

# SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS

## NEWSLETTER OF THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS

VOLUME 25, NUMBER 2

Fall 2022

### Fall Season Brings NCCSAH East Bay Julia Morgan Tour

**T**he NCCSAH has planned a spectacular fall 2022 lecture and tour focusing on the life and architecture of Julia Morgan led by Victoria Kastner, the historian at Hearst Castle for thirty years. The lecture/tour will be Thursday, September 29 from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Some will recall that Ms. Kastner led the extraordinary NCCSAH tour of Hearst Castle in November 2015. Her best-selling, recently published book, *Julia Morgan: An Intimate Biography of the Trailblazing Architect*, will be available for sale at the tour. The first printing of the book sold out in two weeks. (See review, page 2.)

We will begin the program with coffee and pastries, at 9:00 am at the 1930 Berkeley City Club (originally known as the Women's City Club), 2315 Durant Avenue. Victoria Kastner's talk on Julia Morgan's life and architecture will begin at 9:30am. At 10:30, Ms. Kastner will lead a tour of the City Club, a building of great beauty and dignity, often referred to as "Julia's Second Castle." A short walk takes us to the Hearst Memorial Gymnasium on the UC campus, a 1927 collaboration of Morgan (who designed the swimming pool, which we will see) and Bernard Maybeck.



Photo: Chronicle Books

Lunch will be on your own from 12:15 to 1:15 pm (there are many lunch options in the area).

We return to the City Club by 1:15, where a charter bus will take us to the 1908 St. John's Presbyterian Church (now the Berkeley Playhouse), a landmark in the Craftsman Style by Julia Morgan. Thereafter, we'll bus to the nearby privately owned 1908 Goddard House to tour the painstakingly restored interior with beautiful period furnishings and light fixtures.

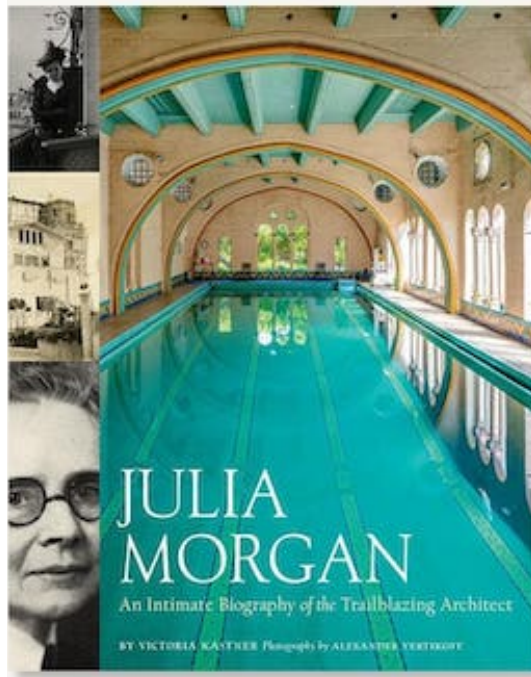
The tour will end at about 4:30 pm at the what may be Morgan's most profound and sublime building, the Chapel of the Chimes, in Oakland. The bus brings us back to the City Club.

Lecture/tour fee is \$100 for NCCSAH members/\$130 for non-members (includes annual NCCSAH membership).

## Book Review

### Victoria Kastner, *Julia Morgan: An Intimate Biography of the Trailblazing Architect* (Chronicle Books, 2021)

Following Julia Morgan's death in 1957 at the age of eighty-five—or rather, following the effective end of her career in the late 1940s, as her health declined greatly—there was little public interest in her for many years. Sara Holmes Boutelle's groundbreaking book of 1988, *Julia Morgan, Architect*, was an eye-opener, and since then the interest in the architect has grown phenomenally. Innumerable articles and sections of books on her have appeared, both in the popular and the scholarly press, and additional books devoted to her have been published.



There was a revised edition of Boutelle's book in 1995; in 2012 appeared Mark Wilson's *Julia Morgan: Architect of Beauty*, which was mostly a picture book. Victoria Kastner's book, reviewed here, came out last year; and this year there is another new book, *Julia Morgan: The Road to San Simeon*, an anthology of essays edited by Gordon Fuglie.

The contents of these publications inevitably repeat information on Morgan's prolific output of works and the basic outlines of her life, although in each case a particular focus or point of view may be emphasized. The distinctive focus of Kastner's book is indicated in its subtitle, *An Intimate Biography*. She has studied the documentation of Morgan's life more closely than probably anyone else—including the vast archive of Morgan material at California State University at San Luis Obispo.

The book is filled with information and quotations from myriad sources: diaries, official documents, newspaper and journal stories, and a huge number of letters—letters between Julia and her family members, her clients, her friends, and others, as

well as correspondence by other people relating to Morgan in one way or another. Much of this material is about Julia's personal life and character—and this is what makes the book an "intimate" study. Even when previous Morgan historians have had access to such material, they apparently considered it to be trivial or irrelevant to the architecture. In Kastner's book, however, even non-architectural information can shed light on many aspects of Morgan's career.

In the chapters on Julia's education at U. C. Berkeley and then at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, Kastner provides the standard information about her work and educational challenges, but in addition quotes from numerous letters and diary entries that are illuminating in various ways. In Paris Julia wrote many letters to family members and friends describing the city, the weather, her living arrangements and other mundane matters, and one remarkable aspect of them is their detailed and observant descriptions of places and individual people—as if she were a budding novelist.

Julia's genuine sympathy for other people was manifest in her remarkable generosity to her employees and friends—as seen throughout Kastner's book. This may help explain one of the unusual aspects of Morgan's architectural practice: her very sympathetic relationships and rapport with clients, in which she was nearly always willing to accede to their wishes regarding the architectural styles of their buildings and other elements of the designs—an aspect of her work which, however, has been criticized by some, as not allowing her to develop a distinctive style of her own.

—Photo above: Chronicle Books  
Review continues on page 8

# The Other Women: Julia Morgan was not Alone

*Inge Horton's interest in the subject of women architects is the result of years of research that began, in 1987, with the thought that Julia Morgan—while the most renowned—may not have been the sole woman architect to have practiced in the Bay Area. The product of that interest and many years of research is Early Women Architects of the San Francisco Bay Area, published in 2010, by McFarland & Co. To mark NCCSAH's special event on Julia Morgan in the East Bay, Inge generously agreed to provide the following profiles of women who practiced architecture locally, in the period 1890-1951.*

## Grace Jewett (1876-1946)

Grace Jewett moved from the East Coast to San Francisco in 1908, probably attracted by job opportunities during the rebuilding of San Francisco after the 1906 Earthquake and Fire. She had acquired architectural skills during her studies at the Pratt Institute and the Washington Atelier and at various jobs as a draftsman in architectural offices in Washington and Baltimore.

Due to her experience and skills, she had no difficulties in finding a job in the San Francisco city architect's office, which, in turn, helped her to qualify for a State of California architectural license (1911). The license enabled her to open her own office, initially with a partner, Italo Zanolini, and design buildings exceeding the scope of single-family houses. Her works, rather unusual for women, included multi-story apartment houses, a warehouse, a factory, a women's club, a parking garage and a store. One of her buildings, the Regina Apartments (today Samantha; photo on the right), drew high praise in the press.

No buildings by Grace Jewett have been found after 1923, in San Francisco or Los Angeles, where she had relocated. She maintained her architectural license, however, until 1945, when she requested to be added to the list of retirees.

In 1942, she and her lifelong partner, Erskine Hathaway, moved to Oakland. Grace was partially crippled and, not wishing to be "helpless", chose to commit suicide, April 12, 1946. The news of her death appeared on the front page of the *Oakland Tribune*, but there was no acknowledgement of her impressive work as a pioneering woman architect.

## Gertrude Comfort Morrow (1888-1983)

Gertrude Comfort grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area and received a Bachelor of Science degree in Architecture, with honors, from the University of California in 1913 and a Master's degree a year later.

Gertrude worked for the well-known architect Henry Gutterson, and while he served in World War I, she took on the role of supervising architect for St. Francis Wood. Over time, she designed about ten houses in that San Francisco residential park. Upon earning her State of California registration, she opened her own office in downtown San Francisco. In 1920, she married architect Irving Morrow and took time from her career to give birth to and raise their daughter.

Morrow dissolved his partnership with William Garren, in 1925, and formed a new firm with his wife. Morrow and Morrow was a relatively small office, but they were able to attract interesting projects. Among their most important is the architectural design of Golden Gate Bridge. Although only Irving Morrow is named in the con-



*Apartment house at 972 Bush St., San Francisco. Architect Grace Jewett, 1913. Photo: Inge Horton*



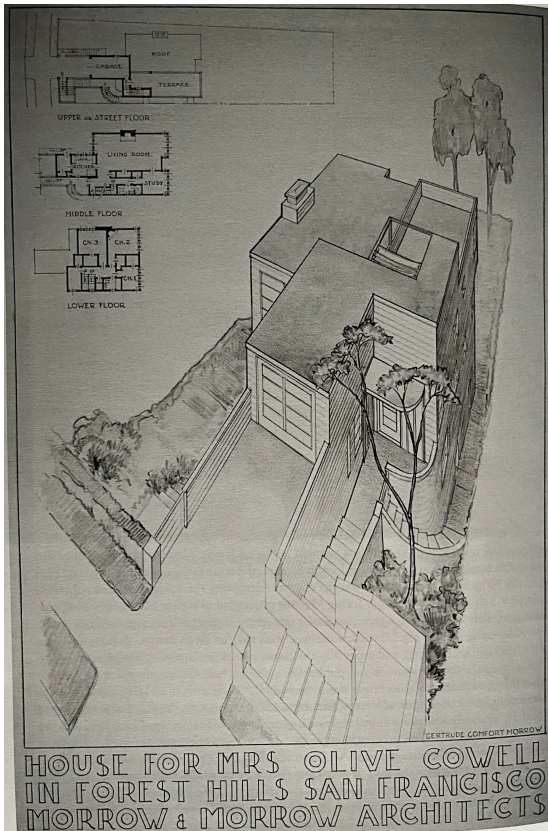


Photo: UC Environmental Design Archives/reproduced from Inge Horton, *Early Women Architects of the San Francisco Bay Area*

tract, early documents also show Gertrude's name. As partners in business and in life, they surely would have exchanged ideas on the project, and it is difficult to separate out the contributions each may have made.

In 1942, the Morrows closed their San Francisco office and worked from their home in Oakland. However, during the war, there was little private construction going on. Gertrude was assigned to work for the U.S. Navy and developed several new building types.

Irving Morrow's unexpected heart attack and death, in 1952, led to the closing of their practice. Gertrude enjoyed many years of retirement. She died in 1983, at the age of 95.

### Emily Eolian Williams (1869-1942)

Emily Williams was one of the women whose persistence and talent, with the support of her partner, Lillian Palmer, helped her successfully enter the male-dominated profession of architecture. Lillian encouraged Emily to pursue architecture, while Emily supported her partner in seeking a career in journalism and, later in life, as a successful metal artist. Although Emily was not registered by the State of California to practice architecture, she was legally permitted to design single-family houses and small apartment buildings as a residential designer.

Emily's education in architecture consisted only of half a year of drafting classes at a vocational high school and the study of classical architecture while traveling in Europe. When she set out to find a job as a "draftsman" in San Francisco architects' offices, without success, she was often told that, if she were a man, they would recommend that he build a house to demonstrate his abilities as a draftsman. With Lillian's support and encouragement, Emily used a small inheritance from her father to acquire a property in Pacific Grove and designed her first house, a small cottage for herself and Lillian.

Without employing carpenters, the two women built the house. The local press featured the unusual story of two women house-builders, and the construction site became a tourist attraction. This publicity was good for business and resulted in several contracts. The charming wooden cottage with a tall chimney of river rocks has survived from 1903 to the present, with some repairs and an addition. Emily designed three more cottages on adjacent lots for her sister, as investment properties.

After the death of her father, Emily moved in with the Palmers. She designed a house in San Jose for the family that included a metal workshop for Lillian. An article in the *San Jose Mercury*—probably written by Lillian, who worked for the paper as a society reporter at the time—described Emily as "San Jose's successful woman architect." The publicity helped spread the word and led to contracts from San



—Cottage in Pacific Grove; designer/builder Emily Williams, with assistance of Lillian Palmer, 1903. Photo: Inge Horton

—Concluded on the bottom of page 5

## Architect Made Her Mark with Craftsman Homes in Berkeley



Women architects may have been rare in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and none in the Bay Area achieved the same renown as Julia Morgan. But there were women who, like **Leola Hall** (1881-1930) succeeded in the profession, although they had no architectural training.

Hall came from a family of contractors, however, and was a trained artist, having studied with William Keith, among others. In the scant six or so years in which she both designed and built homes, mostly in Berkeley, many in the Elmwood district, Hall produced livable, generally affordable homes that more than a century later can often be easily identified as hers.

She both designed the homes and acted as contractor, buying the sites and even selling the homes – filling roles not then associated with women. Her homes ranged from Neoclassic boxes, some with Craftsman touches, to more overtly Craftsman bungalows. Like many homes of the period, a typical Hall tended to be brown-shingled, with broad eaves and exposed rafter beams. Interiors were warm, with redwood paneling.

Berkeley's 'Honeymoon house,' which she designed for herself and her new husband, Herbert Coggins, displays interior features typical of her work: a prominent staircase, ample living and dining rooms suited for entertaining, and small kitchen and bedrooms.

Leola Hall quit home building shortly after marrying. The couple ran a concrete contracting firm and a small chain of auto parts stores. A talented and versatile musician, Leola enjoyed performing, together with her husband, in their Honeymoon house's grand hall.



*Typical Berkeley brown shingle home by Leola Hall. Photo: Linda Svendsen*

— Adapted by Dave Weinstein from his 2006 book *Signature Architects of the San Francisco Bay Area*.  
Gibbs Smith: 2006

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Jose residents. Times were difficult in 1913, when Emily and Lillian received a commission to design an exhibition stand for a women-owned Minnesota company, Alaska Garnet Mining and Manufacturing Company, at the Panama Pacific International Exposition (PPIE).

For the balance of her career, Williams designed several houses for herself and Lillian that provided rental income during the Depression. There is no evidence that she continued her practice after 1925. Emily died in Los Gatos, after a long illness, in 1942.

### *The following ad appeared in The Business Woman, March 1922*

*"Like a Dress, Ready-Made Buildings Are Seldom  
Made to Fit  
Architecturally Designed Dwellings  
Mean Real Homes  
.....  
Before you build  
Consult Emily Williams"*



# Spring Tour Explored Island Fair Sites and Navy Presence

Everyone had a great time during the Treasure Island and Yerba Buena Island tours on May 26<sup>th</sup>. Our day began in the original Administration Building for the Golden Gate International Exposition (GGIE) with coffee and pastries (thank you Maggie and Ian for the delicious pastries from Jane's Bakery in San Francisco).

Our host, Treasure Island Historian Anne Schnoebelen, gave a wonderful opening talk about the island's creation and the fair's history and architecture. After Anne's talk, Robert Beck, the Director of the Treasure Island Development Authority (TIDA), spoke about the ambitious future plans for the development of the island.



*Above, Anne Schnoebelen speaks of the fair's history and architecture. Photo: Paul Turner.*

We then carpooled to one of the monumental GGIE pavilions where an impressive collection of original sculpture from the exposition is now stored. Subsequently we traveled to the Mersea Restaurant on a spectacular site looking out to the San Francisco skyline. Many thanks to restaurant owner MeeSun Boice for arranging the lovely lunch at Mersea.

The tour continued, after lunch, to Yerba Buena Island where we viewed the National Register listed Senior Officer's Quarters Historic District, developed in 1902-04 as a part of the Navy's West Coast Training Center, funded by Congress in 1898. We toured the interior of the elegant neo-classical 1899 Admiral Nimitz house.

Our day concluded with a surprise addition: the 1891 Torpedo Assembly Building on the east side of Yerba Buena Island, under the new Bay Bridge. The Army assembled and stored mines in this building for defending the Golden Gate. This fascinating building is an early use of the reinforced concrete technique invented by engineer Ernest Ransome, who later became world famous for his innovations with this building material.



Our thanks to Jack Nathanson at TIDA for arranging for us to view the interiors of the buildings on Yerba Buena Island and Treasure Island. Many thanks to Anne Schnoebelen and Annamarie Morel, Treasure Island Museum Administrator, for organizing the opening event and the day's program.

*Left: Cast stone Pacific Unity sculptures from the GGIE sit in storage on Treasure Island. Photo: Ward Hill. Additional photos appear on page 9.*

## In Memoriam Jackie Young

We note with sadness the recent and unexpected death of long-time NCCSAH member Jackie Young. Members who have joined our tour programs will recall her trim, striking appearance and enthusiastic participation.

Jackie held a Masters in Public Administration from USF and shared her knowledge and experience with many and varied local non-profit community organizations. These include San Francisco Heritage, the SPCA, the GGNRA Advisory Commission and Meritus College Fund (now joined with 10,000 degrees).

She currently served on the board of San Francisco Achievers, whose mission is “to support African-American young men in San Francisco Unified School District lead and thrive in higher education and beyond. . .through college scholarships, leadership training, and mentoring.”

Many will miss Jackie Young’s generous and giving spirit.



Photo: [sfachievers.org](http://sfachievers.org)



*Below: Residential project adjacent to the High Line in Manhattan. Architect Zaha Hadid (1950-2016), the first woman to win the coveted Pritzker Architecture Prize (2004)*  
Photo: D. Andreini October 2017.



*MIRA, 400-foot residential tower in Transbay district, San Francisco. Jeanne Gang, Studio Gang. “It evolves the classic bay window, a familiar feature of San Francisco’s early houses, reimagining it in a high-rise context. . . . [T]he bays make every residence a corner unit.”*

Photo: [studiogang.com](http://studiogang.com)

### Women in Architecture Today: It’s still a man’s world (USA).

Attorneys	50.1% women
College Professors	49.8%
Dentists	54.5%
Doctors	54%
<b>Architects</b>	<b>23.3%</b>

Source: [Zippia.com](http://Zippia.com)



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In Kastner's treatment of Morgan's architectural career, the dominant focus is on her relationship with the Hearsts: first, Phoebe Apperson Hearst, whose support for Julia was crucial to getting her career going; then Phoebe's son, William Randolph Hearst, who gave her a nearly continuous series of commissions for the rest of her career. Here again, Kastner quotes from letters, diary entries, and other sources that shed light on Morgan's personality and working methods.

For Morgan's relationship with William Randolph Hearst, some of the most telling observations are from other people's accounts. William Randolph Hearst Jr. ("Bill Jr."), who watched his father and Julia work together for years, described her prim demeanor and plain manner of dressing, and said,

Underneath that impeccable attire and highly professional air was a steel-trap mind and a will of iron. I used to listen to her and the old man go at it in her small office at the top of the hill [at San Simeon]. She and Pop had some real squawks, let me tell you, but both were so formal and low-keyed that an outsider would hardly have noticed. . . . At the end of most discussions she deferred to him as the client. But not without forcing my father to consider all the questions in her mind, the cost, and the new architectural problems created. . . . [But] she caught the old man up short many a time and indicated she would not retreat on her view unless he had a darn good answer.

Julia's nephew Morgan North (with whom she was very close) recalled, "She would work [Hearst] over by showing him sketches of his way, and showing him how it would not look as well as another way." And Adela Rogers St. Johns, one of Hearst's employees, said, "Miss Morgan could say nothing in more ways than my great aunt Betsy . . . . Mr. Hearst understood and obeyed what Miss Morgan didn't say." Innumerable other examples could be cited of Kastner's quotations from various sources that are illuminating of Morgan's character and work.

With its abundance of information from previously untapped sources, Victoria Kastner's *Julia Morgan: An Intimate Biography of the Trailblazing Architect* enriches our understanding and appreciation of this important and uniquely fascinating architect.

—Paul Turner, NCCSAH board member and Wattis  
Professor of art and art history at Stanford University

**Victoria Kastner** has always been intrigued by historic buildings and the talented designers and clients who create them. She wrote the definitive trilogy on the history of William Randolph Hearst's grand estate at San Simeon—*Hearst Castle: The Biography of a Country House*; *Hearst's San Simeon: The Gardens and the Land*; and *Hearst Ranch: Family, Land, and Legacy*, all published by Abrams Books. Further exploring the intriguing lives of Hearst and Julia Morgan, she authored "William Randolph Hearst: America's Maverick Collector" for Oxford University's *Journal of the History of Collections*, and "Morgan and Associates: Julia Morgan's Architectural Practice as Design Metaphor" for the AIA publication *20 on 20/20 Vision*. Photo: Chronicle Books



Builder's Booksource will be selling copies of *Julia Morgan: An Intimate Biography of the Trailblazing Architect*, during our visit to the Berkeley City Club, or order a copy through your local bookseller.

For more on Julia Morgan, see Spring and Fall 2015 issues of the NCCSAH newsletter on our website: [nccsah.org](http://nccsah.org)



Berkeley City Club. Photo: Chronicle Books



## Schedule for East Bay Julia Morgan Tour September 29

9:00 - 9:30 am	Coffee and pastries at the Berkeley City Club, 2315 Durant Avenue
9:30 - 10:30	Talk by Victoria Kastner
10:30 - 11:30	Tour the City Club
11:30 - 11:40	Walk to Hearst Memorial Gym
11:40 - 12:15 pm	Tour Hearst Memorial Gymnasium
12:15 - 1:15	Lunch
1:15 - 1:30	Travel by bus from the City Club to St. John's Presbyterian
1:30 - 2:00	Tour St. John's Presbyterian
2:00 - 3:15	Tour houses in the Elmwood District including interior of a house on Ashby Place
3:15 - 3:30	Travel to Chapel of the Chimes
3:30 - 4:30	Tour Chapel of the Chimes
4:30 - 4:50	Travel back to the City Club

### Safety Protocols

Everyone on the tour will need to be fully vaccinated and wear a mask. Proof of vaccination (second shot at least two weeks before the tour) will be checked at the Berkeley City Club.

## NCCSAH Receives Generous Benefactions

*NCCSAH is the unexpected beneficiary of two donations this past year. We are grateful to board member Paul Turner, who made a generous cash gift, and we received notice of a bequest from the Vincent Marsh Trust. Long-time friend and member, Vincent died at his Palm Spring home in February 2021.*

## Additional Tour Photos



*Group approaches the Admiral Nimitz House on Yerba Buena Island. Photo: Paul Turner*



*Torpedo Assembly Building on Yerba Buena Island. Photo: Bill Kostura*

## Registration: East Bay Julia Morgan Tour

[please print]

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone \_\_\_\_\_

Registration:

September 29, 2022 \_\_\_\_\_

Number in my party: \_\_\_\_\_

Members \$100 per person \_\_\_\_\_

Non-members \$130

(includes one-year membership in NCCSAH)

Total enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to NCCSAH and mail to:

Ward Hill  
NCCSAH Julia Morgan Tour  
3124 Octavia Street, #102  
San Francisco, CA 94123

For more information please contact  
Ward Hill at [whill@pacbell.net](mailto:whill@pacbell.net).

## Membership Dues

Is your membership current?

At \$30 per year,

NCCSAH membership is still a great deal.

Please see the coupon on the last  
page for details.

## Events Calendar

### AIA San Francisco

*19th Annual Architecture + the City Festival*,  
September 12-23 presented by the Center for Architecture + Design, in collaboration with AIA San Francisco. Enjoy 20+ events including walking tours, conversations, home tours, book programs, and more! [aiaf.org](http://aiaf.org)

### California Historical Society

Exhibitions: *Mapping a Changing California: Selections from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century*. On view through March 1, 2023. 678 Mission St., San Francisco  
<https://www.californiahistoricalsociety.org>

### Filoli

Orchard Days, Saturdays and Sundays, September 24 - October 8, 2022, 10:00 am - 5:00 pm. [filoli.org](http://filoli.org)

### San Francisco Heritage

2022 Hybrid House Tours Kick-off Event. October 6, 2022, 5:30 pm - 8:00 pm. Join Heritage and the Victorian Alliance at the Haas-Lilienthal House to launch the VA's online/in-person house tour.  
[haas-lilienthalhouse.org](http://haas-lilienthalhouse.org)

### Berkeley Historical Society

Live and virtual events, through October 8, 2022:  
*African Americans in Berkeley: Art, Entertainment, Literature, Sports, 1940-2010*. [berkeleyhistoricalsociety.org](http://berkeleyhistoricalsociety.org)

### DOCOMOMO US TOUR DAY

Tour: *Embarcadero Center as Urban Shopping Mall*. October 15, 2022, 10:00 am - 12 pm. Advance registration required. [docomomo-us.org/events](http://docomomo-us.org/events)

### California Preservation Foundation

*Presenting the 39th Annual California Preservation Design Awards*. October 27, 2022, In-person at two venues in Pasadena and Oakland. Tickets available from September 6. <https://californiapreservation.org>

### National Trust for Historic Preservation

PastForward National Preservation Conference. Online November 1-4, 2022. Denver  
<http://www.pastforwardconference.org/pastforward19/>



## SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS

The mission of the NCCSAH is to promote the study and discussion of our region's architectural history and its related fields; visit significant works of architecture; and increase public awareness and appreciation of our historic built environment. Membership is open to anyone interested in architectural history and its related fields.

### NCCCSAH Officers

President, Richard Brandi  
Vice President, Paul Turner  
Treasurer, Ward Hill  
Secretary, Don Andreini  
Membership, Ian Berke

**Remember, you do not have to be  
a member of the National SAH to  
become a member of NCCSAH  
Join or Renew Now!!  
Individual \$30.00  
Make checks payable to NCCSAH**

Please send your ideas or comments  
concerning The Newsletter to:  
Don Andreini  
NCCSAH Newsletter Editor  
[dandreini@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dandreini@sbcglobal.net)

**To become a member of the Northern California  
Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians**  
or to renew your membership return this form  
and your dues check for \$30 made out to NCCSAH  
to

Ian Berke, NCCSAH  
Ian Berke Real Estate  
2824 Clay Street  
San Francisco, CA 94115

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

NCCSAH is a 501(c)(3) organization

### NCCSAH Web Site

*To view back issues of the newsletter, go to  
[nccsah.org](http://nccsah.org)*