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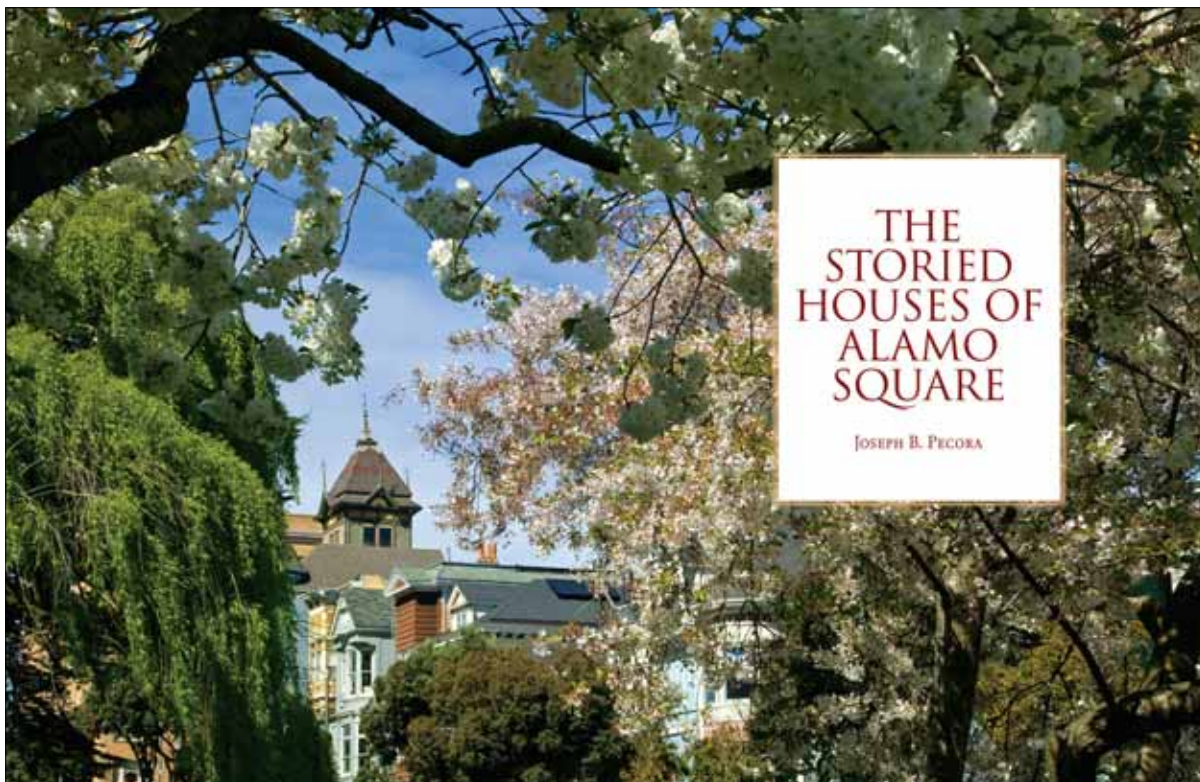


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# THE NEW FILLMORE

SAN FRANCISCO ■ OCTOBER 2014



## FAMILY AFFAIRS

**J**OE PECORA has finally written the book about the architectural riches of Alamo Square people have urged him to write, pulling together the stories, photographs and drawings he has collected from local families during decades of research.

So he set out in early September to invite his neighbors to a launch party, to be held on his block in one of the most

magnificently restored Victorian homes in San Francisco. He went knocking on doors, and around the corner on Fillmore Street a woman he'd never met answered — and promptly invited him to join her family for dinner.

“So I did,” he says. “It was a very nice salmon dinner.”

Pecora wrote much of the book as a

series of profiles of important houses and the families who lived in them published in the Alamo Square Neighborhood Association newsletter. The association was a way of bringing people together to address the issues they faced in restoring their historic houses and reclaiming a neighborhood that had become an unkept and sometimes dangerous part of the city.

“It’s a much safer neighborhood now,” Pecora says, which ironically gives people less motivation to come together. But he’s finding his book is once again helping the neighbors get to know one another.

“It’s repeating itself now,” he says, “and it’s all very rewarding. We think this is a city of strangers, but it’s really not.”

“STORIED HOUSES” | PAGE 14

### Ice Cream Shop, Not a Bank, in Line to Replace Copynet

Smitten in negotiations to expand to the neighborhood

By CHRIS BARNETT

**S**MITTEN, a made-to-order ice cream venture that opened its first shop in a converted shipping container in Hayes Valley, is scooping up the small space recently vacated by Copynet at 2404 California Street.

Copynet relocated to 2174 Sutter Street at the end of September as its 20-year lease was about to expire and the rent was to increase by \$4,000 a month.

Selling just four to six flavors of ice cream at any one time, Smitten’s founder, Robyn Sue Fisher, is in the final stages of signing a lease with the landlord, Russell Flynn of Flynn Investments. The longtime San Francisco property investor owns the venerable Preston

Apartments on the corner of Fillmore and California, which includes six street-level storefronts.

Flynn hoped to rent the 960-square-foot storefront on California Street to Wells Fargo Bank as a limited service branch filled with automated teller machines. Wells Fargo, which theoretically could easily pay the \$10 to \$12 per square foot asking price for monthly rent, is in a dispute with the city over claims its two ATMs embedded in the exterior wall of the bank building facing California Street violate local disability codes because the sidewalk is too steep.

But the deal fell through.

Flynn said he approached First Republic, his longtime bank, with a similar offer but was turned down.

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### UPFRONT



Adrienne Sherman's *Bareback Rider* features her dog Febbo, with whom she can frequently be seen walking in the neighborhood.

## SERENITY — OR CHAOS?

A local artist paints animals in the  
most unusual circumstances

By SUNNY ZENTNER

A FEW YEARS AGO, I was in Seattle at the opening of a new exhibition of paintings by Adrienne Sherman, a remarkably meticulous artist inspired by the Italian Renaissance, who has worked in the same small studio in her California Street apartment for many years. People were fascinated by a painting of a fox. They could not believe it was two-dimensional. They kept moving around, first to the side, then back to the front. It really looked as if the fox was casually walking out of the canvas and into the gallery.

She uses tiny brushes to paint fur, and her animals want to be petted. But they also want to be taken seriously. Her paintings are either a lovely serene scene or chaos about to get worse. In "Imaginarium," her new exhibition at the neighborhood's Thomas Reynolds Gallery, a fox with a birdcage on her head is careening down a hill in Lafayette Park pursued by birds. Why? A monkey with a crown is being tipped over by another monkey. Just play, or a power grab? In "Bareback Rider," her dog Febbo on horseback is going somewhere, now, away, without parental permission. But where? And what will happen next? In "Masquerade," someone with a half-fox mask looks left. The eyes we see through the mask are fox eyes; the nose, mouth and body are human. Are we looking at a "skin changer" about to become fully fox? Or fully human? Or forever at the mysterious halfway point?

Adrienne Sherman often paints her dreams, so we are in that nebulous world of her infinite creativity. The depths of image, mystery, color and form are transformed into captivating and fresh images that are haunting, beautiful and unforgettable.

*"Imaginarium," featuring paintings by neighborhood resident Adrienne Sherman, is on view through October 11 at the Thomas Reynolds Gallery at 2291 Pine Street (at Fillmore). For more information, call 441-4093 or visit [thomasreynolds.com](http://thomasreynolds.com).*

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[editors@newfillmore.com](mailto:editors@newfillmore.com)

**Editors** | Barbara Kate Repa & Thomas R. Reynolds

**Production Editor** | Ginny Lindsay

**Copy Editor** | Donna Gillespie

**Advertising inquiries** [ads@newfillmore.com](mailto:ads@newfillmore.com) or 415.441.6070

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Every month, 20,000 copies of the New Fillmore are delivered to homes and businesses in the Fillmore, Pacific Heights and Japantown. We thank you for your support and encouragement and welcome your ideas and suggestions.



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### Rag & Bone now open on Fillmore

One of the fashion world's hottest labels, Rag & Bone, has joined the parade of new boutiques on Fillmore. On September 16, R&B opened its new showplace on the corner of Fillmore and California, bringing an entirely new era to the longtime coffee house and laundromat on that key corner. The skinny jeans range from \$200 to \$1,000 and nearly everything is black — natch, given that New York is in its signage. Another sign of the times: the dressing rooms are equipped with iPhone chargers. . . . Still more fashion is on the way. At the former home of the Pure Beauty store at 2124 Fillmore, Rebecca Minkoff is building its newest boutique.



**THE NEW YOSHI'S:** Say goodbye to the distinctive Yoshi's marquee that has become familiar in the jazz district. This month the club and restaurant will be reborn with a new name, a new menu and a new concept. The new owners have until the end of October to unveil their vision, with Yoshi's living on across the bay in its other home at Jack London Square in Oakland.

**TAKEN — AND AVAILABLE:** Hotel Tono in Japantown has been taken over by the Kimpton Group, joining the nearby Hotel Kabuki under new ownership. . . . And a "for rent" sign has gone up at 1712 Fillmore on one of the neighborhood's most legendary buildings, formerly home of Marcus Books and Bop City.

## Ice Cream Shop in Line to Replace Copynet

► FROM PAGE ONE

A First Republic spokesman said the bank's chief real estate decision maker knew nothing about any discussion of a local branch.

Meantime, the threat of a rent hike from \$6,200 to \$10,000 or more a month sent Copynet owner Maryam Zadeh scrambling. She contacted Los Angeles retail leasing broker David Fishbein — who has replaced many longtime Fillmore businesses with new corporate tenants — to discuss her options. But with her lease expiring at the end of the year, there was not enough time remaining to justify "key money" — the payoff Fishbein has secured for other Fillmore merchants willing to give up their spaces for a big chunk of cash.

Moving quickly, Zadeh found a new location in the neighborhood. She moved and re-opened for business on Sutter Street on October 1. The new Copynet is slightly smaller, but the 750-square-foot space that formerly housed Sydney for Hair salon has been completely remodeled. Zadeh says her monthly rent is less than half of what she was paying under her old lease.

Her neighbor on Sutter Street is Jet Mail, which was also forced to move off Fillmore after more than two decades. It was Jet Mail manager Kevin Wolohan who contacted Zadeh to tell her about the vacant storefront a few doors away.

In turn, it was Zadeh who sparked Smitten owner Robyn Fisher's interest in Copynet's old space when they met while shopping on Fillmore.

"We were both at Heidi Says Shoes looking at sandals and we started talking," Zadeh says. "Robyn followed me back to Copynet and asked for the landlord's phone number. I showed her the space and they connected. She said she wanted to be next door to Delfina."

Fisher did not respond to repeated phone calls and Smitten's public relations staff would not provide information about the new store or when it will open. "Rumors are fun, aren't they?" emailed Smitten's Eliza Bennett.

In addition to the Hayes Valley location, Smitten has shops in Los Altos, Oakland and Lafayette.

The company's promotional materials say that what separates Smitten from other purveyors is its ability to freeze ice cream at a lower temperature using liquid nitrogen and produce it on demand, eliminating the need for preservatives and emulsifiers to lengthen shelf life.

Smitten pulls this off with a new patented ice-cream making machine it calls



After 20 years at 2404 California Street, Copynet has relocated to Sutter Street.

"Brrr," which the company claims "makes the smoothest, densest and most flavorful ice cream on earth from scratch, to order, in just minutes." A \$4.95 dish of Smitten and a \$6.20 cone are served up by "brrristas," a term the company has trademarked.

Its September "seasonal flavor" was Crème Fraîche with Pear Caramel, described as "sun-blushed pears, ripe for the picking in early fall, an ideal 'pear-ing' with tangy crème."

Smitten calls its toppings "pairings" and charges 75 cents each for 14 of them, ranging from cinnamon shortbread to spicy caramel to fresh mint chip.

Meanwhile, Copynet is settling into its new location and Zadeh seems pleased with the move.

"I have a great mother and daughter landlord, and Sutter is becoming a nice corridor for business services," she says. She maintains Copynet is not competitive with Jet Mail.

"When I moved into the Fillmore 20 years ago — when my rent was \$2,300 a month and we were doing mostly black and white copies and printing syllabuses for doctors, dentists, schools and students — I decided I would never do shipping. We've always been complementary, never competitors."

Already she has become a Sutter Street cheerleader and is recruiting new neighbors to take over the renovated space next door that formerly housed Timeless Treasures.

Landlord Neecha Than-Ngern confirms she is entertaining offers for the space next door at 2176 Sutter. "We have an empty

but renovated 1,000-square-foot store for \$3,500 or \$3.50 a foot," says the property owner, who grew up in the Victorian above the stores and whose family formerly owned Neecha Thai restaurant at Sutter and Steiner. "We're looking for more stores so it will generate more foot traffic on Sutter. We'd like a tenant like Maryam who's friendly, upbeat and has a good vibe."

Zadeh wasn't all that upbeat recently when she had her store at 2404 California professionally measured and discovered it is 829 square feet, not the 960 square feet she's been paying rent on for the last 20 years.

"We're entering into discussions" about a refund, she says dryly.

Flynn, a longtime San Franciscan and property investor who owns the red-brick Preston Apartments at Fillmore and California and half a dozen ground floor storefronts underneath — including the popular Dino and Santino's pizzeria — sounds happy too. Barring any last minute glitches with the Smitten lease, his firm, Flynn Investments, is fully leased on that key corner.

Flynn also owns the former Bank of America building at Fillmore and Post now occupied by Dosa, the Southern Indian restaurant, and several other properties south of Geary.

"I'm just hoping all the interest in Fillmore continues to drive demand down to Haight where the new CVS pharmacy is going in," he says. "That area is going to thrive. It already is."

■ Research assistance by Veronika Torgashova



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Coalition for SF Neighborhoods (CSFN) is an all-volunteer "umbrella" organization for neighborhood groups. Since 1972 CSFN has worked to strengthen the voice of our neighborhoods in all aspects of governance and planning: stable, healthy neighborhoods are the key to healthy cities. We carefully review ballot measures and bonds and consider those matters that will have impact on our neighborhoods.



## Don't Shred City College

By Dr. Anita Grier, City College Board of Trustees

**Saving City College is our number 1 priority.** ACCJC, the Accrediting Commission that's supposed to "ensure the quality of education" at City College has recklessly and seriously endangered the hard-earned reputation of our 79 year-old college. We have nothing to apologize for. City College offers an excellent education.

**Finances are not the problem.** CCSF is in strong financial shape, the Board left it with a balanced budget. And with Prop 30 and Prop A and new facilities to attract new students, plus the improving economy, City College has a bright financial future.

**The quality of City College's education is not in question.** City College is renowned for its teachers, staff and educational excellence. Hundreds of thousands of successful students have gone on to rewarding careers, contributing to our community. What annoys the ACCJC is the bureaucracy — not because it's unresponsive to the will of the voters — just the opposite. The ACCJC has imposed its will through "Extraordinary Powers" behind closed doors, without hearings or input from the public—that's antithetical to San Franciscans' sense of fair play and due process.

**Destruction of records.** Now that ACCJC has been forced to defend its actions in court, it's reportedly shredding documents. It's no wonder U.S. Congress Member Jackie Speier calls it "an agency run amok."

**Policy pushback.** The ACCJC wants to impose policies that read straight out of the right-wing playbook: remove faculty from the decision process, hire part-time, temporary, low-wage "adjunct" professors, slash job security for teachers, increase wages for administrators, trim "unnecessary classes," nullify child care agreements, rewrite the Mission Statement to exclude thousands of students, close neighborhood serving facilities, cancel expansion plans. All these "fiscal austerity" mandates are demanded despite the fact they will further cut enrollment, aggravating the fiscal health of CCSF.

**Lifelong learning is not lifelong failure.** We disagree with the ACCJC and the non-repeatability ruling. We favor repeating classes when repetition ensures success — hundreds of classes: learning English (ESL), basic skills, art, theater, music, tai chi, yoga, aerobics are being closed because students can't re-enroll. This especially hurts our seniors for whom a class makes a big difference. Grandma's pottery class does not threaten the community college system!

**Education for All.** It's why City College began. I take pride in the students who do not have the option of 4 year and elite universities, whose successful careers started at City College. They are the very people who need it the most, I'll always advocate for them.

**No Apologies.** I am confident that we will prevail if we stay true to what we believe. I do not apologize for standing up for the values San Franciscans cherish — living wages, a seat for everyone at the table and education for all — our San Francisco values.

### A great career begins at City College!

Please sign my petition on repeating classes: [petitions.moveon.org/sign/dont-kick-grandma-out](http://petitions.moveon.org/sign/dont-kick-grandma-out)

INFO: [anitagrrier.org](http://anitagrrier.org)

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## CRIME WATCH

### Burglary of Vehicle, Possession of Burglary Tools Laguna and Bush Streets August 16, 3:22 a.m.

Two officers responded to a call about an auto burglary in progress. The caller knew the suspect and gave dispatch his name and description. When officers arrived, they found a man who matched the description and detained him. He was carrying tools used either to break into cars or as weapons. Scattered about the car were numerous household items police believed had been removed from the vehicle. The suspect was transported to Northern Station, where officers learned there were several warrants for his arrest.

### Vandalism to Vehicles, Obstructing an Officer Laguna and Lombard Streets August 18, 2:06 a.m.

A witness reported an intoxicated man who was "going wild," walking down the street punching cars and kicking their side mirrors. The caller gave dispatch a description and the man's direction of travel. Officers found the suspect standing in the street kicking at the driver's mirror on a Cadillac. The officers jumped out of their car and shouted, "Police! Stop." The man walked away, then broke into a run. As the police chased him, he fell down. When the officers were handcuffing him, they observed a small lump on the man's head and called the paramedics to have him evaluated.

The officers then attempted to locate and log all the damaged vehicles. They were unable to contact most of the owners, but took photos of the damage and left report numbers on the windshields of the vandalized cars. The suspect was booked for eight counts of felony vandalism.

### Driving Under the Influence Broadway and Van Ness Avenue August 25, 12:27 a.m.

Officers on patrol observed a car traveling north on Van Ness as it made an illegal U-turn, crossing over the double yellow line. As the officers attempted to catch up to the car, it sped up and slowed down, then made random turns. Officers at one point got close enough to get the license plate number; then the car sped off the wrong way on a one-way street.

When the officers turned on their siren and emergency lights, the driver pulled over. Then he jumped out of the car and started walking away. When officers shouted at him to stop, he complied, then stated: "I'm sorry I screwed up. I just don't want a ticket." The officers smelled alcohol on his breath. After failing a series of field sobriety tests, he was arrested and transported to Mission Station for the breath test. He was

well over the legal limit. He then admitted to having had four beers. The suspect was booked at county jail.

### Aggravated Assault Sutter and Buchanan Streets August 26, 7:30 a.m.

Witnesses called the police concerning two men fighting in front of the Japanese Cultural Center. When the police arrived, they found one man lying on the ground, bleeding heavily from his head. They applied pressure to his wound and called for paramedics. Witnesses told the officers one man had become angry because he believed the other man had cut in front of him in line. A heated argument broke out. Then one man went inside the cultural center and came back out with a plastic milk crate and struck other man two times on the head. The assailant was still in the area; a witness identified him for the police. He was booked at Northern Station.

### Traffic Violation Geary Boulevard and Divisadero Street September 8, 10:36 p.m.


Officers on patrol saw a black Mercedes speed through a red light. They initiated a traffic stop and spoke with the driver, who produced a Washington driver's license; a computer check revealed it had been cancelled. The police cited the driver for that violation. They then learned that a passenger in the car had an outstanding warrant for his arrest. While they were booking the passenger at county jail, they discovered he possessed fraudulent government documents. Police are continuing to investigate.

### Threats Eddy and Fillmore Streets September 13, 10:18 a.m.

Officers received a call about an individual brandishing a gun and making threats. They attempted to detain the suspect, but he fled. The man who had been threatened with the gun said that the suspect, who was his son, had threatened to shoot him. The incident is still under investigation.

### Narcotics, Outstanding Warrants California and Scott Streets September 15, 11:18 p.m.

Officers saw a vehicle parked in a crosswalk with three occupants inside. They approached the car and spoke with the driver. When they spotted a gun next to the passenger in the front seat and a second weapon in the back seat, they called for backup. Additional officers arrived and detained all three occupants. One man had a long criminal history and six outstanding arrest warrants. A search of the car revealed a large quantity of methamphetamine. The driver was booked at county jail for possession of narcotics.



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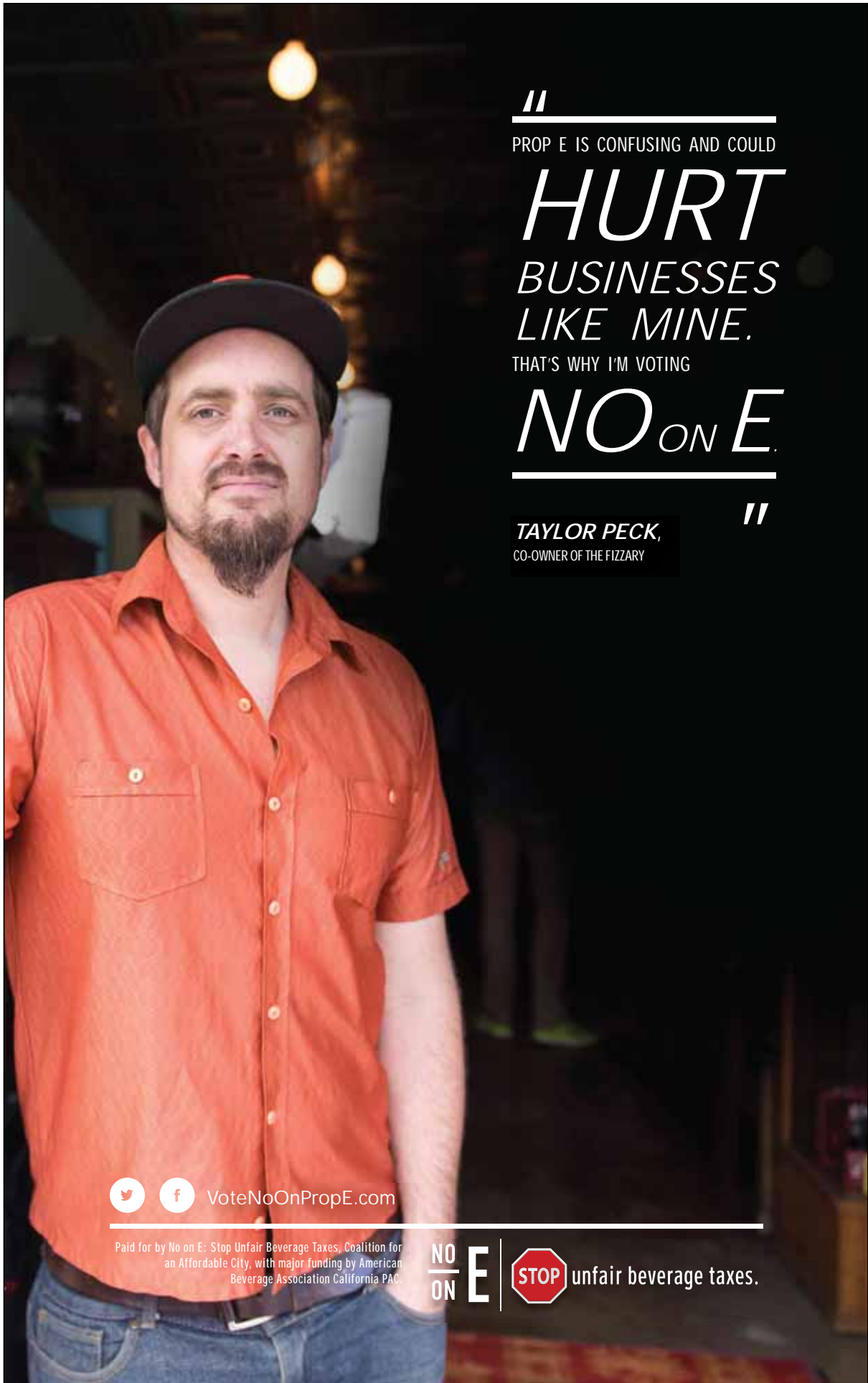
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# A Place So Loved for So Long

A child of the neighborhood's Swedenborgian Church found inspiration close to home

By TED BOSLEY

**M**Y EARLIEST MEMORIES of the Swedenborgian Church are from about 1957. I would have been three years old.

I remember the welcoming fire behind the hearth and the home-like atmosphere of the sanctuary. And there were the welcoming people, too: Rev. Othmar Tobisch and Mrs. Tobisch, and Jane Sugden — “Miss Jane,” as we called her — who taught my sister Kathy and me to sing. I recall especially the sound and feel of the rush-bottomed chairs that my little backside swam around in.

Our father died in 1959, so most of our childhood memories of the church are connected with our mother, Phyllis Bosley. The church became our home away from home. Kathy and I were there four or five times every week for one reason or another: children's choir practice, adult choir practice, Thursday night supper or to help Miss Jane with a project.

I don't recall exactly when I became interested in the church building as a potent physical object, but I do remember why. Sitting at the back of the church waiting for a wedding to conclude so I could blow out the candles and sweep up the rice (Mr. Tobisch paid 75 cents per wedding), I picked up a copy of the little pamphlet written in 1945 on the 50th anniversary of the first service. It described historic features of the church, practically all of which — and this is what captured my complete attention — remained decades later exactly as they were described. It seemed incredible that a place might be so loved as to be left unmolested for so long.

**M**EANWHILE, all around us the Victorian houses of the Western Addition and the Fillmore District were being demolished in great waves, thanks to “urban renewal.” And Geary Boulevard was being grotesquely widened to create a giant gash through neighborhoods of homes, displacing thousands of mostly African-American and Japanese-American families.

The preservation of the church, like its creation, is best ascribed to Rev. Joseph Worcester, its first pastor, who was appreciated during his lifetime by a diverse cross-section of creative and intellectual lights in San Francisco. Of this I knew nothing as a child, but I may



PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAURIE PALSEY



## ■ CELEBRATION

### One of the nation's historic landmarks

The Swedenborgian Church, located at Lyon and Washington Streets, is the birthplace of the Arts & Crafts Movement in the United States. The church will celebrate the 10th anniversary of its designation as a national historic landmark on Sunday, October 26, at 11 a.m. Special guests include historian and former state librarian Kevin Starr and architectural historian Ted Bosley. For more information, call 346-6466 or visit [sfsweborgian.org](http://sfsweborgian.org).

have had some sense of it, or an instinct.

I had inherited my mother's affinity for the artistic and the antique, which in 1960 had led her to buy a then unfashionable, dark Victorian house built in 1885, which retained its remarkably original living and dining rooms. It wasn't for everyone. I remember one visitor

calling the interior of our home “funereal.”

I loved the house, but when I was about 17 or 18, I began to sense a strong preference for the simplicity of the church sanctuary. My Sunday morning walk from home, on Sacramento near Cherry Street, would take me past later-era Craftsman townhouses along Clay and Washington

Streets. I would dip down into Jackson Street, too, to see the fantastical Roos house or the beautifully restrained shingle-skinned houses of the early 20th century before climbing up to Lyon Street.

No matter the route, there were urban houses and apartment blocks to admire,

TO PAGE 8 ►

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## ‘The Building Must Teach Its Lessons’ – And It Still Does

► FROM PAGE 7

all from just after the turn of the last century — built, I realize now, just 10 or 15 years after our Victorian house. I could not understand why those who lived in these unique and beautiful homes did not seek out the nearby church, so clearly a spiritual companion piece of artistic beauty. Unlike the monotony — as I saw it then — of the Victorian rows, there was an aesthetic affinity among the turn-of-the-century buildings that spoke of kinship rather than sameness.

**T**HE LATE 1960S AND EARLY 1970S saw a surge in appreciation for the city’s architectural past. In 1974, Leslie Freudenheim’s book, *Building with Nature*, boldly identified Joseph Worcester as the pioneer and leading light of the American Arts and Crafts movement. Others had hinted at the possibility, but her conclusions were unequivocal.

I still attended church from time to time, but by then I was in college across the bay living in the William R.

Thorsen house designed by architects Greene and Greene. I now know that my choice of student housing at Berkeley had everything to do with the love of architecture the church had ignited in me. And, with the publication of *Building with Nature*, I could see this inspiration in a nationally significant light.

At Berkeley I majored in art history, taking every architectural history course offered. I was haunted by the photo of the church under construction that appeared in Freudenheim’s book, and I wanted — needed, really — to know more about the characters in her narrative. To further my education, I began to organize architectural walking tours in Berkeley to benefit the University Art Museum, now the Berkeley Art Museum, and learned about Bernard Maybeck, Ernest Coxhead, Willis Polk, A.C. Schweinfurth and a raft of others.

In 1990, I was fortunate to be offered a job at the Gamble House, the Greene and Greene masterpiece in Pasadena. While it meant leaving the Bay Area, I would be able to do what I loved. In 1993, a professor at Occidental College,

Dr. Robert Winter, asked me to “write about something you’re onto in Northern California.” With youthful hubris and naivete, I volunteered to write about the Swedenborgian Church.

**I** BECAME CONVINCED that when the church was designed in 1894, Schweinfurth, not Maybeck, had been the lead designer in architect A. Page Brown’s office, following the departure of Willis Polk from that post. After writing 20 years ago with enthusiasm that Schweinfurth should be given design credit for the church, I have since come to the inescapable conclusion that *I was wrong*.

I conclude this not because I have found new evidence, but because I find the existing evidence revealing in a way that I did not appreciate 20 years ago. I still believe that A. Page Brown was probably too immersed in other, bigger projects — the Ferry Building, for instance — to pay much attention to the little church project. But I also appreciate that he could have given potent direction to his staff, who then used their own gifts to make the church the best



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PHOTOGRAPHS BY LAURIE PASSEY

it could be. I now feel that we can see signs of Brown's distinctive hand. We can also sense Maybeck's involvement, and have it from many sources that he was indeed involved. And I remain convinced that Schweinfurth had a hand in the church.

And there is Bruce Porter's role to take into account. Like the others, he was a busy and very young man compared to Worcester, but not too busy to be sure that he made his own mark on the church. He contributed the stained glass windows and the Westminster-glass lancet window in the tower. Porter also supplied Joseph Worcester with a sketch of an Italian church near Verona that inspired the design of the exterior of the church.

The 80 rush-bottomed maple chairs are the work of Alexander Forbes, who explained to Worcester that he had lost his religion but was moved by the significance of the project to make the chairs for less than it cost to create them. We do not know who designed them, but Worcester doubtless hovered over the details. The chairs would famously become the prototype for all Mission furniture.

William Keith's mural paintings, the last of which was given in tribute to Brown after his untimely passing, give tremendous artistic depth to the interior — the kind one can expect from a mature man close to Worcester's age.

In the end, however, none of this involvement and energy amounts to what Joseph Worcester himself brought to the design and building of the church. It was Worcester who kept Psalm 127 — "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it" — uppermost in his consciousness throughout the planning, funding, designing, constructing, decorating, landscaping and furnishing the church. And it was Worcester who gently persuaded the talented and artistic team to follow his unorthodox architectural concepts.

Those who knew Worcester might recognize his nurturing, self-effacing character when he remarked to a reporter from the *Examiner*: "I could have done nothing without the architect." But one might also recognize vision and determination when he added: "But he was very patient with my suggestions."

Worcester revealed his certainty of how the church should be built when he said: "Sometimes he [Brown] said that some idea of mine was not good architecture. I answered him that I cared nothing for the canons of architecture; the building must teach its lessons." This was a man alive to all of the possibilities of what he was doing.

**T**HE CHURCH'S LESSONS are taught even today through the devoted preservation of its of lack of pretense; its simple and natural beauty; the intimate, sheltered garden; the natural, unadorned building materials and furnishings and through Swedenborgian theology envisioned by Worcester.

Joseph Worcester was not only an architect of buildings, but of people — not least the circle he drew to him to create this unique and remarkable place of timelessness and spirit.

*Edward R. "Ted" Bosley is director of the Gamble House in Pasadena, another icon of the Arts & Crafts Movement.*



Juan-Antonio

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**ABOUT JUAN-ANTONIO CARBALLO**

Juan-Antonio is a 10-year resident of San Francisco. His children were born and raised right here in District 2. He's had a celebrated career as an engineer, inventor, investor, and author.

CARBALLO@CARBALLO2014.COM • 415.770.4466 • WWW.CARBALLO2014.COM

BY CHRIS BARNETT

A FRESH WAVE of happiness is flooding Fillmore as boulevard bars and restaurants are pouring newly discounted drinks and offering bargain-priced appetizers during afternoon happy hours. Some thirst parlors are more generous than others.

**THE ELITE CAFE**, at 2049 Fillmore Street, the one-time sporting house, gambling den and Chinese restaurant turned New Orleans fine dining spot, with a long bar and discreet private booths, has extended its happy hour — now from 3 to 6 p.m. — with \$2 off all cocktails, wine and beer and a new daily “bartender special.”

Heading a list of discounted appetizers on a new happy hour menu is a choice of oysters or its signature stuffed deviled eggs. Owner Peter Synderman has shaken up the kitchen and brought in new chef James London, who is catering to early birds with pulled pork sliders, mustard sauce and green apple slaw, \$4 apiece; charred skirt steak with smoky potato salad, \$8; shrimp cocktail, \$8; and a smoked trout kale salad with onions, \$8.

The Elite is also kicking with live music Monday through Wednesday evenings from 6 to 9 p.m. No cover charge and no drink minimum.

**HARRY'S ON FILLMORE**, at 2020 Fillmore Street, has a long list of special prices and different times and caveats for its happy hours. But with patience and persistence, you can score some real deals.

For starters, there's a 4 to 6 p.m. happy



The Elite Cafe is offering drink specials and a new menu during its extended happy hour.

## Happier Hour on Fillmore

Local bars and restaurants offering new specials

hour weekdays only with well drink prices cut to \$5, draft beers trimmed to \$4 and house wine going for \$6. On Tuesday, a bottle of premium wine is half price. All night long on Wednesday, there is a “shot and a beer” special with a choice of Jameson Irish Whisky, Jack Daniels, Fireball, Cazadores or Fernet Branca and any draft beer for \$10.

On Thursday and Friday, Harry's has Chinese-Hawaiian Martini Nights from 4 p.m. to 2 a.m. closing for \$8. While a cocktail purist would dispute its authenticity, a recent concoction mixed pineapple juice,

lychee juice and vodka.

The longstanding Monday burger special offered from 5 to 10 p.m. has been modified, too. It was previously a basic hamburger, fries and a drink for \$10.95. Now the drink has been dropped and so has the price, to \$5.95 — except when a legal holiday falls on a Monday.

**PALMER'S**, at 2298 Fillmore, has a daily happy hour that runs from 4 to 6 p.m. that includes a draft beer for \$4, a basic well drink for \$5 and a glass of select white or red wine or a bartender's special cocktail for \$7.

The \$5 appetizer list includes a choice of spicy meatballs, mussels in a fume blanc sauce, dry rub pork ribs and burrata cheese. Curry or plain French fries are \$3 and deviled eggs are a buck apiece.

**THAI STICK**, at 2001 Fillmore, has redesigned its happy hour, and while the time remains from 4 to 7 p.m. every day, the bargains are scaled back. On Monday, draft beer is \$4 and on Tuesday, beer and wine are \$1 off and there's a 20 percent savings on any bottle of wine. A bottle of beer is \$3 on Wednesday. Gone is the daily generous pour of a house chardonnay or cabernet for \$5. It's now \$6 every day but Tuesday. Also, there is no break on cocktails, either well or call brands.

Still, Thai Stick retains its happy hour appetizer prices of \$5 each, led by the six grilled chicken satays with peanut sauce and a cucumber salad.

The small, sophisticated bar at **FLORIO**, at 1915 Fillmore, has not pared its prices to woo imbibers. However, on weekends it now opens at 3:30 p.m. instead of 5:30 with a new game it's calling Dealer's Choice.

“You just choose a spirit and I will create a cocktail for you,” explains the congenial and smartly turned out Reuben Aguirre, who has joined the bartending team.

Florio is known for its serious cocktails that at \$11 are fairly priced considering the ingredients and ambiance. They range from “classics” (a Pegu Club Cocktail with gin, Cointreau, lime, Angostura bitters) to “moderns” (Fillmore Fizz: bourbon, mint, lemon, ginger syrup and Champagne).

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# A Life in Leather

A leathermaking badge in Boy Scouts helped launch a career soon coming to a close

By BARBARA KATE REPA

PETER JAMES still remembers when he got smitten by leather. He was about 10 years old, living in San Francisco, having immigrated with his family from Sweden four years earlier.

"I sat in my dad's new 1955 Studebaker, and when I shut the door I was instantly intoxicated with the leather aroma," he says. "It just knocked me out. It had black and white checkerboard upholstery — and it hit me like a thunderbolt. I was hooked."

Becoming an artisan and a leather-crafter wasn't on his radar screen back then, growing up in a family where the mantra repeated each night at dinner was: "Be willing to work a little harder."

His mother was a gourmet cook, his father an accomplished architect who collected art and drove cool cars — always fast, two-door, sporty models that were thrilling, but a tight fit on frequent family road trips. The walls in the family home were overflowing with paintings and music was in the air. Early on his brother and sister mastered guitar and piano, while he played along on bongos.

"Trying to figure out how I fit in to all of that was challenging," he says. "I had few artistic skills — and the bongos were as far as I went with the music."

For cash, he dabbled at being a babysit-

ter, newspaper carrier, gardener and window washer. He also earned a merit badge in leatherwork in Boy Scouts — and still keeps a yellowed copy of the Scouts' leathermaking manual in his shop. "But it never occurred to me that I could make a living doing leather," he says.

James served on active duty in the Coast Guard from '64 to '68. "It was pretty good duty with Vietnam in full swing and many brothers going down over there," he says. He did sea duty on a cutter in San Francisco Bay, with time off for jazz in North Beach, Janis Joplin at the Matrix on Fillmore and Jimi Hendrix at the Fillmore Auditorium. Then radio school in Groton, Connecticut, brought weekends in New York City's Greenwich Village that were flowing with jazz, rock and beer. "And no one was shooting at me," he adds.

While he was in the Coast Guard, his father gave him a prescient gift: a deer suede blazer he'd bought for \$250 but never worn. "I broke it in and wore it during the Haight-Ashbury days," James says. I also bought an olive green lamb suede Nehru-style jacket — and suddenly I realized: chick magnet! I would get touched by strangers because my jackets were so yummy looking and feeling."

His entrepreneurial mojo was beginning to rise. With newfound riches from a



PHOTOGRAPHS BY SUSE BIEHLER

Peter James and Susanne Rundberg outside their Fog City Leather shop at 2060 Union.

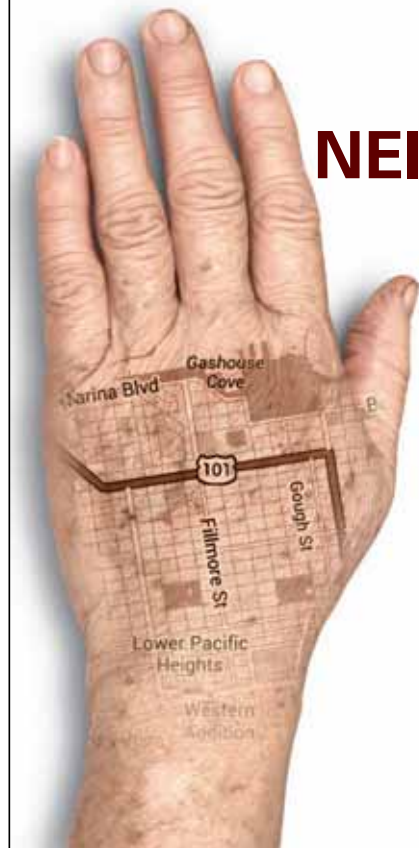
stint selling an exercise contraption advertised on TV, James opened his first leather store — a sandal shop — in Castro Valley in 1970. It was there he learned to cut, dye and shape leather and then fit, pattern, cobble, glue and sand the edges of the sandals. "It was dirty, dusty work," he says, "But I was becoming a craftsman and a business owner. I was off and running."

Later that year he opened another shop — this one in Berkeley at a time and place

when demand for custom sandals was skyrocketing.

"It was the 13th sandal shop in town, and it was happening," he says. In addition to being one of the first shops to offer sandals with heels, he was able to set his operation apart from the crowd by promising fast delivery — three days instead of three weeks, made possible by the innovation of using a nail gun — plus jaunty styles and colors and experienced workers on the premises. He opened early, closed

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late and delivered what was promised — on time or even sooner. His work ethic had been implanted early on.

"From the get-go, I would hear horror stories about how flaky the sandalmakers were — that people would show up for appointments and often the stores were closed," he says. "What would happen is the craftsperson would make a fast \$30 or \$40 and close at 2 p.m., go pick up a jug of red mountain wine for \$3 a gallon and it was party time."

While James adhered to a strict business code, work was also play. He recalls a typical workday in The Sandalmakers, a leather shop he opened in Los Gatos: "We always had great rock 'n' roll playing and the sound of the nail gun popping, the sander sanding. Keeping up with the madness was just such a blast, it was intoxicating. A leather shop in action was pretty cool."

It was also becoming lucrative, enabling him to lease a new Porsche and then a Dino Ferrari, two of many fast cars he's had over the years.

In the '60s and afterward, leather found its place in San Francisco, where it's always leather weather.

"Lots of crafts and back-to-nature attitudes had developed, and leather was one of them," says James, noting that more than a dozen tanneries flourished in the Bay Area, each offering its own style. And a sudden run of Hollywood films flaunted leather jackets as hot fashion items.

Then Pier 39 came along. The developers approached James about opening a shop there to complement the booming North Beach Leather. "They wanted another shop that was a bit more mom and pop, crafty,

*"It was  
intoxicating.  
A leather shop  
in action was  
pretty cool."*

— PETER JAMES  
Fog City Leather



local, happening," he says. "Apparently, more than 30 leather shops applied — it looked like a gold mine. But they wanted us because we had shown we were professionals, not just jumping on the hot leather bandwagon." That shop opened and ran great guns until the 1989 earthquake.

All totaled, James has created 14 leather operations in various parts of California over his 44 years in the business. He opened the current spot on Union Street in 1989.

"I always liked Union Street," James says. "It was appealing as a neighborhood — and there was lots of music close by on Fillmore."

He also had another motive. After a divorce and 10 years as a single man, he was taken by the Union Street's slogan at the time: "Let's meet on Union Street."

And it proved to be true. Into the shop

one day walked a young woman in search of a custom leather jacket. It was serendipity. They discovered they were born in same city in Sweden: Gothenburg. She began to help out in the shop on weekends and proved to be a natural at retailing, with a mind and eye for design. Susanne Carlson became Susanne Rundberg — his full name is Peter James Rundberg — and they have been married for 23 years, working side by side at the shop for most of that time. They keep a crew of tailors on hand for custom orders and repairs.

They've seen big changes on Union Street: higher rents, fewer independents, more corporate shops and more services than merchandise.

The leather industry has changed, too — a shift that began when their favorite competitor, North Beach Leather, went out

of business in 2002. Quick and cheap production in China, India and Pakistan has undercut the U.S. market as material and labor costs here have continued to climb.

While there is still a loyal Fog City cohort of locals and tourists, more customers are opting to have their old jackets refurbished rather than buy new ones.

"People dress so casually now. The new fashion is yoga pants," notes Rundberg. "And the tech kids aren't into leather; they're wearing T-shirts and jeans. They're not necessarily going to buy a leather jacket."

More change is coming.

"We've had a dream of a landlord here for the last 25 years," says Peter James. "She even gave us a break in rent for the last six years — and we always paid on time."

But the longtime owner of Fog City's commercial condo at 2060 Union Street died last year at age 96, and her heirs have put it up for sale. When that happens, James expects the new owners will double the rent and Fog City will have 90 days to move out.

"We're still in a situation of mystery," he acknowledges. "We know we're moving, but we don't know when."

They're not sure what's next after the sale of the building goes through.

"I can't really ever see hanging up the shears," says James, who adds that Fog City will continue online after the store closes. "That will be a big change for us because we're so customer-oriented. We like to talk to people about the skins and colors and exact sizes," he says. "The only other thing I've thought about doing is custom cars. I could create a small collection, and then..."



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## Alamo Square and the Families Who Lived There

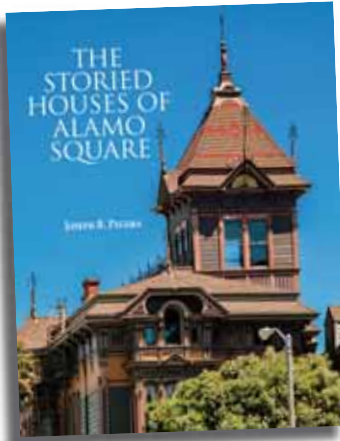
By JOE PECORA

VERY SOON AFTER I moved to the historic and architecturally rich Alamo Square neighborhood in 1979, the untold stories of its vintage housing stock piqued my curiosity. When I could discover very little photographic or written material, I began my own research and eventually composed old house profiles for the Alamo Square Neighborhood Association newsletter from the 1990s on. By personally contacting descendants of the early owners and occupants of these antique residences and institutional buildings, I was able to secure a wonderful trove of previously unpublished photos and family stories.

The sequence of the profiles was dictated by whichever homeowner in the neighborhood would agree to host an association meeting in their home. In exchange the owners would receive a house history by me and a drawing by former architect Jack Walsh.

Now I have gathered these profiles, drawings and photographs into a new book called *The Storied Houses of Alamo Square*.

Many of the homes in the Alamo Square Historic District were designed by some of the city's most prominent architects and contractor-builders for a clientele that included a number of the downtown's prosperous businessmen. Several families residing here were listed in the pages of *Our Society Bluebook*. Except for the handful of large 20th century apartment buildings, our housing inventory shows a similarity of scale and building materials



that evokes a pedestrian-friendly, residential atmosphere.

With little effort, one can imagine the neighborhood as it was in earlier times: surfaced with cobblestone streets and plank sidewalks, illuminated at night by gaslights, traversed by cable or horse car and populated by a citizenry more formally dressed than today's.

Of the vintage residences and institutional buildings featured in the book, the earliest, the Abner Phelps House, was built in the 1850s and the latest, the Harris House, in 1933. The majority are Victorians (dating from 1852 to 1901) predominantly in the Italianate, San Francisco Stick and Queen Anne styles.

Although there is a good representation of dwellings from the 1870s, they are eclipsed in number by those erected during a building boom of the 1880s that coincided with the arrival of the cable and horse cars down Hayes and McAllister Streets. A majority of the last available vacant parcels were filled in during the 1890s and the

TO PAGE 16 ►

## Ever a Wild and Romantic Spot at the Top of the Hill

BEGINNING IN THE late 1770s, Alamo hill — probably named after a species of poplar tree native to the area — served as a landmark for those who journeyed by foot or horse between Mission Dolores and the Presidio on the Old Divisadero Trail, which lay immediately to the west.

It became parkland under the land use ordinance passed in 1856-57 during the mayoralty of James Van Ness. And although in the late 1850s and '60s the city's title to Alamo Square was vigorously contested in the courts by several prominent land-grabbers and squatters, the park remained intact through the efforts of the city's attorneys. In the 1880s and early '90s, in the recollections of one chronicler, the square bounded by Steiner, Scott, Fulton and Hayes Streets was "then a primeval forest of rocks — at the top of the hill, the whilom

paradise of a thousand boys. It was in this wild and romantic spot that they played at being trapper, or scouts or wild Indians of the boundless prairies."

The park was tamed in 1892, graded and landscaped, with formal pathways laid out. Four years later, the surrounding coping and eight grand, pillar-flanked stairways were constructed by the California Concrete Company.

Alamo Square was a refuge after the earthquake of 1906. "When the fire came a dozen years ago, the long since regenerated Alamo Square blossomed into a tented city," Edward Morphy records, "and thousands of homeless folk wondered why they had never climbed up there to observe its scenic wonder."

TO PAGE 16 ►



City and County of San Francisco Department of Elections

# Be A Voter

Election Day is Tuesday

# November 4

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## 2014 Voting Guide

SF BUSINESS  
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### VOTE YES

#### Proposition A: Transportation Road and Improvement Bond

\*Allows the City to make much needed capital investments in our transportation infrastructure

Proposition C: Renews the Children's Fund to better serve San Francisco youth and families

Proposition F: Approves Union Iron Works/Pier 70 Development Project Heights

Proposition I: Allows Renovation of Playgrounds, Walking Trails, Athletic Fields

Proposition K: Supports Affordable Housing Goals

Proposition L: Advocates for Balanced Transportation Priorities

### VOTE NO

#### Proposition G: 24% Surtax on Transfers of Residential Property

\*Places burdens on residential property owners with no guarantee revenue will go to housing

Proposition H: Prohibits lights and turf at Beach Chalet Soccer Fields



SF Forward is the Political Action Committee (PAC) of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce. SF Forward is comprised of local business owners and residents who support sound economic policy and exceptional quality of life in San Francisco. The PAC is dedicated to ensuring that political reforms strengthen the local economy, improve the business climate, and streamline the operation of government.

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# A MASSIVE NEW HOUSING TAX

will only make the housing crisis worse and hurt  
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Paid for by Stop the Housing Tax, No on G, a coalition of homeowners, renters and real estate organizations. Major funding by National Association of Realtors, California Association of Realtors Issues Mobilization PAC Committee and San Francisco Association of Realtors, 425 Market Street, 26th Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105. FPCC #1593949

**P**rop. G imposes a massive new tax on many homes, including single-family homes with in-law units, sold in San Francisco. This new tax of up to 24% of the total sales price of a home is one of the highest taxes ever levied in San Francisco or any city.<sup>1</sup> Worse, not one cent is obligated to go towards creating more housing — it can all be diverted to other uses.

**Take a closer look** at exactly who gets hurt if Prop. G becomes law:

**New Homebuyers and Renters Lose:** There are zero protections against passing on all the costs to new owners or new tenants.

**Owners Forced to Sell Homes Lose:** Owners forced to sell because they face an illness, job loss or job transfer are not protected from Prop. G.

**Seniors Lose:** Their retirement nest eggs could be scrambled by this massive new tax.

**People Looking for Affordable Rentals Lose:** Prop. G creates an incentive for homeowners to take secondary rentals, known as in-law units, off the market — leading to even higher rents.

**San Franciscans deserve thoughtful solutions to address our housing crisis, not Prop. G.**

Find out why the City Democratic Club, San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, Alliance for Jobs and Sustainable Growth, Noe Valley Democratic Club, the *Bay Area Reporter* and many others say no on Prop. G.

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To learn more, go to: [www.StoptheHousingTax.com](http://www.StoptheHousingTax.com)

<sup>1</sup>Read the full text of Prop. G on the City and County of San Francisco Board of Supervisors' website at [www.sfbos.org/ftp/uploadedfiles/bdsuprvr/committees/materials/rls071014\\_140695.pdf](http://www.sfbos.org/ftp/uploadedfiles/bdsuprvr/committees/materials/rls071014_140695.pdf)

# New Book Celebrates Alamo Square

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early 1900s. Often this entailed developing the side gardens of large estates. Later, usually in the 1920s, multi-story apartment buildings such as the one on the northeast corner of Steiner and Hayes Streets replaced some of the area's grander homes.

In the last 30 years or so, the Alamo Square neighborhood has undergone a slow but steady transformation. Today there is a growing population of middle class families with children, a handsome inventory of largely restored and well-kept historic homes and a park that has become one of the city's main attractions. This is a far cry from a time when, with much of its vintage residential stock in disrepair or condemned, it was unsafe to walk its largely deserted streets at night. Alamo Square did not then have adequate lighting, functioning restrooms, tennis courts or an updated play area.

Since its mid-19th century beginnings, the Alamo Square neighborhood has experienced many demographic transformations: Once mainly the domain of German, English and Irish Catholic immigrants, it evolved, especially after the 1906 earthquake and fire, into a much more cosmopolitan district attracting not only a great influx of Jewish families, but people from throughout Europe. Significant numbers of Russians arrived in the 1920s, and on the



Author Joe Pecora (seated) signed copies of his book on September 14 at the annual Alamo Square Flea Market. It is available at Browser Books at 2195 Fillmore Street.

northern borders there were a few Asian families, primarily Japanese. World War II brought a large migration of African-Americans from the South seeking work in the local shipyards.

The neighborhood reached its nadir in the 1960s when the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, which had already bulldozed large tracts of the Western Addition's vintage properties in the Fillmore District, readied plans to raze the deteriorating structures of the Alamo Square area.

By then, many of the original families had fled to the suburbs, and several of the grander homes they vacated were converted into boarding houses, rest homes, hippie "pads" or institutional uses. On the other hand, its large stock of inexpensive, spacious and ornately crafted fixer-uppers, many of which had splendid views,

attracted preservation-minded gays and a few middle-class families to the area. The new pioneers, finding common cause with an older guard that had never left, banded together in 1963 to form the Alamo Square Neighborhood Association. Protecting and maintaining the park, securing safe streets, and thwarting the Redevelopment Agency's goal of leveling the neighborhood were their prime objectives. Through their efforts, federal loans helped residents bring their dwellings up to city code requirements.

There are many other houses whose stories remain untold. They patiently await another researcher's attention.

“**Storied Houses of Alamo Square**”  
VIDEO | [newfillmore.com](http://newfillmore.com)

# City Considered Leveling the Park for a Playing Field

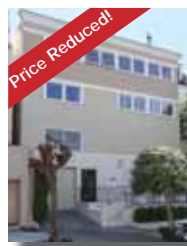
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B.J. Kearney, one of the Alamo Square Neighborhood Association's early presidents, remembers what was probably the greatest threat to the park's integrity since the speculators' claim to ownership a century before. In the 1960s, the city gave serious consideration to a proposal to level the park for a playing field. A fieldhouse was to be constructed at the corner of Fulton and Steiner. Kearney, Peter Witmer and other neighborhood activists enlisted the support of Mayor Joseph Alioto to suppress the plan.

In 1981, Alamo Square was rededicated by Mayor Dianne Feinstein, an occasion that marked the installation of an automatic irrigation system and a number of new plantings, including several cherry trees donated by Sumitomo Bank.

At its highest elevation, Alamo Square is 300 feet above sea level. With a botanically diverse array of trees and shrubs, it covers 12.69 acres and contains several live springs. It features tennis courts, a children's playground and newly opened restrooms. Bordered by blocks of vintage architecture, it reigns as the centerpiece of the Alamo Square Historic District.

Even though the famed vista of Postcard Row on Steiner Street, backdropped by a scenic modern metropolis, attracts daily busloads of tourists, the hilltop park remains a quiet sanctuary for the neighborhood.



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NEIGHBORHOOD HOME SALES								
Single Family Homes	BR	BA	PK	Sq ft	Days	Date	Asking	Sale
3020 Scott St	3	2		2,100	80	8/21/2014	3,000,000	2,600,000
3218 Buchanan St	3	3		n/a	28	8/22/2014	2,995,000	3,400,000
2914 Sacramento St	5	4		3,295	18	8/21/2014	3,658,000	3,750,000
3242 Washington St	6	4		5,610	28	8/27/2014	4,495,000	4,150,000
2529 Union St	3	3		n/a	48	8/25/2014	4,600,000	4,600,000
330 Locust St	5	5		n/a	42	8/26/2014	6,250,000	5,950,000
16 Spruce St	5	5		n/a	10	9/15/2014	9,500,000	9,500,000
Condos / Co-ops / TICs / Lofts								
7 3rd Ave #1	1	1		804	105	8/21/2014	675,000	660,000
1521 Sutter St #5021	1			586	15	9/13/2014	629,000	700,000
7 Cottage Row	1	1		n/a	14	9/12/2014	695,000	884,000
86 Garden St	2	2		1,179	31	8/22/2014	849,000	900,000
1945 Washington St #408	2	2		917	29	8/21/2014	899,000	950,000
2110 California St	2	2		1,281	66	8/19/2014	1,200,000	1,300,000
1865 California St #4	3	2		1,570	76	8/19/2014	1,295,000	1,370,000
2295 Vallejo St #2	2	2		1,075	14	9/15/2014	1,198,000	1,410,000
2003 Lyon St	4	2		2,755	1	8/20/2014	2,400,000	2,450,000

### To G or not to G

A significant slowdown in the number of multi-unit building sales in San Francisco's northern neighborhoods suggests that Proposition G may be having an impact on the local real estate market months before city residents cast their votes.

On the ballot for the upcoming November 4 election, Proposition G is designed to discourage property flipping by levying a substantial tax on homes with two or more units that are resold within five years of purchase. Essentially, the proposed legislation could force home sellers to pay up to 24 percent of the sale price in taxes — a substantial sum in a city where the median single-family home price has hovered around the \$1 million mark for most of this year.

The uncertainty surrounding Proposition G appears already to have cooled investor interest in multi-unit properties. From mid-August to mid-September 2013, eight multi-unit buildings sold in the Cow Hollow, Lower Pacific Heights, Pacific Heights and Presidio Heights neighborhoods, while four went into contract. In that same time period in 2014, only two multi-unit buildings sold and two went into contract.

And since Proposition G applies to single-family homes with in-law units, its effects could be felt beyond the multi-unit property market if voters choose to approve it.

— Data and commentary provided by PATRICK BARBER, president of Pacific Union. Contact him at [patrick.barber@pacunion.com](mailto:patrick.barber@pacunion.com) or call 415-345-3001.

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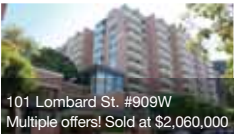
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1645 Pacific #3E  
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101 Lombard St. #909W  
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**Seller representation**




2028-2030 Leavenworth St.  
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