

# SOCIETY OF ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIANS

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

VOLUME 28, NUMBER 1  
Spring 2025

### NCCSAH Offering Late Spring Architectural Tours of Stanford University Campus

The NCCSAH has organized an in depth look at the world-famous architecture of Stanford University for the Spring, 2025. We are honored to have Stanford Professor Emeritus Paul Turner (also NCCSAH board member) and Stanford Adjunct Professor Tom Beischer lead our tour. The tour will focus on both historic and modern campus buildings.

The Stanford University tour will occur on two dates (same tour each date): May 24, 2025 at 9:30 am and May 31, 2025 (both dates are Saturdays) at 9:30 am. The tour will include lunch at the Cantor Center (Stanford Art Museum) restaurant.

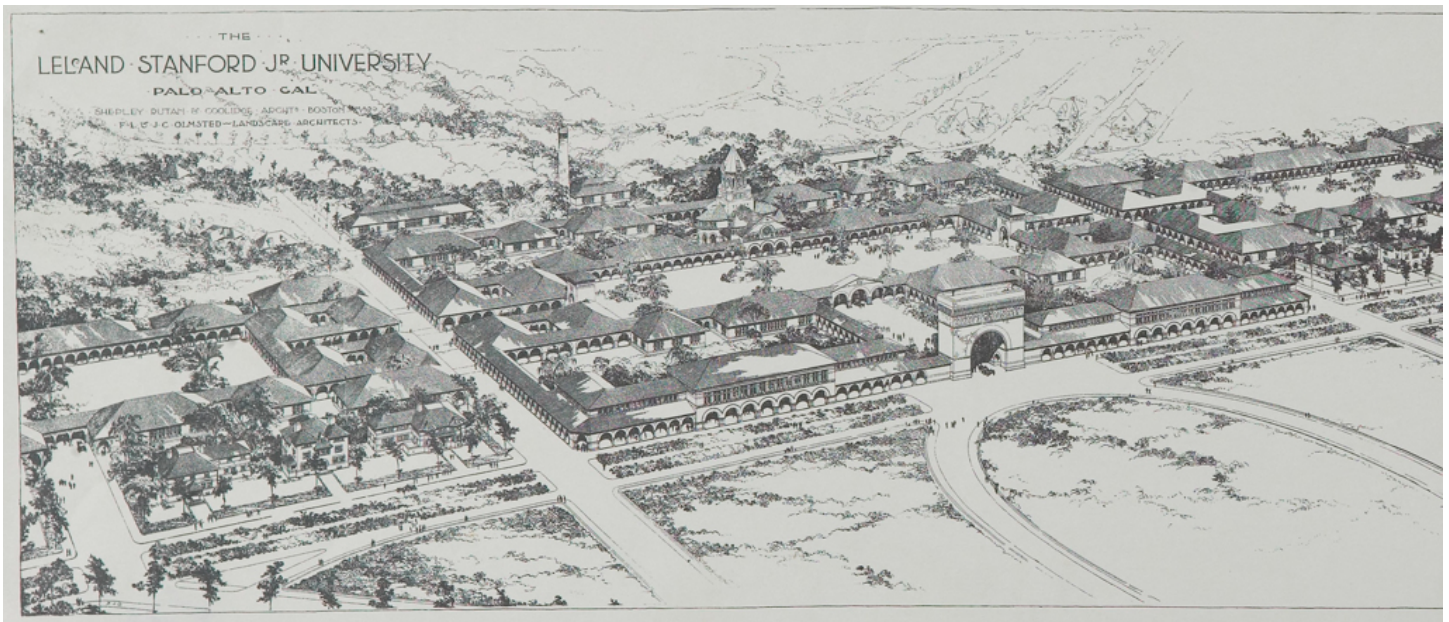


Photo: istockphoto

This tour will involve extensive standing and walking. Stanford Professor Emeritus Paul V. Turner was trained as both an architect and an art historian at Harvard University. He taught the history of architecture at Stanford from 1971 to 2006, offering a broad range of courses to undergraduates and graduate students, from a survey of world architecture to courses on Baroque, 19th- and 20th-century European and American architecture and urbanism, and seminars on various subjects.

Professor Turner is the co-author of the following books about Stanford University architecture: *The Founders & the Architects: The Design of Stanford University*; *Stanford University- An Architectural Tour*; and *Museum Builders in the West: The Stanfords as Collectors and Patrons of Art, 1870-1906*. In 2004, he published *Mrs. Hoover's Pueblo Walls: The Primitive and the Modern in the Lou Henry Hoover House*, a book about the Lou and Henry Hoover house on the Stanford campus. His book *Campus, An American Planning Tradition*, won the Society of Architectural Historians' Hitchcock Prize, for the best book on architecture in the year 1984. His publications also include works on the architects Le Corbusier, Frank Lloyd Wright, and Joseph Rammé. His book Wright's work in the Bay Area, *Frank Lloyd Wright and San Francisco*, was pub-

—continued on page 7



Frederick Law Olmsted and Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge. Stanford University Archives. [sah-archipedia.org](http://sah-archipedia.org)

## The Stanfords Engaged Prestigious Eastern Firms to Plan University Campus on the Peninsula

The original architecture of Stanford University (the "Quads"), designed starting in 1886 and constructed mainly in the 1890s, was different from earlier campus architecture in a number of ways. American colleges and universities, beginning in the colonial period, were open and outward looking, typically in a natural environment and with separate buildings of different periods and styles. An exception was Jefferson's University of Virginia, but it too had a natural character, with its large central "Lawn," open at one end to a vista of nature. The Stanford design was much more formal and monumental, with closed courtyards arranged along axes and cross-axes, in a manner foreseeing the American Beaux-Arts period of design.

The distinctiveness of the Stanford campus was the result of a very personal motive of the school's founders, Leland and Jane Lathrop Stanford. Leland was the wealthiest man in California, mainly due to his principal role in the creation of the western portion of the transcontinental railroad. He and Jane were childless for eighteen years, until Jane, at the age of thirty-nine, bore a son in 1868 whom they named Leland Stanford Junior.

The parents lavished their attention on the child, with tutors for his education and grand tours of Eu-

rope. From an early age, he was interested in antiquity and museums. In Florence in 1884, aged 15, he contracted typhoid fever and died. His parents were devastated and decided to create an institution in his memory. They first considered a large museum in San Francisco, but then raised their sights and decided on a university. (Leland Senior reportedly had a dream in which he said "The children of California shall be my children.") The site of the school was to be on the Stanfords' large farm and estate adjacent to Palo Alto on the San Francisco Peninsula.

Leland and Jane wanted the best people in the country to plan their university. For its educational program they hired as a consultant Francis A. Walker, president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. (Leland had already determined that the university would include instruction in engineering.) For the physical plan they chose Frederick Law Olmsted for the overall design. And for the architecture they wanted to have Henry Hobson Richardson, but he died unexpectedly just as they were contacting him; his firm was reorganized by three of his associates, as Shepley, Rutan, and Coolidge, and it was Charles Coolidge whom the Stanfords hired as the architect.

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Olmsted, renowned as the creator of Central Park in New York City, had already designed several educational institutions, mostly with small buildings scattered in a park-like setting. In September of 1886 he came to Palo Alto to see the site. He produced a plan with buildings along curving roads in a park, located in the foothills to create a more picturesque and naturalistic environment. When the Stanfords saw the plan they rejected it completely. They wanted the school not to be in the hills but on the flat land, where it could be formal and monumental, with courtyards arranged axially—in order to create an imposing memorial to the dead child.

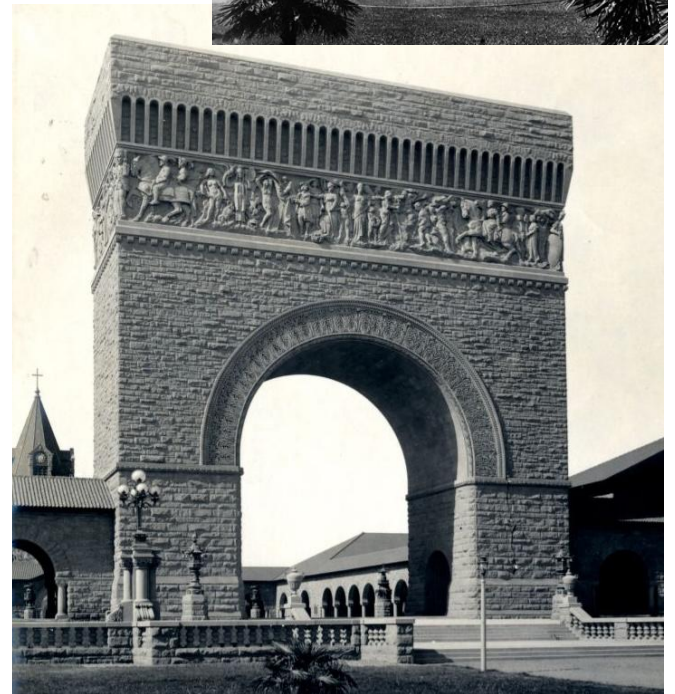
From then on, the relationship between Olmsted and the Stanfords was difficult, with the Stanfords usually insisting on what they wanted. At one point, Coolidge reported to Olmsted that Leland said, "A landscape architect and an architect might be disappointed but he was going to have the buildings the way he wanted them." Despite this conflicted design process, the resulting university plan was unified and forceful, and Olmsted recognized its quality.

In the following decades, after the construction of the central part of the design and the Stanfords' deaths, the university began departing from the original plan. But in various ways the Olmsted-Stanford plan continued to influence new construction—even up to contemporary times, when a new Science and Engineering Quad followed the original master plan in its location and overall shape. Leland and Jane's insistence on creating a powerful memorial to their son persists to this day. The institution's official name, after all, is The Leland Stanford *Junior* University.

—Paul Turner



*James H. Clark Center, Stanford. Architects: Perkins + Will and Foster + Partners*



*Memorial Arch, and (inset) post-1906 quake damage.  
Photo: quake06.stanford.edu*

## Interesting Facts About Stanford University

- Student Enrollment. 7,841 undergraduate. ...
- Academic Programs. 66 undergraduate majors. ...
- Campus. 8,180 contiguous acres.
- Award and Honors. 19 Nobel Laureates. ...
- Research. 7,500+ externally sponsored projects. ...
- Endowment. \$36.5 billion (as of August 31, 2023)

## “...to qualify students for personal success and direct usefulness in life.”

**A**fter eighteen years of marriage without issue, Leland and Jane Lathrop Stanford were favored with the birth of a son, May 14, 1868. By nearly any measure, parenthood came late in their married life and late in life for the couple—Leland was 44 years of age, Jane nearly 40.

The proud father staged the child's debut at a dinner party in the Stanfords' Sacramento home—to the surprise of the guests *and* the mother—on a large covered silver platter set on the dining table. The guests responded with appropriate admiration.

“Like many wealthy children of America's Gilded Age, little Leland Stanford junior was born into a glittering world of silver and servants, pampering and privilege. Colored in lace and cultivated by tutors, the young heir to the Stanford fortune had his own pony and a pint-size train that ran on a 400-foot track from the family's Palo Alto house to the stables. As a teenager, he rubbed elbows with senators, generals and Supreme Court justices and traveled with his family by rail across much of the United States and Europe.” —Theresa Johnston, “The Truth About Leland Stanford Jr.”, *Stanford Magazine*, May 14, 2018, republication of a 2003 article), marking 150th anniversary of Leland's birth.

For all the privilege the boy enjoyed, he seems to have grown up to be a sensible and sensitive teenager with wide-ranging interests. “Leland Junior's carefully preserved letters and his drawings of ships and trains hint at an energetic and likable kid who loved animals and the outdoors, took special care of his playmates and fretted about his aging parents' health. He also had an insatiably curious intellect.”



It was while traveling abroad with his parents in 1884 that young Leland fell ill, in Rome, following visits to Constantinople and Athens. Seeking a more salubrious climate in which their son might recover under the care of doctors, the family travelled to Florence where they took up residence at the Bristol Hotel. After three weeks of lingering illness, the boy died, March 13, 1884. News reports gave the cause as “Roman fever”, that is, malaria.

Grieving for the loss of their young son, their only child, the elder Leland reported having a dream in which Leland, Jr., appeared and urged that his parents live on for the good of

others. Back in California, Leland and Jane Stanford interred their son near their Palo Alto home. A year later, the couple signed a grant that founded and endowed a university to bear their son's name, “to qualify students for personal success and direct usefulness in life.”



Top of page: Stanford Family Photograph Collection  
Above: Bristol Hotel Florence, Italy. famous [hotels.com](https://www.famous-hotels.com)



# Pioneer Class at Stanford Included a Future President of the United States

One of Stanford's most distinguished graduates—Herbert Hoover—was a member of the “Pioneer Class” of 1895, the first class to graduate after a full four years at the university. His progress toward that achievement was, however, characterized by some false starts.

Born in 1874, in West Branch, Iowa, Hoover lost both parents by the time of his 10th birthday. Soon after, he was sent to Oregon to live with an uncle. His early schooling was interspersed with occasional stretches of work in his uncle's real estate office. Though he never earned a high school diploma, he took some courses at a business college, including bookkeeping and typing.

In 1891, his interest in education took a more serious turn, and he applied to Stanford, scheduled to open that fall. Spring of that year, he failed all entrance exams, save for math. After a summer of cramming, he took the exams again in the fall, passing all except for English. The university granted him conditional admission: he was required to take extra credits in English.

He chose to major in geology, and lived the undergraduate life, taking part in extracurricular activities that included serving as class treasurer and managing the baseball and football teams. He earned money working in the registration office and starting and running a campus laundry service.

In the early years following graduation, after a slow start pushing carts in a California gold mine, he worked as a geological surveyor. Opportunities soon opened up in Australia and in China, and his career took off.

Living in London at the outbreak of World War I, Hoover quickly turned to relief of civilians impacted by the conflict and won praise particularly for leading the Commission for Relief in Belgium.



Remembered by many—and much maligned—as President at the time of the 1929 Crash and the onset of the Great Depression, Hoover assumed a low profile for many years thereafter. In 1946, Harry Truman tasked him with organizing post-war relief efforts. Soon after, at the request of Truman, Hoover led a study commission that made recommendations for reorganization of the executive branch of the federal government, many of which were adopted. A second Hoover Commission (1953)

made recommendations for reducing big government.

Speaking of his Stanford education, years later, Hoover said, “It has been my lot in life to be the recipient of honorary diplomas [more than 80 in his long life] but none ever had the sanctity or, in my opinion, the importance of this one.”

Herbert Hoover died in 1964 at ninety years of age.



*Stanford campus view, (early 1900s) as it may have appeared in Hoover's time at the University.*

*Stanford University Historical Photo Collection*

*Top of page: Herbert Hoover as student.*

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

# Beautiful Late Fall Weather Greeted NCCSAH Tour of Mission San Juan Bautista and Salinas.

**M**any people generously gave of their time and knowledge to organizing and directing our fall 2024 tour of Mission San Juan Bautista and the city of Salinas.

We extend our deepest gratitude and appreciation to architectural historian Kent Seavey and Salinas historian Michael Mazgai for their invaluable help in organizing our fascinating tour of Mission San Juan Bautista and Salinas in November. All agreed it was an amazing adventure.

We also wish to thank the following people who made our trip so memorable:

We appreciate all the time Event Manager Bly Morales-Chandler took organizing our wonderful lunch in San Juan Bautista, on November 1st, in the beautiful garden at the *Jardines de San Juan* restaurant. Everyone had a great time socializing with friends in this lovely setting.

Our thanks also to the guides at the San Juan Bautista Church for their tour of this significant historic building from California's Spanish past and Julio Ortiz, historian with *California State Parks*, for his insightful in-depth tour of the historic town of San Juan Bautista.

Special thanks, as well, to Denise Estrada who spent many hours organizing our terrific tour of the many historic buildings in the Salinas City Heritage Park on November 2nd. Many people contributed to the different tours of the Park: Craig Kaufman, Executive Director, Salinas Valley Tourism and Visitor's Bureau, introduced us to the many Monterey County historic photos at the California Welcome Center; Peter Kasavan, FAIA, led a tour of the adaptive use of the Associated Seed Growers Building; and the guides at the First Mayor's House (Harvey House) and the Monterey & Salinas Valley Railroad Museum.

We are grateful to Susan Shaw, who organized our excellent lunch in the Steinbeck House. We also wish to thank Leslie Earnest for her charming portrayal of John Steinbeck's mother during lunch and the many guides who led our tours of the house. Following lunch we enjoyed tours of the impressive exhibits at National Steinbeck

Center near the Steinbeck House.

Thank you again to Michael Mazgai and Kent Seavey for our wonderful tour of the many splendid Art Deco buildings in Downtown Salinas on November 3rd. Highlights included seeing the on-going restoration of the El Rey Theater with building owner Kurt Meyer. Our thanks to Meynardo Gutierrez, Event Coordinator, who organized a wonderful buffet lunch for us in the beautiful patio of the restaurant, *Portobellos on Main*.

James Perry, Executive Director, Monterey County Historical Society, organized a great tour of the Boronda Adobe History Center during the afternoon. In addition to viewing the historic Jose Eusebio Boronda Adobe, we saw the beautiful 1897 one-room Lagunita School and other buildings on the site, two archival vaults containing documents and artifacts dating to the 1770s, as well as the Victorian Eastlake library. Our excellent tour guides included Ruben Mendoza, Monterey County Historical Society Board President and Mark Wood, Heirloom Botanic Garden volunteer.



*Fearless Leader, Ward Hill, standing next to spectacular Art Deco drinking fountain at Salinas' El Rey Theater. Photo: Paul Turner. Jane Shabaker at Vertigo Coffee, named for the classic film made in San Juan Bautista. Photo: Ward Hill.*

*Additional photos from the tour appear on page 8.*

## Schedule for Stanford Campus Tour May 24 and 31, 2025

- 9:30 - 12:30 Main Quad and Stanford Art Museum (Cantor Center)
- 12:30 - 1:30 Lunch at the Cantor Center
- 1:30 - 4:40 Focus on contemporary campus architecture

### Registration

Cost of Stanford tour, including lunch at the Cantor Center restaurant, Tootsie's:

\$50 NCCSAH members

\$80 for non-members (includes \$30 annual membership dues)

Make your check out to NCCSAH and send to

NCCSAH Stanford Tour  
% Ward Hill,  
3124 Octavia Street #102,  
San Francisco, CA 94123.

*Please include your name, email (very important!), and telephone number, and **indicate if you want to sign up for the May 24 or the May 31 tour.***  
No cancellations after May 12, 2025 unless we can sell your position.

### Transportation

Stanford University is near the Palo Alto Caltrain Station ([www.caltrain.com](http://www.caltrain.com)). Parking is free on the Stanford University campus on Saturdays.

**See registration form on page 11.**

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lished in 2016. In 2020 Professor Turner was named a Fellow of the Society of Architectural Historians.

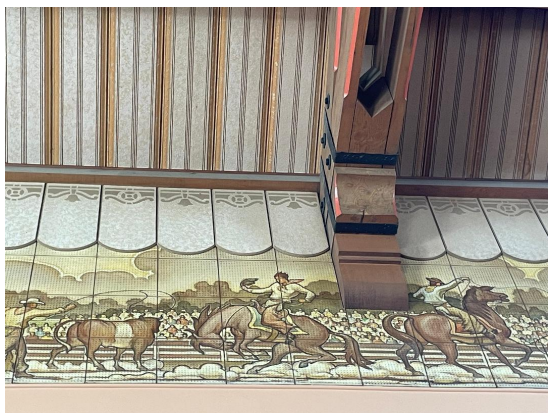
Tom Beischer is an Adjunct Professor in Stanford's Department of Sustainable Architecture and Engineering where he has taught courses on architectural history and theory for 19 years. He teaches a course, *Experiencing Campus Architecture*, about Stanford's architecture, in addition to *A Global History of Architecture and Engineering*; *Architecture since 1900*; and *Design Theory*. Tom received his Bachelor's Degree in Art History from Stanford where he had been one of Professor Turner's students. He received a Master's Degree in Art History from Williams College and a PhD in History, Theory and Criticism of Architecture and Art from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



The 1769 expedition of Spanish explorers into Northern California, under the command of Portola, encountered a towering coastal redwood tree. Camping nearby, they named it *El Palo Alto*, "the tall stick". Reportedly, the tree still exists, although it is said to have decreased in height by about 50 feet. When the town incorporated, in 1894, it adopted the name as its own.



## Salinas, San Juan Bautista Tour Photo Gallery



Top left: our group poses after lunch at Steinbeck House; top right Mission San Juan Bautista church. Left middle: Boronda Adobe; photo: Paul Turner; right: Salinas train station; photo: Paul Turner. Below left: frieze at Salinas train station: photo Jane Shabaker. Below right: 1898 McDougall Building, Downtown Salinas (William Weeks, architect; photo: Ward Hill





# Berkeley's Anna Head School Building Complex

## Proposed for Partial Demolition

The historic shingle complex originally housing Miss Head's School for Girls in Berkeley's Southside neighborhood is in imminent danger of demolition to make way for UC Berkeley (UCB) student housing. The University acquired the entire through-block site in 1963 from the Anna Head School, now known as the co-educational Head-Royce School located in the Oakland hills.



*Threatened with demolition: The Gables, Miss Head's School for Girls. Post-1923. Photo: Head Royce School*

The complex consists of six buildings that were built between 1892 and 1927. The three currently threatened buildings are Channing Hall (1892/1911), The Gables (1895/1901/1923), and the Study Hall building (1917/1920/1922). Three other buildings, a cottage (1901/1912), a pool/gym (1916) and Alumnae Hall (1927), were previously rehabilitated as part of another adjacent student housing project, Maximo Martinez Commons, constructed to the east of the complex, which was opened in 2012.

Progressive educator Anna Head's school produced some remarkable graduates including tennis champions Helen Wills Moody and Helen Jacobs. A sporadic student at the school was Oakland resident Isadora Duncan, later considered to be the mother of modern dance, who was privately tutored in French, German and English by the Head staff.

So far, the entire building complex has remained intact, except for the water tower that once stood in the main quad area. This is primarily due to benign neglect by UCB. A fire damaged some of the original building's fabric in 2022.

One of the threatened structures is the original core building, Channing Hall, built in 1892 to the design of architect Soule Edgar Fisher, Anna

Head's second cousin. Its exuberant Queen Anne Style is expressed in its complex composition featuring gambrel roof forms. The first floor was used for social gatherings, dining, and classrooms, while the upper two floors were student bedrooms.

Demolition would allow for student housing to be constructed near the property's northeast corner, near the intersection of Bowditch Street and Channing Way.  
—Christopher Pollock

For further information go to:

<https://annaheadschoool.org/>

and

<https://www.berkeleyside.org/2025/03/27/anna-head-school-demolition>

***On January 28, it was announced that Stanford University will assume permanent stewardship of the California Historical Society collection. This important resource will continue to be available to scholars and the public. For more information go to [library.stanford.edu](https://library.stanford.edu)***

## Exploring a Napa Valley Program for the Fall 2025



Plans still very much in early stages envision a two-day program in Napa Valley. Scheduled for October 21 and 22 of this year, the tour would begin with walking tours of downtown Napa and the city's oldest neighborhood (1870s and '80s), *Napa Abajo*, a National Register Historic District, that includes a major Ernest Coxhead house from 1892. On the second day the tour would take us to two historic (1880s) wineries, as well as at least two contemporary establishments. We will be exploring possible hotel options for an overnight stay. Stay tuned for further news as plans develop. Thanks to Christine French, Executive Director, Napa County Landmarks for help in organizing this tour.

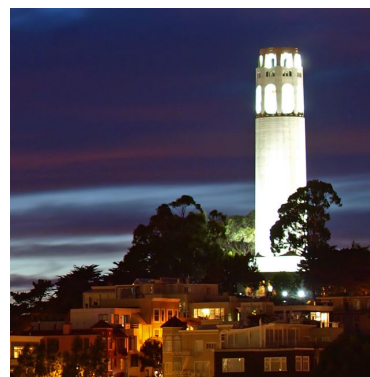


Photos: Churchill Manor, Napa. Ward Hill

## Arthur Brown's Other Tower



Arthur Brown, Jr., architect for Stanford's Hoover Library (1941), also designed San Francisco's Coit Tower (1933). Its height, at 210 feet, falls short of the Stanford structure (285 feet). However, the elevation of Telegraph Hill, on whose summit Coit rests, adds nearly 300 feet. By comparison, perhaps the world's most famous—surely most photographed—tower, in Pisa, Italy, (begun late 12 century) rises 183 feet. Berkeley's Sather Tower (John Galen Howard, 1915) tops out at 307 feet, world's second tallest bell & clock tower.



Top photo: Tower of Hoover Library rises above the Stanford campus, [hoovergallery1\\_2.jpg](#).

Above left: Coit Tower, [sfrecpark.org](http://sfrecpark.org)  
 Right: Tower of Pisa, [en.wikipedia.org](http://en.wikipedia.org)  
 Left: Sather Tower, UC Berkeley, [commons.wikimedia.org](http://commons.wikimedia.org)



## Registration: Stanford Campus Tour

[please print]

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

Select your tour date preference

May 24, 2025 \_\_\_\_\_

May 31, 2025 \_\_\_\_\_

Number of places on the tour:

\_\_\_\_\_ Members @ \$50 \$\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Non-members @ \$80 \$\_\_\_\_\_

Price for non-members includes one-year  
NCCSAH membership

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

Please make checks payable to NCCSAH and  
mail to:

Ward Hill—Stanford Campus Tour  
3124 Octavia Street, #102  
San Francisco, CA 94123

## Events Calendar

### California Preservation Foundation

Annual CPF Statewide Conference. Panel discussions and tours. Sacramento, May 6-10, 2025. For details visit [californiapreservation.org](http://californiapreservation.org)

### DOCOMOMO

Call for abstracts for papers on theme of international conference in Los Angeles, May 17-22, **2026**: *Multiple Moderns: Climate, Community, Creativity*. Abstracts may be submitted between May 1 and June 2, 2025

### Filoli

Outdoor concert series: *In a Landscape: Classical Music in the Wild*. May 19 & 20, 6:00 to 7:30 pm. \$60 for Filoli members \$75 for nonmembers [filoli.org](http://filoli.org)

### Society for Industrial Archeology

53rd Annual Conference, May 29-June 1, 2025. Buffalo, New York. Highlights the rich industrial legacy of the conference's host city. [sia-web.org](http://sia-web.org)

### San Francisco Heritage

*Splendid Survivors - Modernist Times. A night celebrating '70s icons at the Embarcadero*. June 5, 2025, 5:30-9:00 pm at the Hyatt Regency Embarcadero. For more information: [www.sfheritage.org/splendid-25](http://www.sfheritage.org/splendid-25)

### National Trust for Historic Preservation

PastForward National Preservation Conference, celebrating 75 years of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Milwaukee. September 16-18, 2025. [savingplaces.org](http://savingplaces.org)

### Berkeley Historical Society

Exhibit: *Roots, Removal and Resistance: Japanese Americans in Berkeley*. Through August 30, 2025. [berkhistory.org](http://berkhistory.org)

### Annual AIASF Homes Tour,

Save the Date! Saturday, September 20, 2025. Showcasing a variety of architectural styles, neighborhoods and residences throughout San Francisco in an open-house format. [aiasf.org](http://aiasf.org)

## 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  
Member, Betsy Yost  
Member, Jaime Kooser

**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  
nccsah@gmail.com

**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

Ward Hill  
3124 Octavia Street, #102  
San Francisco, CA 94123

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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

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

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### NCCSAH Web Site

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

### Membership Dues

Is your membership current?

At \$30 per year,

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Please see the coupon on this  
page for details.