservation.org) OR  
1650 Senter Rd, San Jose, CA 95112-2599

© 2017 Preservation Action Council of San Jose

PAC\*SJ is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization

# Unanimous—Willow Glen Trestle is Historic!

The Willow Glen Trestle is now officially listed on the California Register of Historical Resources! The unanimous decision was reached at the quarterly meeting of the California State Historical Resources Commission in Pasadena on May 10<sup>th</sup> after over an hour of presentations and discussion.

As Larry Ames, founder of Friends of the Willow Glen Trestle, has noted, support from local residents was critical. Most of the 15 nominees for state listing had one or two letters of support, but the Trestle had 24 pro-letters including ones written by County Supervisor Dave Cortese; the grandchildren of the original Trestle engineer; members of trail and cycling groups; historic organizations; and nearby neighbors.

At the hearing, after the City of San Jose statements, former Councilmember Pierluigi Oliverio testified with sometimes misleading and insulting comments as described below.

1) How, two years prior, the San Jose Historic Landmarks Commissioners failed to call on the city's historian consultant during their meeting to review the trestle issue. Fact: the Commissioners did not know he was there. The consultant was in attendance—he chose not to identify himself or to speak.

2) Trestle supporters were admonished for not formally objecting to the EIR within the 30-day appeal window. Fact: the Friends of the Trestle's lawyer informed them that critiques of the EIR shouldn't be delivered until after the court case was final.

3) How Little League and lawn bowling projects were delayed because of the fight to save the Trestle. Fact: if the city had proceeded with the original plans to refurbish and use the existing Trestle and not reversed plans without fully considering the historic nature of the Trestle, the trail would have been connected by now—and without the city wasting hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars.

4) Exaggerated descriptions elsewhere of toxic fumes from illegal fires burning creosote timbers as well as dead or deformed fish from contaminated waters. Fact: the Willow Glen Trestle has stood for 95 years without any of these problems. It is well-known that creosote timbers are best left alone as



**The Willow Glen Trestle: photo by James Watkins, a winner in the PAC\* SJ 2015 Historic Photo Contest.**

disturbing them could cause potential contamination. Plus, after many years, the leaching of any creosote decreases dramatically. Then later, in his rebuttal, Oliverio insulted lawyers in general for taking on CEQA cases, calling their actions a “stick up” and insinuating that money is their only incentive.

Trestle proponents have suggested Oliverio's battle to demolish the Trestle has become personal and he must save face since a replacement bridge was purchased in haste, before proper city procedures and outreach to the public occurred.

The consultant historian hired by San Jose also spoke at the state meeting, reiterating that he didn't think the Trestle was historic enough to be listed on the State's list of historic resources. (He is also the same consultant who declared that the Mt. Umunhum Radar Tower was not historic, only to have the Santa Clara County Heritage (Cont'd p. 5)

# Winchester Mystery House Featured in Movie

During early May, the filming of a major motion picture took place at the historic Winchester Mystery House. The movie, "Winchester," stars Helen Mirren and Jason Clarke and is expected to arrive in theaters in the spring of 2018. The amazing Victorian mansion at 525 S. Winchester Boulevard in San Jose, with all its eccentricities, will be featured in the film.

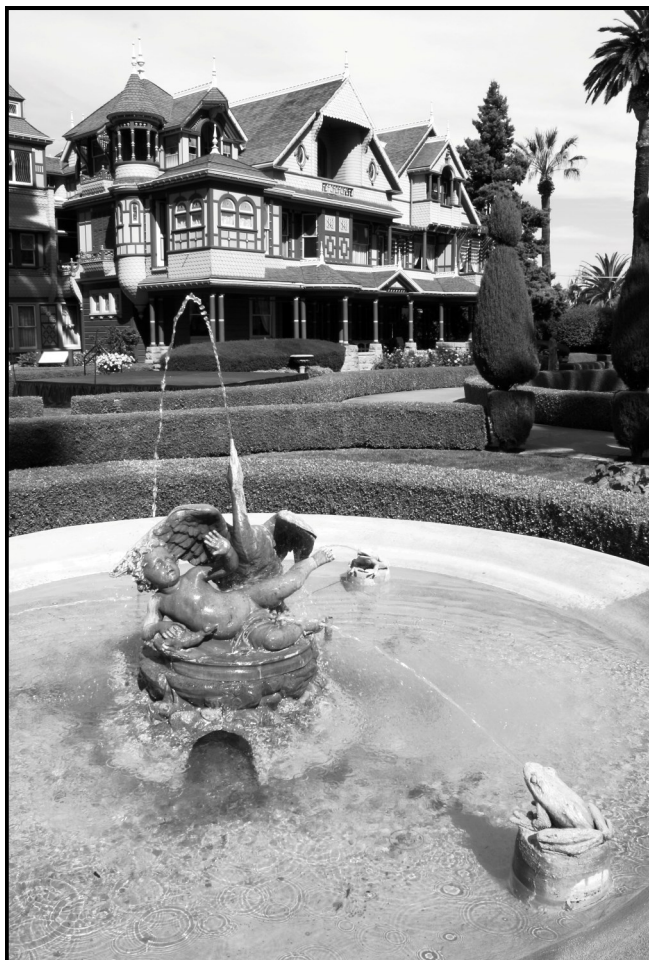
The plot involves a San Francisco psychiatrist assigned to evaluate Sarah in the year of the big earthquake, 1906. Much of the movie was shot in Melbourne, Australia.

This Queen Anne Style Victorian structure began as an unfinished farmhouse that Sarah bought in 1884. She immediately started construction, and it eventually evolved into a seven-story mansion (only 4 stories after the 1906 earthquake). It is a designated California historical landmark and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Historians hope that the movie will accurately portray Sarah Winchester and not exaggerate the myths that have flourished over the last century. But then, it's the movie business, so...

To read about Sarah Winchester, the 2012 book, "Captive of the Labyrinth: Sarah L. Winchester, Heiress to the Rifle Fortune" by Mary Jo Ignoffo, is filled with extensive research that reveals a more accurate story about Sarah than we knew previously. ☞

*For photos of the SJ filming go to: [mercurynews.com/2017/05/05/helen-mirren-filming-in-san-jose-marvels-at-inspiring-winchester-mystery-house/](http://mercurynews.com/2017/05/05/helen-mirren-filming-in-san-jose-marvels-at-inspiring-winchester-mystery-house/)*



*Winchester House Photo by Karryl Turney,  
A 2015 PAC\*SJ Historic Photo Contest Finalist.*

## Trestle (Cont'd)

Commission and the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors conclude that the tower is historic and now appears on the county list of historic resources.)

At the state meeting, comments included Commissioner Bertoli stating that the trestle "has a very, very attractive aesthetic quality" and "it is not one of the many, it is one of the very, very few." He asserted that "it seems very appropriate to keep it, to maintain it."

Commissioner Hayos commented that "the California Register is "the 'People's Register' because it can be more inclusive" and that he was "glad that the community takes interest in something that's theirs," referring to the Trestle.

The Friends of the Willow Glen Trestle and PAC\*SJ are

delighted that the State has recognized this small piece of history as an official historic resource. The Trestle received a thorough review with a fascinating discussion at this quarterly State meeting. The Trestle's importance to the community of Willow Glen was emphasized and we experienced how support from the community can impact a final outcome. But there is still more work to be done and the Trestle may still be in jeopardy. ☞

—Gayle Frank

The video of the entire proceedings is online at: <http://cal-span.org/unipage/index.php?site=cal-span&owner=CSHRC&date=2017-05-10> with the discussion of the Willow Glen Trestle beginning at time-marker 2:12:30.

---

# Radar Tower Preservation Threatened, Again

---

It appears that the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MidPen) is back-pedaling from a formal agreement to retain the historic Radar Tower on Mt. Umunhum. An engineering assessment of the Tower was to be the next step for its future preservation, planned for Summer or Fall of 2017, in order to determine what repairs are needed and a schedule set to make those repairs.

However, now MidPen is proposing that they only pay 10% of the assessment cost, with Umunhum Conservancy paying the rest, and requiring the Conservancy to pay for all the required Tower repairs, now and in the future.

Apparently this came about because MidPen is over budget. Reneging on the Tower assessment and repairs will help balance its books. A meeting for a vote on this defunding proposal will take place a few days after press time on May 31<sup>st</sup>, so the outcome is unknown. By the time you are reading this, it will be too late to contact MidPen and let them know they are shirking their responsibility to a previous agreement. Stay tuned.

The Radar Tower is now recognized as historic by Santa

Clara County but does not have state or federal historic recognition yet. The Tower needs over a million dollars in repairs. The Umunhum Conservancy stresses that the tower must be preserved and not abandoned. Its members have been working hard to raise the necessary funds to assist with those repairs, but could hardly reach the monies for all repairs and maintenance.

The Umunhum Conservancy offers free presentations with a slide show on the fascinating history of the Mt. Umunhum Radar Station. The next one, hosted by Santa Clara County Parks, will be held on August 6 from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm at Casa Grande, 21350 Almaden Road in New Almaden. To register or to learn more visit [umunhumconservancy.org](http://umunhumconservancy.org). ☞

*MidPen Sources on latest development:*

*Specifics of the proposal (R-17-82):* [https://openspace.org/sites/default/files/20170531\\_ABC\\_R-17-82.pdf](https://openspace.org/sites/default/files/20170531_ABC_R-17-82.pdf)

*Information about the meeting:* <https://openspace.org/about-us/meetings/action-plan-and-budget-committee-16>



*Photo: [umunhumconservancy.org](http://umunhumconservancy.org)*

---

## SJ Planning Director Moves On

---

The San Jose Director of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement, Harry Freitas, has left his position to become the Santa Clara County Director of Roads and Airports. He has worked for the City of San Jose for twenty seven years.

PAC\*SJ has appreciated meeting with Freitas and his staff every other month and found him willing to listen

to our concerns and welcomed his willingness to look into preservation issues. PAC\*SJ wishes Harry Freitas success in his new ventures.

Rosalyn Hughey, Assistant Director of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement, is Acting Director until a successor is named. ☞

# ON THE RADAR



## St. James Park

CMG Landscape Architecture was confirmed by the San Jose City Council on March 7<sup>th</sup> as the winning firm in the St. James Park Capital Vision and Levitt

Pavilion competition. The EIR will be developed and there will be community outreach meetings where design drawings for the Park improvements will be provided. PAC\*SJ continues to provide input into the process. We also continue to remind decision makers that potential impacts to the Historic District will not be known until the EIR is released.

## Mel Cotton Building

The Mel Cotton's Main Building at 1266 W. San Carlos Street was evaluated and did not meet criteria for historic significance. It is slated to be demolished. PAC\*SJ requested that the neon sign be donated to History San Jose.

## Park View Towers/First Church of Christ Scientist

The Park View Towers project, which includes the historic First Church of Christ Scientist, has been sold by Barry Swenson Builder to a Chinese real estate giant. The North San Pedro Tower at West Julian and Terraine Streets was also sold to the same company, Full Power Properties LLC, an affiliate of Guangzhou R&F Properties.

PAC\*SJ has been assured that the project will continue as before with 100% continuity. Ground-breaking is expected by the end of the year. It has been reported that Full Power Properties now is heading up the construction of more than 1,100 residential units in downtown San Jose including Silvery Towers.

The Historic Preservation Permit for the First Church of Christ Scientist Building has been amended to extend the expiration date for two more years. All plans to temporarily move the church to the east to allow excavation for below grade parking, and moving it back 15 feet west of its current location will remain the same as previously approved.

## Firato's Ravioli Sign

The Firato's Ravioli neon sign at 28 E. Santa Clara Street is one of the oldest extant signs in San Jose (circa 1926). It appears to be in disrepair and we are concerned about its preservation.

## Former Greyhound Bus Station

Once again a landmark eligible building at 70 S. Almaden Ave. is slated for demolition. PAC\*SJ is proposing mitigations above and beyond the usual plaque and/or photographs that seem to be the panacea for razing historic buildings.

## Dancing Pig Sign

The Stephen's meat product sign at 105 S. Montgomery Street (circa 1950s) is, for many sign enthusiasts their favorite neon sign. It is alarmingly neglected and we are increasingly concerned of losing it through irreversible deterioration.



## PAC\*SJ is Still Keeping

### An Eye On—

- Montgomery Hotel
- Scheller House/SJSU
- Grave's House
- Agnews Developmental Center

## E.D. Message (Cont'd)

While we regret the loss of our historic resources it does not compare to the loss we felt from the recent passing of our longtime Board member, Sharon McCauley. She was a very dedicated and hardworking member of the Board who went above and beyond with her efforts on behalf of PAC\*SJ. Our deepest condolences to Sharon's family and we thank them for sharing her with us all these years.

We were also saddened about the passing of San Jose native, Ethel Reinegger, mother of Board member Gayle Frank. Our sympathies to Gayle and her family.

In closing, I want to thank San Jose Planning Director, Harry Freitas, for his efforts on behalf of historic preservation in San Jose during these past 3 years. Harry recently left the City after 27 years to join Santa Clara County as Director of Roads and Airports. We met with Harry and his staff on a regular basis and he was always open to hearing about our issues. We wish him well in his new position. ☞

—Brian Grayson, Executive Director, PAC\*SJ



Red tile roofs, arched doors and windows, twisted pillars, wrought iron trim, and ornate door surrounds are on some of the most beautiful homes in San José. **Open for one day only!**

**San José city-wide architectural homes tour**  
 Eight 1920s Spanish Revival houses and buildings by the architectural firm of

# WOLFE & HIGGINS

**MASTER ARCHITECTS OF THE SPANISH REVIVAL**

**AUGUST 26, 2017**  
**10:00 AM-4:00 PM**

Purchase tickets now at  
**[www.WolfeandHigginsTour.com](http://www.WolfeandHigginsTour.com)**

Members \$30 advance • Regular and in store \$35 • All \$40 day of tour

Please consider becoming a sponsor of the tour!  
 Learn more at [www.preservation.org](http://www.preservation.org) or [www.wolfeandhigginstour.com/sponsors.html](http://www.wolfeandhigginstour.com/sponsors.html)

Extra! Join us August 25 at the pre-tour kickoff party with a discount for PAC\* SJ members

Support preservation and enjoy delicious continuous hors d'oeuvres and small plates with wine or soft drinks and convivial company at an exclusive party at the Gross-Low house, a San José City Landmark that is not on the tour. This stunning 1916 Dutch Colonial Revival house is one of the few still-standing houses designed by William Higgins before he partnered with Frank Wolfe. **Includes a ticket to the next day's tour.**  
 Space is limited, so reserve your spot now!

**Go to [www.WolfeandHigginsTour.com](http://www.WolfeandHigginsTour.com) for details**

Tickets also available at these local merchants:

**Antiques Colony**  
 1881 W San Carlos St, San Jose

**Willow Glen Home & Garden**  
 1123 Lincoln Ave, San Jose





---

# PAC\*SJ Architectural Home Tour Slated for August 26

---

## Eight Spanish Revival Works by the Architectural Firm of Wolfe & Higgins

By Krista Van Laan

Red tile roofs, arched doors and windows, wrought iron balconies, and ornate door surrounds....nothing says "California architecture" like the romantic and beautiful Spanish Revival buildings of the 1920s. On August 26, you'll have the chance to see the interiors of some of the best of these buildings at PAC\*SJ's open homes tour of the Spanish Revival work of Wolfe & Higgins.

One hundred years ago, in 1917, master San Jose architect Frank Delos Wolfe partnered with Santa Clara architect William Ernest Higgins to form what would become one of the most prolific architectural firms of all time.

Their signature style was Spanish Revival. This was something new to Northern California, and the firm set a new trend, bringing the Spanish Revival style to our area, where it became popular with both buyers and builders. Today, the houses of Wolfe & Higgins can be seen in historic neighborhoods all across the city.

The Preservation Action Council is very fortunate that owners of some of the most beautiful Wolfe & Higgins homes in San Jose have allowed their houses to be included on the tour. The tour will show the wide range of work produced by the architectural firm—their Spanish Revival style was applied to both small cottages and big mansions, businesses and public buildings.

Buy your tickets now at [www.WolfeandHigginsTour.com](http://www.WolfeandHigginsTour.com).

Here's a sneak preview of just some of what you'll see on the tour.

### **Kate and Robert Wright house**

The Kate and Robert Wright house is one of the grandest of the Wolfe & Higgins residences, a two-story house in the College Park neighborhood of San Jose, set back

on a large corner lot. The house was featured in the *San Jose Mercury Herald*, which called it "one of the most handsome homes in the city," and that is still true today, with its ornate pillars, wrought iron, and sculptured terracotta.

Robert Wright was one of the most prominent lawyers in San Jose when he commissioned this house in 1922. Its sumptuous exterior includes many of the identifying features that you'll learn to recognize as those of the Wolfe & Higgins era. Visitors will step inside to the grand entry and visit the light-flooded dining room and living room, all trimmed with ornate paneled woodwork. The owners have combined the house's original features with top-of-the-line renovations to create a truly memorable home.



*The Wright House*

### **Carrie and Frank Dreischmeyer house**

In Willow Glen, the 1923 Carrie and Frank Dreischmeyer house features the Churrigueresque detailing that Wolfe & Higgins popularized in San Jose. Churrigueresque is a Spanish Baroque style of architecture,

*(Cont'd p. 10)*

---

# Wolfe & Higgins (Cont'd)

---

heavily ornamental, usually surrounding the entryway. It became popular in California after the Panama-California Exposition of 1915-1917. (The buildings from that exhibition still stand today in Balboa Park in San Diego.)

Frank Dreischmeyer was a San Jose attorney whose family owned most of the brick-making business in San Jose. His wife Carrie was the daughter of orchardist John Addison Campbell, whose two-story 1880s Victorian still stands next door. There are many memorable details for tour visitors to see in the Dreischmeyer's Wolfe & Higgins home, among them the beautiful Batchelder fireplace tiles. Wolfe & Higgins were very specific about the materials used in each of the buildings they designed, and Batchelder was one of the approved tilemakers.



*The Dreischmeyer House.*

## **Cerruti & Col Packard Building**

The magnificently restored building at 865 The Alameda was the work of Carl Wolfe and William Higgins in 1929, designed for the Col & Cerruti Packard Motor Cars Sales and Service. Today the headquarters of the Biggs Cardosa Engineering firm, the exterior of the building has been restored to its original grandeur, and the interior still contains the original lighting fixtures, woodwork, and stained glass.



*Façade of Packard Building.*

Leland Cerruti and Louis Col had grown up together as neighbors in the Hanchett Park neighborhood of San Jose, where the Cols owned a Frank Wolfe Prairie house at 1163 Martin Avenue. (The Col house was featured on the PAC\*SJ Wolfe & Wolfe Prairie Architectural Homes Tour of 2012.) When Cerruti and Col went into business together, it was only natural they turned to Wolfe & Higgins to design a spectacular building. Packard buildings were known at the time for their outstanding architecture, many of them done in elaborate Spanish Revival styles. San Francisco had its own Packard building designed by Berkeley architect Bernard Maybeck. The same year, Leland Cerruti had Wolfe & Higgins design a home for himself and his wife Lorine in nearby College Park.

## **Anthony Maderis House**

Anthony Maderis was one of the most prolific developers in San Jose and one of Wolfe & Higgins's best customers. In 1925, he and his wife Clara lived in this Hanchett Park home. Meticulously restored and maintained, the two-story house is a showpiece with its ornate exterior and interior with arched doors and windows, dramatic entry hall, and grand central staircase. Maderis used Wolfe & Higgins regularly throughout the years for personal residences and for the new buildings he developed and sold throughout San Jose.

*(Cont'd p. 11)*

## Wolfe & Higgins (Cont'd)

These are just some of the many outstanding works of Wolfe & Higgins that you'll see on the August 26 PAC\*SJ Wolfe & Higgins Architectural Homes Tour.

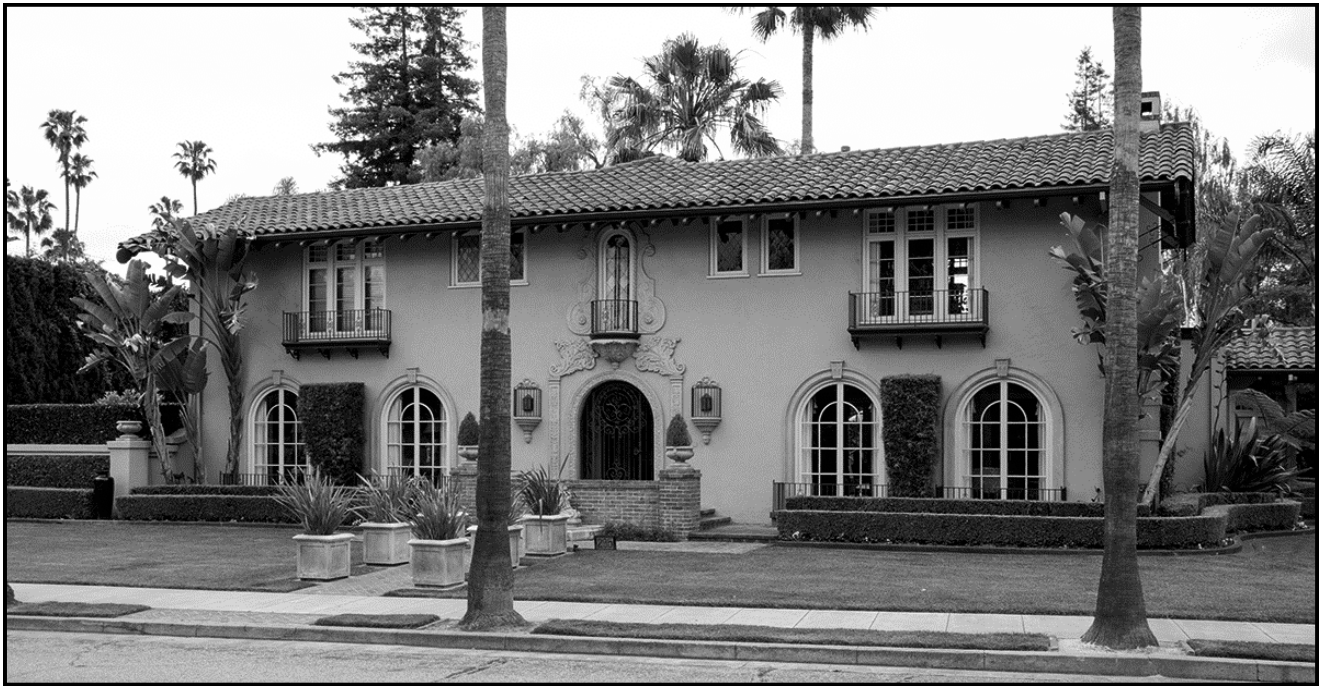
The tour will take place in two historic areas in San Jose, with houses in Willow Glen and in the Rose Garden--Hanchett Park neighborhoods. As you walk or drive from one open house to the next, make sure to keep an eye open for the other nearby Wolfe & Higgins designs!

PAC\*SJ is looking for docents to help out with the tour. To find out more, contact us at [info@wolfeandhigginstour.com](mailto:info@wolfeandhigginstour.com) or call us at 408-998-8105. ☞

*Right, entrance décor of the Maderis House.*

*Below, Maderis House in Hanchett Park.*

*(Photos: Krista Van Laan)*



Help support the Preservation Action Council by being a sponsor  
of our 2017 Wolfe & Higgins architectural homes tour.

**Go to [www.WolfeandHigginsTour.com](http://www.WolfeandHigginsTour.com) to learn more about the benefits of sponsorship.**

---

# In Memory of Sharon McCauley

---

The entire PAC\*SJ family was saddened by the recent passing of longtime Board Member Sharon McCauley. Sharon served many years on our Board in a variety of capacities. She chaired our Events Committee, kept our financial records in order, planned and executed our annual series of Walking Tours, and was a key member of the team that produced our historic homes tours. She was also a familiar figure at our Garage Sales helping out wherever needed.

Sharon was born in Detroit where her dad worked for Ford's (which is how it is referred to in Detroit.) She had two older sisters, Elaine and Joan, who both still live in Michigan. She attended Catholic school and graduated from Rosary High School. She received a varsity letter for being on the debate team.

Sharon received a scholarship to attend the University of Michigan where she met her future husband, Jay, and majored in Psychology. She and Jay were married and moved to Ohio so that he could attend grad school while Sharon worked for several years as a social worker.

They moved to California for Jay's work. In 1977 their only child, Erin, was born. Sharon did a lot of volunteer work even back then and Erin remembers being taken to an organization for people who were in transition to welfare to get basic food supplies to feed their families. She was active in Erin's preschool and eventually was head of the parent board.

As time went on Sharon completed her master's degree in computer science at SJSU. As she described it, it was hard to get a job as a social worker in California without being bilingual, and it was easier to learn C++ than Spanish.



*Sharon McCauley*

*Sporting a vintage hat at a PAC\*SJ event.*

*(Photo: Heather David)*

She started working for KLA Instruments (now KLA Tencor) and was there during the very early days, and contributed to its first product release (everyone on the team got to go to Hawaii for making the deadline.)

Sharon eventually retired but continued to keep herself very busy. In addition to her involvement with PAC\*SJ, she was a child advocate with CASA. She took "her" kids to all sorts of places and likely changed each of their lives for the better. She also did a lot of traveling and other work with the Society for Industrial Archaeology. This was originally Jay's inter-

est but she found a lot of joy in it as well.

Sharon became a grandmother in 2012 and again in 2014 and was a wonderful grandmother to both of her grandchildren.

The last two years or so had also been spent dealing with Jay's failing health. Jay passed away late last year and Sharon had started making plans to redo the yard, and had started figuring out how to do all the tasks Jay used to do around the house.

We extend our condolences to Sharon's daughter, Erin, and their entire family. Sharon leaves many friends in the PAC\*SJ family and she leaves a void that will be difficult to fill. We appreciate the enormous amount of time and energy she contributed to our organization. She will be missed but she will always be remembered. ☞ —Brian Grayson

*Thanks to Erin McCauley for providing the biographical information about her mother.*

# PAC\*SJ 2017 Calendar

- Jun 19** Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6:30—8 PM. History San Jose, Pasetta House.
- Jul 17** Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6:30—8 PM. History San Jose, Pasetta House.
- Aug 10-12** Tentative Date, PAC\*SJ Summer Yard and Salvage Sale. 260 S.13th St. To donate or volunteer, send email to [donations@preservation.org](mailto:donations@preservation.org).
- Aug 20** Sunday, San Jose Woman's Club, 2-4 PM. 75 S. 11th St. Free Ice Cream Social. Krista Van Laan will speak about her new book on Wolfe & Higgins. (See page 16)
- Aug 21** Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6:30—8 PM. History San Jose, Pasetta House.
- Aug 25** **Friday, Wolfe & Higgins Pre-Tour Kickoff Party. See page 15 for details.**
- Aug 26** **Saturday, Wolfe & Higgins Home Tour, 10 AM– 4 PM. See page 9 for details.**
- Sep 18** Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6:30—8 PM. History San Jose, Pasetta House.
- Oct 16** Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6:30—8 PM. History San Jose, Pasetta House.
- Nov 20** Monday, PAC\*SJ Combined Annual Board Meeting & Board Meeting, 6:30—8 PM. History San Jose, Pasetta House.

## 75 Years Later—Executive Order 9066

Artifacts relating to the internment of Japanese-Americans are on display at Special Collections and Archives at San Jose State University's Martin Luther King Jr. Library. In San Jose in 1942, 2,487 people of Japanese descent were forcibly removed to 11 camps across the nation and were part of the 120,000 that were incarcerated for up to four years.

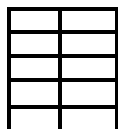
Visitors to the Library can view posters describing Executive Order 9066, authorized by President Franklin Roosevelt to relocate local Japanese and Japanese-American residents to

internment incarceration camps. Other items on exhibit are from the Japanese American Museum of San Jose and the private collection of Ralph Pearce. The collection is presented in conjunction with the CSU Japanese American History Digitization Project, a joint archive of the California State University system. Because many of the 23 campuses are located near internment sites across the state, the collection offers a unique opportunity for scholars to access resources that reflect the complexity of a chilling era in American history. ☞

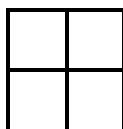
## ADVERTISE IN CONTINUITY!

*Continuity* is distributed to over 500 San Jose preservationists, homeowners and decision-makers. It's a great way to get your message out to your best potential customers! For ads larger than the business card, you must supply camera-ready artwork, or PAC\*SJ can provide it at an additional charge.

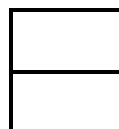
**Buy ads in 6 issues and SAVE! Plus, all multiple-issue ads come with a free membership!**



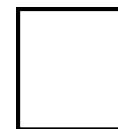
**Business Card**  
Single issue \$50  
3 issues \$120



**1/4 Page**  
Single issue \$100  
3 issues \$250



**1/2 Page**  
Single issue \$200  
3 issues \$450



**Full Page**  
Single issue \$375  
3 issues \$700

# Meet New PAC\*SJ Board Members



**Gratia Rankin**

Gratia Rankin arrived in Palo Alto in 1959 with her parents Carroll and Laura Rankin. Her mother was an elementary school teacher. Her father had just joined the firm of Ernest J. Kump as Project Architect for the construction of Foothill College. He continued his design work with such projects as Cabrillo College, Gunn High, Superior

Court San Jose, All Saints Episcopal Watsonville among others. The family lived in an Eichler home in the Greenmeadow neighborhood of 300 Eichlers, for which her father and a small team successfully gained a listing on the National Registry of Historic Places in 2005. Gratia says that because of her father's work, she has "historic

and architectural preservation in her blood," which is a definite plus for PAC\*SJ.

Gratia worked at Santa Clara University in the Art & Art History Department for 22 years, and then in the Biology Department for eight years before retiring in 2015. She is a computer programmer and serves on the board for radio station KKUP 91.5 FM, an all-volunteer, listener sponsored, eclectic station for the Bay Area since 1972.

Gratia has three degrees from San Jose State University, the last of which was *Library and Information Science* that served to fuel her love of databases and cataloging. She is thrilled to be a PAC\*SJ board member and looks forward to working on our home tours, watching cranes going up all over downtown San Jose, while fighting the good fights for preservation. Welcome Gratia! ☞



**Nima Moinpour**

Nima Moinpour is excited to advocate for preservation and the understanding of local history.

He recently graduated from his Master of Arts program at The New School in New York with an active interest in

destination marketing for the City of San Jose and its historic heritage.

He is currently giving dynamic presentations on the industrial journey of San Jose and is looking for interested organizations who would like to learn more. (OrientationSJ.com)

Nima tells us he is interested in walking tours and would like to participate beginning next spring. Welcome Nima!



## Did You Know About?

### Niles Canyon Transcontinental Railroad Historic District

Just north of San Jose, California, this rail line through Niles Canyon to San Francisco was the final segment of the First Transcontinental Railroad to be completed in 1870, providing the first rail connection between San Francisco Bay and the rest of the United States. Thousands of Chinese laborers were employed by the Central Pacific Railroad Corporation and the Western Pacific Railroad Company, and its completion is considered one of the biggest engineering achievements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The still-in-use railroad tracks through Niles Canyon remain on the original alignment that Chinese workers laid in the 1860s. According to National Park Service, "Niles Canyon is the only remaining railroad corridor entering the San Francisco Bay area that has not been substantially altered for modern transportation projects."

Source: National Trust: [savingplaces.org/stories/](http://savingplaces.org/stories/)

---

# Wolfe & Higgins Pre-Tour Gala for PAC\*SJ

---

The Preservation Action Council of San Jose is gearing up for a very special event—the Wolfe & Higgins Tour kickoff party on August 25 at 6:30 PM. The gala event will be held in the Gross/Low House, a San Jose City Landmark built in 1916. The house, a Dutch Colonial Revival style, is one of the very few remaining solo works of William Ernest Higgins before he went into business with Frank Delos Wolfe. Friday night partygoers are the only ones who will have an opportunity to tour the Gross/Low house, as it will not be part of the next day's Wolfe & Higgins Home Tour.

The house was originally built on The Alameda for newlyweds Wilmer and Dorothy Gross and later sold to Pratt-Low cannery owner David Low and his wife Emily. In 1957, a subsequent owner had the house moved to McKendrie Street in the Rose Garden.



*Gala Event will be held here at the Gross/Low House, a City Landmark.*

For more than one hundred years, the house has retained its original character-defining features, including the signature design elements of William Higgins, many of which he brought into the Wolfe & Higgins partnership. The graceful curving staircase in the grand entry hall, the huge ornate fire-

place that matches the outside pillars, and the elegant dining room with built-in cabinetry all come together in a house built for entertaining.

From the moonlit back yard with its courtyard and towering palm tree, to the delicious food and drink, to the wonderful company of fellow preservationists, this will surely be a

night to remember. Tickets are available at [www.WolfeandHigginsTour.com](http://www.WolfeandHigginsTour.com). PAC\*SJ members – don't forget to check the box for the member discount! ☞

---

## May Yard Sale earns \$7000 for Historic Preservation Advocacy

---

PAC\*SJ's May yard sale consisted of donations from several estates earning \$7000 for historic preservation. Realtor Georgie Huff expedited the donation of a truck load of vintage furniture from a North 15<sup>th</sup> Street home which found new homes throughout the city. A former City of San Jose Historic Preservation Officer invited PAC\*SJ volunteers to remove 4 truck loads of turn-of-the-century cast iron tools, stoves, anchors, drills, etc., from her father's Menlo Park estate. These were a great favorite with hobbyists and artists.

As always, we are grateful to the Salas, Wangsness-Leisenfelt, Hagen (formerly Guinther Home) and Curia families for storing and displaying the sales items on their front yards during the sale. Special call out to Joan Bohnett for her many hours of pricing, sorting and cashiering at the sale. The usual suspects assisted in sales and merchandising:

André Luthard, Jim Norvell, Ted Essy, Tom Aldridge, Leslie Masunaga, John Mitchell, Lisa Wangsness, April Halberstadt, Mary Lou Mason, Tim McAuliff, Gilda and John Messmer, Peter Di Donato, Rose Van Domelen, Wini Leeds, Lucille Boone, Linda Nemmer, Sara Bruce, Lyle Merithew, Sandy Swirsky, Gayle Frank, Manjubalas Talekar, Heather David, Kim Aldridge, Doug Gallinet, Susan Thomas, Connie Foley, Rebecca Smith, Shannah Miller, Kenneth Trent, Lynne Brown, Julia Howlett, Allie Kerkoff, Tricia Hill, Dev Randler, Bev Blockie, Heinz Boedecker, Larry Boe, Rob Strong, Shawn McCarson, and Markus Luthard. Virginia Carpio prepared lunch on Thursday and Patti and Walt Philips brought an Italian lunch for the crew Friday. I apologize if I missed any helpers. ☞

—Patt Curia

---

# Latest Book by Krista Van Laan Arrives

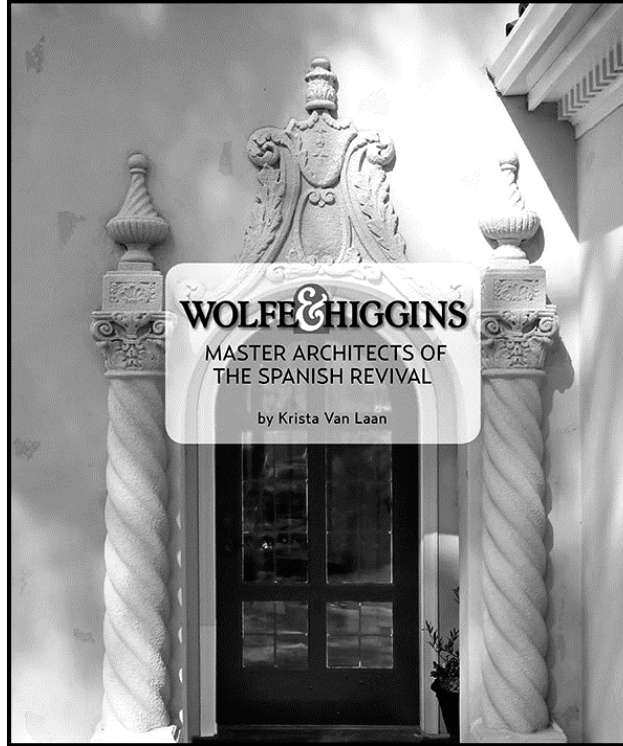
---

## “Wolfe & Higgins: Master Architects of the Spanish Revival”

Krista Van Laan has just published her second book on the work of San Jose architect Frank Wolfe. Just in time for PAC\*SJ’s upcoming Wolfe & Higgins architectural tour on August 26, the book fills in the details of the work of this very prolific firm.

In 1917, Frank Delos Wolfe, already well-known in San Jose for his residential designs with partner Charles McKenzie and his distinctive Prairie-style buildings influenced by Frank Lloyd Wright, partnered with his son Carl Wolfe and Santa Clara architect William Ernest Higgins to form what would become one of the most prolific architectural firms of its time. Early adopters of the Spanish Revival style that swept California in the 1920s, the firm of Wolfe & Higgins lasted only fourteen years but in that short time produced more than 500 homes, commercial buildings, and institutional buildings, many of them still standing. Among these are some of the most recognizable architectural landmarks in Northern California.

*Wolfe & Higgins: Master Architects of the Spanish Revival* is an in-depth presentation by an author who has clearly



done her research. Van Laan, author of *Frank Delos Wolfe: California Prairie Architecture*, has continued the saga of Frank Wolfe in this book, and also presents new information about the work of Carl Wolfe and William Higgins. The full-color hardcover book, with nearly 400 exterior and interior photographs of over 150 buildings, tells the stories of both the architects and their clients. Readers will discover that many of the houses and buildings they’ve admired in San Jose and surrounding cities are the work

of Wolfe & Higgins, and now they can get an up-close look in the pages of the book.

From the iconic Venetian Court of Capitola to the San José Woman’s Club, from bungalow courts and grand mansions to automobile showrooms and schools, Wolfe & Higgins played a major role in establishing the architectural landscape of Northern California, and San Jose in particular. This book tells their story.

*Wolfe & Higgins: Master Architects of the Spanish Revival* is available [www.nreverse.com](http://www.nreverse.com) for \$39.95. ☞

### *Notable Quotable*

*It is forbidden to disfigure external decorations on private buildings through modern additions, and to spoil historic buildings in an important town out of avarice and the desire to make money.*

Theodosius, Valentinianus, Arcadius [309 AD]; Quoted by Anthony Crosby in the *APT Bulletin* [1987]



# Exploring San Jose's City Landmarks

Here is the next San Jose Landmark from the City list. Check previous *Continuity* issues for earlier landmark descriptions on our website at [www.preservation.org](http://www.preservation.org).

## HL92-71; Schurra's Candies, 848 The Alameda

The Schurra's Candy Shop building, a San Jose city landmark, is not where you expect it to be. The original location of Schurra's (pronounced Sure-RAY's) was at 848 The Alameda, on the southeast corner of The Alameda and Sunol Street. In 1999, owner Bill Mundy moved next door to 840 The Alameda where the candy shop sits today, a one-story vintage building that looks just like a candy store should look.

The 848 location, where Schurra's existed for 47 years, is a two-story rectangular, brick building built in 1881. The upstairs has been primarily used for apartments and/or offices. The first floor held the Schurra's candy shop from 1936 until 1999. The stepped-up entrance has large display windows on each side and the façade is adorned with five attractive metal columns designed by foundryman Frederick Altman (see below) who bought out the San Jose Agricultural Works back in 1878. There are two sets of double windows with triangulated pediments on the second floor façade along with more windows and a door on the west side of the building. A wide cornice tops the building and is supported with decorative brackets. The same white and black brackets are found supporting other wooden trims. The leaded glass transom is decorated with blue stained glass borders.



The first floor now serves as the law offices for Macceti, O'Laughlin and Hechtman, who are California land lawyers specializing in land use, real property and environmental law. The building appears to be in excellent condition and recently refurbished.



*Former Schurra's Candies at 848 The Alameda.*

Albert Schurra opened his first candy store in Stockton in 1912 at the age of 22 and soon branched out to other cities in Northern California. After selling the Stockton, Modesto and other shops, Albert purchased the site at 848 The Alameda in San Jose for his candy store in 1936. One of his attractions was the "Sunshine Candy Kitchen" design where customers could watch workers, through the front windows, dipping chocolates by hand. A few of these ladies worked at Schurra's well into their 90s.

An older brother, Justin, also operated candy stores, eventually establishing the Alameda Confectionary at 1457 The Alameda around 1925 to 1932. He later moved his candy store to Sunnyvale.

By 1942, Albert Schurra sold his candy shop to John Smith, who sold it to Henry and Gayle Viehweger in 1946. Albert served in both world wars and retired in San Jose until his final few years. He passed away in Reno in 1978.

*(Cont'd p. 18)*

## City Landmarks (Cont'd)

Bill and Marifan Mundy purchased the candy shop from the Viehwegers in 1983. A San Jose Mercury News article (3/26/86) describes one of Schurra's well-known chocolate dippers. She was Myrtle Bay, age 84, and had been working in the candy business for over 40 years, the last 18 years at Schurra's. Her boss at that time, Bill Mundy, said that chocolate dipping was "an art, and Myrtle the best." She most often worked behind Schurra's front window demonstrating her technique to the interested public.

During the busy season such as Christmas, Easter and Valentine's Day, Mundy had 15 or more women employees. That year in 1986, Mundy introduced his original candy carrots.

Later in a Mercury News article, 4/17/02, Mundy said he bought the candy shop "because he had fond memories of going to the shop as a Lincoln High School student."



*Schurra's in the 1930s.*

*(Photo courtesy of Schurra's Candies)*



The Mundys moved the candy shop to the building next door at 840 The Alameda in 1999, where the shop still stands today. Mundy's son Brian took over the operation of Schurra's in 2005. Bill Mundy passed away in 2010.

CS

—Gayle Frank

*Left, the present day Schurra's at 840 The Alameda, next door to 848.*

*(Present day photos: Gayle Frank)*

# PAC\*SJ Membership Application

## Preservation Action Council of San Jose Membership Application

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

*Members who do not provide email addresses cannot receive timely notices of news, announcements and events. PAC\*SJ will not release your contact details to others without your consent.*

New Member \_\_\_\_\_ Renewing Member \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle the level at which you wish to join:

Individual	\$40
Family	\$55
Student or Senior (over 65)	\$25
Non-profit or School	\$25
Contributor	\$100
Patron	\$250
Benefactor	\$1,000

Join at the \$100 level or above and receive a special premium, *Signposts Revisited*, by Pat Loomis or the Bay Area Modern playing cards.

Please check if you would like to receive  
a book or playing cards

*Signposts Revisited* \_\_\_\_\_ or cards \_\_\_\_\_

or both at the \$250 level.

I am enclosing \$ \_\_\_\_\_ as an extra donation to

PAC\*SJ for a total amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in working with the following  
volunteer opportunities (*please circle*):

**Advocacy**

**Programs/Education**

**Fundraising**

**Events**

**Membership**

**Board Member**

**Newsletter**

**Public Relations**

**Complete and return with your check to:**

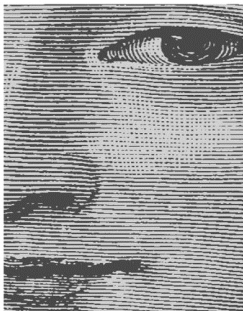
Preservation Action Council of San Jose

1650 Senter Rd., San Jose, CA 95112-2599

Phone: (408)-998-8105

info@preservation.org

**LWGRAPHICS**



Creative | Experienced | Professional  
*Graphic Design Solutions & Support*

Lisa Wangsness  
T: 408.289.1500  
lwgraphics@sbcglobal.net

## JOIN

### PAC\*SJ Board of Directors

The members of the Board of Directors are the core of PAC\*SJ. They formulate the overall strategy, secure PAC\*SJ's financial stability, and contribute their ideas, expertise and resources to make San Jose a better place. If you might be interested in serving on a committee, attending a monthly Board meeting and events, and promoting historic preservation to the general public and city officials, why not go to [www.preservation.org](http://www.preservation.org) to review the Board member expectations. If this sounds like a good fit, email your application to [info@preservation.org](mailto:info@preservation.org). We will contact you to discuss the next steps.



Preservation Action Council of San Jose

1650 Senter Rd., San Jose, CA 95112-2599

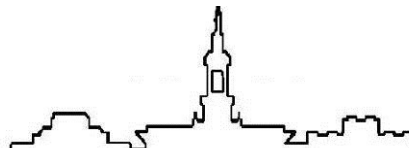
NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT 384  
SAN JOSE, CA

Or Current Resident



Like Us On Facebook!

## Join Today or Renew Now!



# CONTINUITY

The Preservation Action Council of San Jose PAC\*SJ) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation dedicated to preserving San Jose’s architectural heritage through education, advocacy and events.

We believe that historic preservation is **good for our quality of life, good for business, and good for the environment.** We aim to integrate a strong commitment to historic preservation into the land use and development decisions of the City of San Jose that affect historic resources, as well as into the private decisions of property owners and developers. We try to bring owners and developers together to create historically sensitive projects that make economic sense.

## PAC\*SJ 2017 Board

Shanna Desai, <i>President</i>	Marilyn Messina
André Luthard, <i>Vice President Advocacy</i>	John Mitchell
Darryl Boyd, <i>Secretary, Treasurer</i>	Nima Moinpour
Pat Colombe	Gratia Rankin
Gayle Frank	

**Staff:** Brian Grayson, Executive Director

## Advisory Board

Bonnie Bamburg	Karita Hummer
Marvin Bamburg, AIA	Rusty Lutz
Paul Bernal, Esquire	Franklin Maggi
Ken Fowler, CPA	Craig Mineweaser, AIA
April Halberstadt	Gil Sanchez, FAIA
Alan Hess	Keith Watt