

LANDMARKS NEWS

Annemarie Hastings, *Editor*

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The Vintage High School Chamber Singers delighted guests in the Methodist Church for 1998 Holiday Candlelight Tour. Photo courtesy: NCL.



NCL'S *Holiday* Candlelight Tour:

A Retrospective

by Rebecca Yerger,
NCL Board Member

The Napa County Landmarks (NCL) annual Holiday Candlelight Tour will be returning in its full glory in

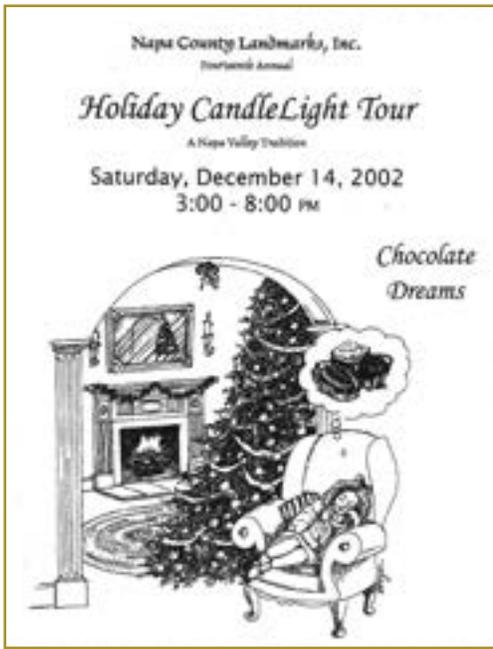
2022. However, as we are waiting for its pandemic-created hiatus to end, now seems to be the perfect time to look back at its 32-year long history and tradition.

Planting the seed for the idea for NCL's Holiday Candlelight Tour (HCT) was the circa-1980s candlelight, or evening, walking tours of Charleston, South Carolina's historic districts. Those tours were enjoyed by the then-NCL president John Whitridge and his wife, Jean. Soon thereafter, a Napa County Landmarks board discussion followed, with approval, and a board member volunteered to chair the event. With that, the concept became a reality.

Although, from its beginning, the HCT was more than a simple evening-time walking tour. It was an event offering access inside local historic homes and properties accompanied with live entertainment, period-attired docents, receptions, and seasonal treats, including chocolate-themed receptions popular in the late 1990s and early 2000s. In 1995, NCL expanded the event to include pre-event activities, including a face painting and cookie decorating party for youths and entry in Napa's holiday parade. All these activities and the HCT were made possible by the large and enthusiastic NCL volunteer base.

An equally important aspect of the HCT was to honor preservation-minded property owners and their historic properties along with an opportunity to showcase NCL and its mission within the joyous and festive backdrop of the holiday season. On the clear and starry evening of December 10, 1989, that goal was accomplished in Yountville with the debut of the first annual Holiday Candlelight Tour!

Since then, all of the tours have been located within various historic neighborhoods of Napa. To date, HCT has showcased over 160 historic properties. Ernie Schlobohm, NCL president, responsible for organizing and managing the HCT for the past 10+ years



Top: 2002 Holiday Candlelight Tour program cover. Courtesy: NCL.

Bottom, left: 1914 Model T in front of HCT home, 1998; Bottom, right: NCL volunteers helping with the 1999 HCT reception. Photos courtesy: NCL.

said, “Each year, our goal is to feature a different neighborhood to offer a new cross-section of Napa’s historic properties.” Dan Cutright, NCL treasurer, has attended all but the first holiday tour and became an NCL member because of it. He added, “I appreciate the effort Ernie and NCL make to change neighborhoods and architectural styles each year to add variety to the annual event.” Some of these changes of venue have showcased specific architectural themes, including the Mid-Century Modern style of Monticello Park in 2010 and the nod to the Craftsman style in 2011.

While the event format and mission have remained much the same, some alterations have been made over time—the most notable being the start time change from the evening to the afternoon. Regarding this Cutright said, “I always enjoyed the ambiance created by holding the Candlelight Tour during the evening, but I can understand the reasons for holding it during the day due to safety reasons. The sidewalks alone in the Old Town neighborhoods are a definite safety issue, even during the day!”

Nancy S. Brennan, a long-time NCL member, 1989 HCT publicity chair and enthusiastic HCT fan, spoke of her recollections of the annual event: “They’ve all been so well done!” Brennan continued, “The tours are really fun and informative. They have that ‘down-home’ feeling of being warm, comfortable and welcoming.” She added, “I’m so glad to learn the HCT will be returning in 2022 as it is a much anticipated and greatly appreciated holiday tradition within my family.”

Over its 32 years of existence, Napa County Landmarks’ Holiday Candlelight Tour has also helped to create countless memories for all who have attended or participated in the annual event. ■

What are your memories and thoughts? Do you live in an historic home built before 1971? Send us photos of your holiday-decorated home to info@napacountylandmarks.org and we’ll publish them on our Napa County Landmarks website!

**Looking forward to seeing you all next December at the
2022 Holiday Candlelight Tour**



From the desk of Ernie Schlobohm, NCL Board President

December Greetings



Looking Back—And Forward

Here we are in December, with another “interesting” year under our belts. While 2021 didn’t take us entirely back to normal, it did provide us with a bit more freedom and promise as we vaxed up and held onto our masks!

In this year-end newsletter, we’ll tell you how Napa County Landmarks (NCL) continued to exude influence and positively affect our community. You’ll read that our Preservation & Advocacy Committee continued to work on many high-profile landmarks and make good impact! And you’ll take a walk down memory lane with a retrospective on NCL’s annual Holiday Candlelight Tour—a much beloved event—with a promise of its return in 2022.

NCL was fortunate to add two new members to its Board of Directors in 2021: Rebecca Yerger and Jonathan Franz both bring expertise, passion and dedication to historic architecture and the culture of preservation to our organization. You can read more about them here:

<https://napacountylandmarks.org/staff-board-members-2/>.

And looking ahead to the new year, NCL has some big news to share: We will be moving our offices into

the Native Sons of the Golden West Building in downtown Napa this month! This historic

gem on Coombs at First Street will aptly reflect our mission of appreciation and preservation of such culturally important structures and we’re eager to share our new home with our membership. You’ll learn more about the history of this beautiful building by reading on. We look forward to sharing more exciting developments with you soon.

Lastly, as we reflect on this season of giving and what is important to us as individuals, family members and citizens of our uniquely special community, I hope you’ll remember Napa County Landmarks and our dependence upon you, our members, and followers, to continue our work to preserve our past and impact our future. Your support, whether it be by membership, donations, or participation in our events, is immensely appreciated.

Wishing you and yours a safe and joyful holiday season,

Ernie



Support Napa County Landmarks!

You can support Napa County Landmarks by becoming a member, making a donation, or by becoming a volunteer. As a non-profit organization, we rely on donations and annual membership dues to fulfill our mission. Join Napa County Landmarks today and start enjoying the benefits of membership, including our quarterly newsletter, invites to members-only events and discounted advance tickets to public events and tours. Volunteers are also essential!

Membership categories are: \$36 Individual, \$50 Family, \$100 Supporter, \$250 Sponsor, \$500 Corporate and \$1,000 Benefactor. All donations are tax deductible. For more information go to the Napa County Landmarks website, <https://napacountylandmarks.org/become-a-member/>, contact us at info@napacountylandmarks.org or call our office at 707-255-1836.

Your membership is vital in preserving our architectural heritage.



A New Home for NCL! Native Sons of the Golden West Building

by John Sensenbaugh,
NCL Board Member

This month, Napa County Landmarks is moving its offices to the prominent Napa Native Sons of the Golden West building located at 937 Coombs Street at First, in downtown Napa.

With that, I had an opportunity recently to sit down and talk with two Napa natives and long-time members of the local chapter (or parlor as they call it in their parlance) of the Native Sons of the Golden West (N.S.G.W.). Phil Wong, the current Recording Secretary of the local parlor and past Grand President for all the parlors within the state, and George Adams, the current 2nd Vice-President for the statewide organization, each granted me some of their time. These two men have considerable knowledge about the history of this grand old building, as well as their local parlor where they have been members for many years.

The first parlor of the N.S.G.W. was founded in San Francisco in 1875. Ten years later, Napa became the sixty-second parlor in the state. One of the initial prominent founders was Frank L. Coombs, whose father, Nathan, laid out the original City of Napa street grid. Mr. Frank Coombs had a long and impressive resume as a local practicing attorney, Napa County district attorney, and U.S. House Representative in Washington D.C.

Over the next several years, the local parlor grew in membership, and in the mid-1890s, a plot of land was purchased for the purpose of constructing a new building to conduct their business. The organization already owned a tract of bare land out in the Coombsville part of the county but decided to sell that parcel and buy a suitable lot in the center of the



city. They purchased the location where the current building stands, though a larger lot for a similar price was available kitty corner from the lot chosen. This lot was rejected, however, because the members realized it would also entail cutting down the weeds that grew profusely there.

In 1898, the Native Sons Hall Association was formed with the express purpose to raise money for the building's construction. Shares were offered at \$100 per share and within a few years, 500 shares were sold. A local architect by the name of William H. Corlett was retained to design the new home for Napa's N.S.G.W. parlor. Over the years, Mr. Corlett also designed other Napa landmarks such as the Noyes Mansion, Migliavacca Mansion, Manasse House, Franklin Station Post Office, Alexandria Hotel, and the Fagiani Building.

Construction on the building began in 1913 and the dedication for the completed building was in 1914. Possibly because of the devastation that was realized by the 1906 San Francisco earthquake, this new structure was the first within the City of Napa to employ a steel structure framework with a brick exterior façade. The local contractor employed San Francisco union iron workers, but early on they threatened to walk off on strike unless they were paid the higher wage that they were entitled to earn in San Francisco. The local contractor quickly agreed to their demands, thereby averting any interruption of their work. The ceremonial first rivet was installed by Charlie Otterson, who was a parlor member and the Napa City Fire Chief.

The storefronts on the lower level were always a part of the original design, as they were seen as a continuous, important source of revenue to finance the building's maintenance and repairs, as well as for philanthropic community purposes.

The next newsletter installment on the history of this iconic Napa landmark will detail some of the changes made since its completion, to the present day. It will also highlight the important art that's been acquired over the years, displayed within the many rooms, as well as the many ways the local parlor shares its space with other groups within the City of Napa.

Opposite: Current view of NSGW building as seen from First Street.

Above: Historical photos of the construction and completion of the Native Sons of the Golden West building in 1913–1914. Lower two photos, circa 1920s. All photos courtesy: NCL.

The NCL 6th Annual Golf Tournament was a huge SUCCESS!

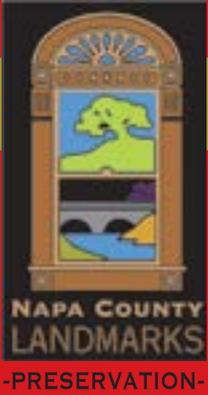
It was a perfect day for golf!

Lunch was provided for the golfers, as well as prizes for winners, gifts for sponsors, and access to a silent auction followed by a tri-tip dinner! The event raised over \$21,000 in gross revenue for NCL.

Thank you golfers, see you next year!

Shown here are NCL Board Member Dan Cutright's foursome golf team, left to right: Dan, Napa City Mayor Scott Sedgley, Tom Fuller of Fuller & Sanders Communications, and Yountville Town Mayor John Dunbar.





Behind the Bio

by Annemarie Hastings

NCL Board Secretary, Shari Kamimori

Tell me about your first impression of NCL.

When I first encountered NCL seven years ago, I was invited to join the Preservation Action Committee (PAC) by a colleague of mine. The more I learned about the organization, their Mission and getting to know the board members, the more I wanted to get involved. I began volunteering at fundraising events, joining in on advocacy campaigns and in 2016, I was nominated to the Board and became Secretary when Juliana Inman retired in 2018.



What's your first memory of something related to appreciation and preservation of historic buildings?

When the Architectural, Engineering, Construction (AEC) industry began to embrace the innovative technology of 3D laser scanning, my company jumped on board. It was then that I learned how 3D laser scanning technology was being used to document cultural heritage sites all around the world, for conservation and educational purposes, and most importantly, to digitally preserve historic buildings at risk of destruction and/or deterioration.

This became most apparent to me when the South Napa Earthquake of 2014 damaged and destroyed many of Napa's historic buildings. Heartbroken from the devastation caused by the Earthquake, I wanted to bring awareness to the public regarding the importance of prevention and protection strategies to ensure the preservation of historic structures in the event of natural disasters through the publication of an article titled "3D Laser Scanning Technology—Key in Preserving Historic Structures After South Napa Earthquake."

What do you wish other people knew about NCL?

That we do more than just sponsor and organize the Porchfest and the Holiday Candlelight Tour!

What surprised you most about working with NCL?

The longer I am involved with NCL, the more I discover about the history of the organization and the members who contributed to its founding, evolution, and continuous development, and I am thoroughly impressed!

Tell me about where you grew up and a little about your family.

I grew up and graduated from college in the heart of Silicon Valley. Having studied Architecture, I was fascinated with historic buildings and landscapes and dreamed of some day traveling around Europe to experience it first-hand. So, at the age of 25, I left on a 3-month trip to Europe, which turned into a 15-year life journey! During this time, my professional career in digital design took off, allowing me to travel all over Europe. I eventually settled in Germany, got married, and had two beautiful children. In 2003 we returned back to California where the kids grew up, graduated from college and I started my own business.

We thought that NCL followers would be interested in knowing more about the accomplished professionals that make up the Napa County Landmarks Board of Directors. With that, we're profiling members in our quarterly newsletter and for this edition of *Landmarks News*, I had the opportunity and pleasure to interview Shari Kamimori, NCL's Board Secretary.

Who have been your strongest influences in life? What might someone be surprised to know about you?

While attending college, I became a volunteer nurse to an in-home care patient, diagnosed with terminal ALS (Lou Gehrig’s Disease) and 2-3 years to live. His name was Charlie Wedemeyer and he was, at the time of his diagnosis, a math teacher and head coach of the Los Gatos football team. On a ventilator at home, he continued to coach, strapped into a golf cart on the football field with his wife Lucy by his side reading his lips to translate the plays to the team, while stand-by nurses (like myself) were tending to him and the machines keeping him alive! The team went on to win the CCS championship, and his compelling story became a book and movie for television starring Michael Nouri (as Charlie) and Pam Dawber (as Lucy). After retiring football, Charlie traveled around the world as an inspirational speaker, spreading hope and encouragement, despite his illness. Through his will to live and positive attitude, Charlie defied the odds and survived 32 years!

What are you happiest doing when you’re not working for NCL?

Two of my most favorite things to do when not working are traveling and hiking. I love experiencing new places while doing both! In 2018, I was fortunate enough to combine my two passions (three if you include historic preservation) by hiking along the historical Nakasendo Trail in Japan, the old mountain route that connects Tokyo and Kyoto during the Edo Period (1603-1867), while encountering post-towns that have been restored and preserved along the way.

What is your life philosophy?

One day at a time . . .

Where do you hope to see NCL in 5 years?

I would like to see NCL grow with a membership and board that embraces relevant social issues as they pertain to historic preservation, encouraging diversity and awareness of the importance of preserving cultural heritage for future generations. ■



Shari hiking with her daughter, Emily, in Kings Canyon. Photo courtesy: Shari Kamimori.

Preservation & Advocacy Committee *Highlights of 2021*

by Kara Brunzell, NCL Board Member

THE PRESERVATION & ADVOCACY COMMITTEE (FORMERLY PRESERVATION ACTION COMMITTEE) IS THE ON-THE-GROUND ADVOCACY WING OF NAPA COUNTY LANDMARKS, RESPONSIBLE FOR MONITORING THREATS TO HISTORIC RESOURCES AND UNDERTAKING PROJECTS THAT PROMOTE PRESERVATION. WE MEET AS NEEDED, USUALLY MONTHLY, TO WORK ON THE MOST URGENT LOCAL PRESERVATION ISSUES.

FOLLOWING ARE SOME BRIEF HIGHLIGHTS RECAPPING A BUSY YEAR FOR THE COMMITTEE.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES REHABILITATION

After more than five years of advocacy for preservation of the “crescent” lawn and historic Napa Infirmary buildings that encircle it, the property sale is final! Heritage Housing Partners of Pasadena will be implementing a plan that develops housing at the back of the site while preserving the historic buildings and open space. It’s going to be exciting to watch this win-win project move forward and we hope this will be a model for historic preservation and housing advocates to work together in the future.



Right: *Health and Human Services Campus (HHS).*
Photo courtesy: NCL; Bottom: *HHS circa 1990s.*
Photo courtesy: Kara Brunzell.



RUTHERFORD DEPOT

Members of our committee have attended meetings of the Rutherford Dust Society and met with Wine Train management to advocate for rehabilitation of this sadly distressed historic gem. We wish we could report a big victory here, but so far there is no sign of imminent rehabilitation. We are urging the powers that be at the Wine Train to stabilize the roof sooner rather than later so the building will not be further damaged over the winter and hope a full restoration will be planned soon.



Left: Rutherford Depot, 1977;
Right: The Depot as it stands today.
Photos courtesy: NCL.



Left: Original post office building in the 1930s. Photo courtesy: North Bay Business Journal; Right: Outdoor glass lanterns after the 2014 Napa earthquake; Photo courtesy: NCL. Bottom left: NCL volunteers who spent their time recently wrapping the lanterns for protection. Photo courtesy: NCL.



FRANKLIN STATION POST OFFICE

Plans to rehabilitate the building and reuse as a hotel stalled during the pandemic. With the building vacant, NCL Board President and P & A Committee member, Ernie Schlobohm, organized a group of volunteers in early October to securely wrap the historic lanterns to protect them from weather and vandalism. It was fun for us to get off zoom and get our hands dirty on a real-world project! Read more at:

<https://napacountylandmarks.org/preserving-the-past/>

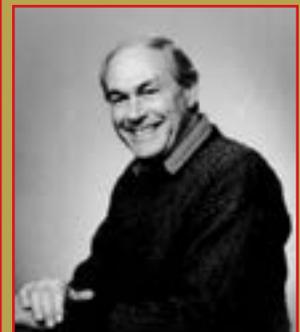
BOB KEENAN PROJECT

Committee members Rebecca Yerger and Valerie Keenan have embarked on a project to document the legacy of Valerie's father, Bob Keenan, an architect who designed many local residential and commercial buildings during the 1960s and 1970s. It's a major project that has just gotten underway, and it's exciting to see Mid-Century Modern architecture recognized!

Apartment building in downtown Napa, designed by Bob Keenan. Photo courtesy: NCL.



Bob Keenan portrait. Photo courtesy: villamuraldoblog.com.



Mid-Century Modern Architecture: What to Know "Function Over Form"

by Rebecca Yerger,
NCL Board Member

past worthy of celebration and preservation.

Regarding its place in history, the Mid-Century Modern (MCM) movement era was roughly from the 1940s into the 1970s. The term Mid-Century Modern, or MCM, used sporadically in the 1950s and onward, did not gain widespread recognition until the 1980s. Author Cara Greenwood is credited with popularizing its architecture, referring to MCM's design movement in her book, *Mid-Century Modern: Furniture of the 1950s*, published in 1984. Today, Mid-Century Modern is recognized by scholars and in museums worldwide as an influential design movement.

The key MCM characteristics are clean, simple lines with minimal, if any, decorative embellishments, using and showcasing modern building materials, primarily concrete, glass and steel, in their raw form. The overall design mantra is: Function over form! These characteristics and general design philosophy arose in rebellion to past architectural aesthetics and to the brutality of the era, specifically World War II, with its profound destruction and loss of life. MCM was envisioned as abandonment of that horrible time, with a look forward toward a more hopeful future. These ideals apply to every aspect of MCM building architecture, inside and out, including its furnishings and outdoor spaces.

As with any architectural style and its design principles, there exists variations of the primary aesthetic; however, they still convey the overall sensibilities and philosophical foundation of that style, including MCM. Whether concrete or wood exterior, flat-top or pitched roofed, all can be representative of the Mid-Century Modern movement, embracing the "function over form" philosophy so different from past design aesthetics. ■

As featured before in previous newsletters, a popular, trending architectural design today is actually an historic style: Mid-Century Modern. Its geometrical, sleek aesthetics and principles are juxtaposed to the highly ornate and complex architectural designs typically associated with historic preservation, such as Italianate and Queen Ann. Mid-Century Modern, at the 70-year mark, is an architectural style from the

The Mid-Century Modern Design Principles include:

- 1) The structure must integrate with the environment and surrounding buildings through the use of colors, tones, materials and form.
- 2) The building's materials should be featured not hidden, showcased in its raw form to produce an immediate visual understanding of its aesthetic significance.
- 3) The building's function is more important than its form to promote the design of practical, economical, and functional spaces free of unnecessary and distracting ornamentation.
- 4) The use of textures and colors taken from the environment used in the interior to create a cohesive, seamless transition between the exterior and interior and to lend a sense of open space.
- 5) There is incorporation of simple, even curved, lines versus bric-a-brac and complexity common in the classically inspired Victorian, Edwardian and Baroque styles; a building's artistic appeal must depend more on its entire structure rather than any one busy decoration.



Top: Bel Aire Bowl Poster.
Photo courtesy: Napa Valley Register.

Bottom: Home in Monticello Park district of Napa. Photo courtesy: NCL

Make Napa County Landmarks Your Legacy

The Giving Season is upon us, and with that, we'd like to remind you of the many ways you can choose to benefit the mission of historic preservation in Napa County through charitable donation and planned giving.

Historic places matter and your commitment and passion help preserve the storied fabric of Napa County. Help us continue our mission with your gift.



LEGACY GIVING

Protect the past by remembering Napa County Landmarks in your will or estate plan. Regardless of where you are in planning your estate, making a bequest is simple with any of the options below.

Bequests

A popular legacy gift to support the preservation work of Napa County Landmarks is a bequest in your will or trust. Bequests provide critical support to future preservation efforts. You may gift of a specific dollar amount or a percentage of your estate in your will.

Real Estate

Donate residential, commercial or undeveloped real estate and provide support for our County's preservation efforts while saving on taxes and reducing responsibilities associated with property ownership. You can donate your property outright, or you can give the title of your home now and retain the right to live there for your lifetime.

Gifts of Securities

Donating appreciated securities or mutual funds can be a tax-wise and simple way to help support your passion for saving historic places in Napa County.



WE APPRECIATE EACH AND EVERY GIFT!

Have you already included Napa County Landmarks in your estate plans? Let us know so that we can honor your commitment to preservation.

If you are interested in making a gift, please contact NCL President, Ernie Schlobohm directly at 707-255-1836.