

Summer 2015

newsletter *Arcata*
 HISTORICAL SITES SOCIETY OF



Following in the tradition of our previous president, Julie Vaissade-Elcock, we had an Arcata Chamber of Commerce mixer at the Phillips House Museum on June 4th. Hot dogs, chips, beer and wine were served in honor of the start of the Crabs baseball season.

HSSA Board Members wearing Crabs' Attire sang Take Me Out to the Ballgame with gusto.

We had a good crew. Thank you to Mary, Carolyn, John, Evan, Julie, Jaffa and Alex for working this event. Evan Brown and his friend, Christian came back to take every thing down including the pop up from his Dad's office. Thanks also to Mad River Brewery and Kinetic Koffee for their generous donations.

HSSA News

Jaffa Wahlberg has been our stalwart board member. As vice-president, she conducted meetings for the past year. She also keeps the repairs on the house continuing, manages the wine pours during Arts! Arcata (fund raiser), and serves as a docent, greeting visitors on Sundays. We thank her from the bottom of our hearts.

Carolyn Otis has been HSSA treasurer for the last 20 years. Besides keeping HSSA accounts, she sends out the newsletter and tea invitations. She collects plastic dishware from the 1940s and 1950s. Her fantastic collection has been exhibited at the Phillips House. The exhibit was called "Cut Glastic".



The Historic Alliance Store burned to the ground on May 23, 2015. This building, which dates back to Arcata's earliest days, was originally a place where mule team drivers stopped to adjust their loads on trips between Jacoby's storehouse in downtown Arcata and distant places like Blue Lake and beyond. Many remember it as a neighborhood market with frozen food lockers. Abandoned since it first caught on fire in 2008, the building is now completely lost, along with another bit of Arcata's history. Above the store is pictured in the past, in 2008 and in May 2015.



Changes to our Website

The HSSA website is being reconfigured for use on smart phones. Google notified us in April that all websites must be phone compatible. Andy Alm, who helped transfer the HSSA site to the Drupal platform, is now working on our phone version that will feature three walking tours of Arcata. Perfect for tourists and ourselves. Our website is arcatahistory.org.



The Historical Sites Society of Arcata promotes recognition of the cultural heritage of Arcata, California and its environs, identifies historically and architecturally significant structures and sites within Arcata and encourages their preservation

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Claudia Israel acts as our curator. She accessions the newest items for our collection. She and Carolyn Fernandez created our past calendars, which are still a wonderful resource of the built environment by prominent architects in our community.

Mary McNelis has held every position within the board. She dictates how to have a proper tea. Being from England, she knows what that means. We are thankful for her many years of help and support.

Karole Ely, a past president, made sure we obtained appropriate wallpaper for the living room and painted the floor in a suitable color. She and Jaffa did the floor on their hands and knees. Karole and Carolyn are in the process of reorganizing the HSSA files—a daunting task.

Sherri Eaton is a docent at the Museum and always brings her rug hooking projects with her. She is currently the corresponding secretary and has a delightful sense of humor.

Donna Hauser was our secretary, and her minutes were amazing. She is the Vice-president of AAUW this year and they are very fortunate to have her. We miss her.

Edie Butler, an archivist at Humboldt State’s Humboldt Room, has been instrumental in working on the Ruth Horel Caskey collection and creating appropriate paper trails for HSSA collections. She and Suzanne Guerra are organizing the HSSA photo collection.

Alex Stillman was a founding member of HSSA. In 1972, she worked with the City of Arcata to obtain the Phillips House for a museum showcasing the Horel Collection and artifacts from Arcata. Once again, she will serve as president of HSSA.

During the past two years, the HSSA has provided educational webinars from the California Preservation Foundation. They have been shown at the Arcata and Eureka City Halls so that planners within Humboldt County can become better educated on Historic Preservation issues. The webinars are mini-conferences on a variety of topics and an excellent way to learn without the expense of traveling to workshops. Bob Felter, Alex Stillman and Alyson Hunter, City of Arcata, presented a talk to Coldwell Banker Sellers Realty entitled “Why Keep Original Wood Windows.”

The background information for this talk was the article on page 4 and 5. Karole, Jaffa and Alex (l to r) are pictured at left.

Hooked Rugs and History

Stored at the museum is a collection of hand dyed fabrics by **Sandra Fletcher**. Sandra was a rug-hooking teacher who taught many how to rug hook pillows and rugs.

At the top of stairs in the museum, is an example of her work (pictured at right), which depicts the Phillips House. Sandra has been published in national books and magazines and was an amazing teacher. Her students are still hooking and doing fantastic work; they miss her guidance especially in color schemes and attention to detail on their projects. The Phillips House Museum will have a Rug Hooking show to honor Sandra and her students' current work. A series of classes will be offered to learn this traditional craft. Originally rugs were constructed from old clothing for use in front of the fire.



As you may have heard, Arcata recently applied for and received recognition as a Walk Friendly Community. If this makes you want to take a walk, there are several guided architectural tours on our website. Another option is the art-related walks offered by Citizens Working to Beautify Arcata. Humboldt State University sculpture students created the first sculptures for the Arcata Walk in 2005. In competition, the participating students were juried by HSU with each student receiving a stipend for materials such as bronze and steel. The people of Arcata honored the students' work in mid-May before graduation by walking the tour of all the downtown sculptures. Arcata Foundation, local businesses, City of Arcata participated in funding this project. Details on two walks, one focusing on sculpture and one on our local murals can be found at their website, <http://arcatawalks.com/>



You can get this newsletter in full color by email. Save some trees and contact Alex at alexnacv@gmail.com to let her know you would like to subscribe by email.

WHY KEEP ORIGINAL WOOD WINDOWS

By Bob Felter and the Arcata Historic Landmark Committee 2013



Originally the double hung windows in an old house sealed out the weather and glided with an effortless pull of the hand. One hundred years later, they might rattle, be stuck closed, leak air through poor mating and loose joints and be a struggle to open. Add a window salesman's boasts to cure these ills and save energy, and original windows are disappearing at an alarming rate.

Windows are the "eyes" to the house. Saving original windows preserves the home's character and adds value to old homes. They reflect the architect's design intent of the building, and can be examples of exceptional craftsmanship and design. Made of durable and decay resistant old growth wood they're made of materials that last. Historic glass adds another level of charm. Double hung windows were first invented in the 1400's as air conditioning systems and are still practical today.

Wood windows are built to be repaired. Any part can be removed and remade. Properly maintained, a window made of old growth wood will last indefinitely. There's no reason why a 100 year-old window will not last another 100 years. A deteriorated window is a product of neglect and disregard for the building. Generally, if a wood sash is less than 50% deteriorated, it is probably cost effective to rebuild it. If more, a replacement sash made of old growth wood is worth the cost. Of course, maintaining glazing putty is critical in preventing moisture from invading mortise-and-tenon joints where dampness encourages rot. Maintaining the glazing is a relatively simple thing to do.

The first step in improving an old window's performance is to remove the sash and clean up the parts. In double hung windows, paint drips have often hardened between the "meeting rails", the horizontal rails where the two sash mate. No matter how hard the sash locks are turned, air creeps through. Another step is to refasten the stops snugly so less air gets past. Sash cords are simple to replace, weights can be rebalanced and other offending blobs of paint can be easily scraped off using a heat gun. While caution and education is recommended, a sash can be easily stripped of lead paint where that is a concern.

A successive step is to weatherstrip the window. Weather stripping improves the ability of an existing window to remain airtight by sealing gaps. There are numerous methods and products available, including vinyl bead, felt or plastic strips, spring metal and compressible foam shapes. This can be done by homeowners with some savvy and the right tools, or professionals. Weatherstripping can be accomplished even more easily, though probably less permanently by homeowners with self stick V-strip vinyl.

Replacement windows are often billed as "maintenance free". There's no such thing as maintenance free. Aluminum windows conduct heat and cold so have become obsolete except for commercial applications, so the latest incarnation of such a window is vinyl. Vinyl, a petroleum product, cannot be repaired when damaged, nor painted with any method that will hold up. It is one of the most toxic materials manufactured today, becomes brittle with age, and discolors with time. The first attempts in vinyl window manufacture came in two colors, brown to mix with the then popular "bronze" aluminum windows, and white. The brown color absorbed heat and warped, costing manufacturers large headaches and were quickly eliminated. While white, or almond colors are sold in huge quantities, they still have a questionable lifespan.

Vinyl windows have now been around for about 30 years. No one knows if they'll last 100, but many of these windows installed since the 1980's are failing at an alarming rate. Vinyl expands more than twice that of wood, and seven times the rate of glass, which can cause the seal to fail. In addition, vinyl begins to soften at 165 degrees Fahrenheit, a temperature easily reached between a window and drapes. It has been said of such replacement windows, "They call them replacement windows because you replace them over and over again".

An old wood window, paired with an exterior or interior storm window can easily outperform a new insulated glass unit. A cellular shade can do the same thing. By replacing single glazing with insulated windows, energy savings are seldom realized. Depending on which study, the payback on replacement windows is anywhere from 30 to 250 years. Almost every retrofit measure, from weatherstripping, installing storm windows, or cellular shades offers a better return on investment than outright window replacement. Interior surface films are another option that help to some degree.

Storm windows can be built to open, providing ventilation and allowing egress. An exterior storm window will reduce maintenance on the primary window and be simpler to maintain. Interior storm windows can be easier to remove on higher windows. At least one local glass company is specializing in this trade.

If retrofitting glass in an old sash is something you feel must be done, ¼" laminated glass has better UV protection than low-e coatings. It approaches the same thermal capabilities of insulated glass, is more soundproof, is safer and costs less. It may also be possible to laminate historic glass to allow the energy and noise benefits while maintaining an authentic finish. Single pane, low-e glass is also available.

Besides tackling windows, the first intervention a homeowner should take is air sealing floors, walls and ceilings, adding insulation and upgrading the heating systems. Sash weight pockets are much less of a heat loss problem when a house is properly caulked.

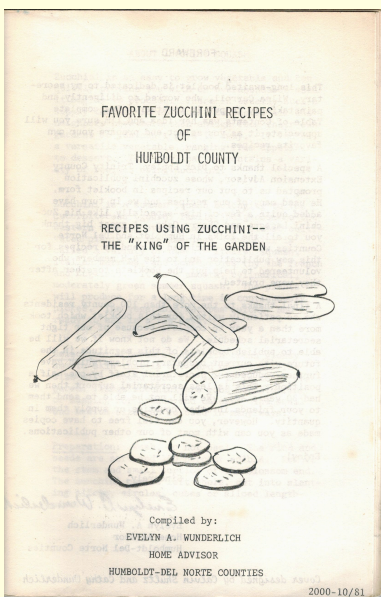
Replacing windows is the antithesis of "green". The embodied energy of old windows is hauled to a landfill, while the manufacture and transport of new units consumes resources. In addition, hiring local labor to improve windows keeps dollars in the local economy rather than sending those dollars to a distant city. Download full report: www.preservationnation.org/saving-windows-saving-money

Bob Felter is a local contractor who is also an extraordinary volunteer at HSSA—making sure our fixes and changes are beautiful and historically accurate.



Zucchini: Still the King

This cookbook, published by the County Home Advisor in 1981, reminded us just how easy it is to grow zucchini and how hard it can be to find ways to use it up.



Here's a Sample

Basic Zucchini Bread or Cookies

3 eggs	2 tsp. vanilla
1 c. oil	1 tsp. salt
3 c. flour	1 tsp. baking soda
2 c. sugar	¼ tsp. baking powder
2 c. grated peeled zucchini	1 tsp. cinnamon
	1 c. chopped walnuts

Optional Add ins: 2 c. nuts, 1 c. raisins, 1 c. strained, crushed pineapple (add more 1 tsp. more baking soda) or 1 c. coconut.

Beat eggs until light and foamy. Add oil, sugar, zucchini and vanilla. Mix lightly, but well. Mix flour, soda, baking powder, salt and cinnamon in bowl. Add flour mixture to first mixture and blend add nuts. Bake in two greased 9x5 loaf pans at 325 for 1 hour or until tests done. Cool in pans 10 minutes. Cookies bake at 350 for 10 minutes. Remove from cookie sheet at once and cool on rack.

SPRING 2009



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