



RUSSIAN RIVER RECORDER

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HEALDSBURG'S

ARCHITECTURAL

Heritage

In This Issue

The history and character of a community can be seen in its architecture. Healdsburg is fortunate that many of our historic residences and commercial buildings have been retained and preserved. They are the centerpiece of our current Museum exhibition, "Healdsburg's Architectural Heritage." The exhibition covers a wide range of topics including our prevalent design styles and characteristics, a tribute to memorable lost buildings of Healdsburg and the larger social history of architecture. It also features scale models of four major residential architectural styles and much more. This popular exhibition will be held over through November 11.

This issue of the *Russian River Recorder* echoes the focus of our exhibition. Architectural Historian and longtime Museum volunteer Fran Schierenbeck chairs our Museum's Historic Preservation Awards Committee and assisted in creating the exhibition. In this volume, Fran has also contributed an article about the role of historic preservation in maintaining the character of a community.

Museum Director/Curator Holly Hoods has written about pioneer building techniques and also about the rescue, relocation and restoration of the pioneer Hassett Cabin, Healdsburg's oldest surviving home.

We have reprinted and updated June Smith's tribute to Healdsburg's most notable Queen Anne residence, the Swisher House. Another successful restoration story is that of the 1871 Marshall House, the recipient of our 2016 Residential Historic Preservation Award.

We have also updated an article highlighting local Craftsman homes. Each of these homes was featured in a past American Association of University Women (AAUW) Healdsburg Homes Tour.

Recorder editor Pamela Vana-Paxhia is also a member of the Historic Preservation Committee. She provided a summary of the Museum's past preservation award winners.

We are always delighted to publish an article by new contributors. This time a collaboration among family members Alan, Lynne and Velma Colombano, Janet Jensen, Vicki Lawson and Alice Picchi resulted in an interesting piece about their relative Fred Colombano and his career in construction. Colombano built many of the ranch style homes between 1950 and 1970 which still stand today.

We hope you find the exhibition and this historical research educational and entertaining.

Holly Hoods, Executive Director/Curator
Pamela Vana-Paxhia, Editor



RUSSIAN RIVER RECORDER

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Edwin Langhart, *Founder*

221 Matheson Street
P.O. Box 952
Healdsburg, CA 95448
(707) 431-3325

www.healdsburgmuseum.org

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Lost Healdsburg

by Fran Schierenbeck

In the 1960s America was still experiencing a post-war economic boom; the space age was in full swing; modern art and architecture was pushed to the forefront of American culture; and young people began rejecting the so-called establishment. Old ideas, including old buildings, were thought of as symbols of the past, a past filled with economic depression and war. The idea that "newer was better" had taken hold.

Urban renewal was seen as a way to revitalize and modernize communities and Healdsburg was not immune to the idea. The Healdsburg City Hall fell victim to the wrecking ball. Master architectural works along with humble cottages were being destroyed at an alarming rate. Our heritage was being lost and with it a sense of who we were (and are) along with it.

Luckily, people began to take notice and speak up. In 1966 the National Historic Preservation Act was established, requiring Federal agencies to examine their impacts to historic properties. In 1980, the destruction of an entire block of cast iron front and brick buildings alarmed local citizens. They began urging the City of Healdsburg to adopt a local Architectural Heritage Ordinance. City staff contacted the Healdsburg Museum to investigate the possibility. By 1982 the City, with the support of the Museum, conducted a survey of historic structures and adopted an ordinance to protect these buildings.

Although a huge step in the right direction towards saving our heritage, regulations alone cannot always stop the destruction of historic structures.

Take a look at the pictures on the adjoining page. These are just some of the buildings that are gone. See what Healdsburg has lost. These not only represent various architectural styles that would be almost impossible to replace due to the cost of materials and skilled labor, but also the loss of our history. Each building has a story. Who built it and why? What happened there? What figures in Healdsburg history interacted with these buildings? Did Colonel Rodrick Matheson do business there? Did ranchers coming to town once a month in their wagons stop there? Did the clerk in that building wait anxiously for news of his son who was off serving his

country? Who lived there and for how long? Did your grandparents, parents or maybe you visit one of these buildings?

Now imagine Healdsburg without its Plaza or the Carnegie Library building. Take a stroll or drive around town and imagine Healdsburg without its historic buildings. Preservation of the buildings keeps us connected to our history and gives us a sense of place. Without our historic buildings what makes Healdsburg so charming and unique would be lost. Remember, once a building is gone, it's gone for good.

Local citizens can affect the architectural fabric of their community without necessarily taking on a preservation project of their own. They can speak up and let local, state and federal agencies know they support historic preservation. A community's voice can have a big influence on decisions, both large and small. The Healdsburg Memorial Bridge is a perfect example.

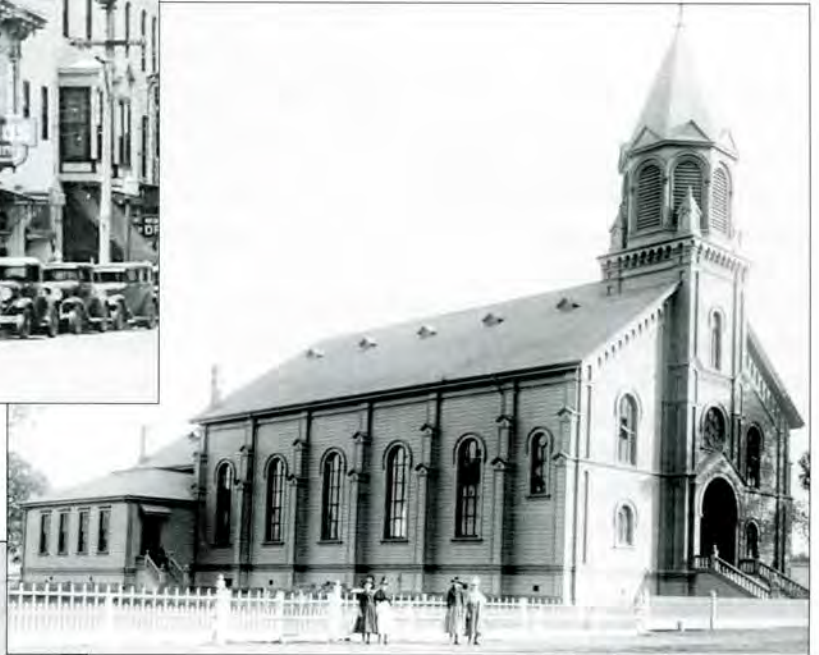


Source: National Trust for Historic Preservation
"This Place Matters" is a national campaign that encourages people to celebrate places that are meaningful to them and their communities.

For more information, see the National Trust for Historic Preservation (savingplaces.org), National Park Service & Historic Preservation (www.nps.gov/subjects/historicpreservation) and the California Preservation Foundation, (californiapreservation.org).



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection
*West Street (Healdsburg Avenue) looking
 North from Matheson Street, c.1935*



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection
*Seventh Day Adventist Church at Northeast corner of
 Fitch and Matheson Streets, built in 1887*



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection
*Healdsburg City Hall
 at Southeast corner of Center and
 Matheson Streets, built in 1884*



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection
*Women's Improvement Club at Center and Piper Streets, built in 1913,
 demolished in 1956 to make way for the Mitchell Shopping Center*

The Early Architecture of Healdsburg

by Holly Hoods

First Buildings

When the first Euro-American settler Cyrus Alexander arrived in this area in 1840, he found no houses of wood, brick or stone. The Southern Pomo and Western Wappo-speaking peoples of the region had successfully utilized plant materials for thousands of years to make seasonal structures. They traveled all year to different locations within their territory to harvest food as it ripened or became seasonally available. As a result, seasonal structures were the most suitable.

Alexander, a fur trapper, was hired by San Diego-based sea captain Henry Fitch to scout the area north of San Francisco for available land. At the time, California was a territory of Mexico; and Fitch, having obtained Mexican citizenship, sought to apply to the Mexican government for grants. Alexander picked out a suitable tract for a cattle ranch for Fitch, naming it Sotoyome Rancho for the local Indian tribe. Fitch received a total of 48,800 acres of land. Alexander served as the ranch manager under a four-year agreement (1840 to 1844), when he was to receive two leagues (approximately 8,857 acres) of land and part of the ranch stock.

In 1842, Alexander built a cabin of split redwood logs on the east side of the Russian River opposite the present town of Healdsburg. Alexander's rough building methods were detailed in the 1880 *History of Sonoma County, California*:

With few mechanics' tools and no nails...grooves were cut in the sills and plates, and after framing these, the sidings were set up in the grooves and aforesaid sills, and the plates being placed on top of the sidings, all were firmly bound together with rawhide. The only sawn lumber used throughout the construction of this dwelling were two planks, subsequently procured from the town of Sonoma, which were made into doors.

The first American-built homes in the 1840s in this region were split-log redwood or adobe dwellings. There are no known examples of the split-log buildings still standing in Healdsburg or the immediate vicinity.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

Sotoyome Rancho adobe, 1912

Cyrus Alexander constructed an adobe residence in 1844 on the Sotoyome Rancho for the Fitch family. Known as "Fitch's Castle," the adobe was remodeled in 1876 to contain 17 rooms. It burned down in 1913.

The former Tzabaco Rancho adobe at 6630 Dry Creek Road is the only known surviving (partial) adobe house in the area. It has been enlarged and remodeled over the years.

The only other known example of early California adobe architecture in northern Sonoma County is an outbuilding converted to a garage on the former Cyrus Alexander ranch, now on Highway 128 and owned by the Wetzel family of Alexander Valley Vineyards.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

Cyrus Alexander adobe, c. 1870s

When Henry O. Ferguson came to Alexander Valley in 1857, there were only five houses in the

valley. He described how settlers made their houses without sawed lumber or nails:

The first thing we did was to go into the woods or timber and cut logs of proper length for the sides and ends of the cabin or house, also poles for the ribs to lay the shakes on for the roof, and to weigh shakes down to keep them in place. Then [we would] select a white oak tree to make the shakes from. [We would] have the logs, shakes and all on the ground where the cabin is to be erected. Then the neighbors are asked to a "raising" to carry the corners of the cabin. The first logs are laid at the ends of the cabin, a saddle is made on the top of the log, and now it is ready for the side logs which are notched to fit the saddle, and so on until the cabin has been raised to the desired height. Then gable logs and ribs are pinned on by boring auger holes and driving wooden pins in them to hold them on. Then the shakes come next. They are laid and the weight poles are put on top to hold the roof on. The floor is made of puncheons split out, hewed, laid on top of floor joists. The chimney and fireplace are made of clay jams and the flue is made of sticks and plastered with clay mortar. The four corners of the flue are weighted down with four balls of stiff clay mortar. The doors are made of puncheons and hung on wooden hinges.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection
March and Heald mill, built 1850

First Sawmill

William J. March and Samuel Heald opened a combination grist and sawmill on Mill Creek in September 1850. Erected on the Upper Falls of Mill

Creek, it was the first lumber mill to operate in northern Sonoma County. March and Heald's mill attracted customers from as far south as Petaluma.

Louis Legendre built the first house in the vicinity from the milled redwood planks produced by the pioneer sawmill in the fall of 1850. Legendre's cabin stood for many years on the Calhoun ranch on Eastside Road.

The old mill still stands at the end of Felta Road.

Residential Settlement

One of the many early settlers was City founder Harmon Heald, an Ohio native, who had come to the area with his brothers in 1850 after a failed gold mining attempt. Heald noted the advantageous location of part of the Sotoyome Rancho. He built a cabin along this route in 1851, opened a small store the next year and by 1854 had established a post office. Unfortunately, no photographs of these first buildings survive. Heald's business was located across the Plaza in what is now the 300 block of Healdsburg Avenue. Heald was buying cheap Sotoyome Rancho land at public sales and making unofficial resales of small parcels to other tradesmen and merchants who joined him during the 1850s. As soon as Josefa Carrillo de Fitch received official title to the land, Heald was able to legally purchase the property. He then officially subdivided and laid out a town that he named "Healdsburg" in 1857. Heald donated a lot for a central park (the Plaza) as well as lots for a school, cemetery and churches. Heald, who died in 1858, never lived to see his town incorporated as a City in 1867 or the long-awaited arrival of the railroad in 1871.

The first houses of Healdsburg built of milled lumber were simple, vernacular wood-frame homestead cottages, two to four rooms in size. Usually one to one one-half stories tall, homestead cottages or cabins were built with wide milled redwood siding, double-hung wood sash windows with multiple lights and either hipped or gable roofs. If gabled, roofs often took on the "salt-box" configuration typical of New England houses. Front porches and shelf moldings over doors and windows were common features. Architectural detail was minimal, varying from posts to split pilasters. The modest structures were "designed" and built by

amateur carpenters. Initially, these early residences dotted West (now "Healdsburg Avenue"), North, South (now "Matheson Street"), Center and East Streets—the extent of the original 1857 City limits. One hundred and sixty-one years later, there are only a handful of pioneer houses still standing.

Several of the new residents of pioneer Healdsburg were skilled carpenters. One of these was James Mead, a native of Vermont, who crossed the plains to Placerville in 1850. In 1856, Mead and his wife moved to Healdsburg where he resumed his trade as a carpenter. Mead constructed many of the early houses in town, including his own, which is now located at 327 Mason Street (moved from a previous location on Mason Street). Mead also built the original Geysers Hotel. Open gable cottages, such as the James Mead house, were typically built as middle-class and working-class housing, and even farm housing. They featured clean lines, a simple form and were usually two stories in height. The former Mead residence is in good condition, although altered by the addition of a porch more typical of the Greek Revival style.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection
James Mead House, built 1856

With the arrival of trained carpenters from other states, local architecture began to reflect more contemporary styles. Greek Revival was distinguished by the use of broad corner pilasters, split pediment, and porches supported by pillars. Buildings of this style featured sharp, severe lines and precise detailing. Façades were usually undecorated, except for occasional porch posts.

Doors have the same proportions as windows, both being long and narrow. Windows are composed of many small panes (usually six-over-six) with simple architraves at the top.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection
Lindsay Carson residence at 641 Healdsburg Avenue, c. 1895

The more articulated examples of Greek Revival, like the Lindsay Carson house at 641 Healdsburg Avenue, have gable returns (roof plane framing that returns at the building's edge). Carson, the brother of famed adventurer Kit Carson, settled in the area in 1847 and once owned 80 acres north of Piper Street. His circa 1855 residence is one of the oldest homes in Sonoma County. We are fortunate to have these few remaining pioneer homes preserved in Healdsburg today.

Sources:

Healdsburg Cultural Resource Survey, Edwin Langhart (Healdsburg) Museum, 1983.

Historic Homes of Healdsburg, Healdsburg Museum, 1993.

The History of Sonoma County California, Alley, Bowen and Co., 1880.

Saving Healdsburg's Oldest House

by Holly Hoods

Healdsburg was founded in 1857, but the oldest house in town actually pre-dates the town itself. The John Hassett cabin, built in 1853, is the oldest known residence within the Healdsburg city limits. The hardy pioneer dwelling has been burned, moved, rebuilt and restored in its 165 years of existence. Purchased by Matheson Partners III, LLC., in 2014, the vernacular residence was recently painted and refreshed, but otherwise has not been altered in decades. Maintained in excellent condition, it graces the north side of Piper Street east of Fitch. Many locals don't know the remarkable story of this seemingly unremarkable building.

The one-story, wood-frame residence has had an illustrious history and series of owners. John D. Hassett came to California in 1852 with his brother, Aaron. The enterprising Hassett brothers opened the steam-powered Healdsburg Flouring Mill in what is now the parking lot behind the Brandt Insurance Building on the southeast corner of Matheson Street and Healdsburg Avenue. John Hassett built his homestead cabin near the flouring mill (on what became Center Street). His pioneer home utilized milled redwood from Felty Miller's saw mill on Mill Creek.

In June 1987, the historic house made local headlines when it was damaged in a fire. The *Tribune* article included so much history about the residence that it is worth reprinting in full:

More than 130 years of Healdsburg's history nearly went up in smoke over the weekend. Luckily, the historic home just happened to be across the street from the Fire Department. The oldest known home in Healdsburg, the John Hassett House at 239 Center Street, was badly charred in an early morning fire Saturday that caused about \$80,000 in damage, according to the Healdsburg Fire Department. The fire was started when a smoldering mattress, which had caught fire earlier in the morning, apparently burst into flames and sent at least 15 residents of the three-unit apartment building scurrying for safety. Firefighters were alerted to the smoking building and were on the

scene within a minute of receiving the call at 5:56 a.m. No one was injured in the fire.

Fortunately for local history buffs, most of the damage was contained to the newer portion of the single-story cabin that sits directly across the street from the fire house on Center Street [which houses the Police Station in 2018]. The fire started in a south bedroom of the original homestead cabin and quickly spread to the attic and other bedrooms to the rear of the structure. The occupant of the apartment where the fire started told firefighters that candles, being used to light a room where children were playing, started a mattress on fire at 2 a.m. The fire was extinguished, but the mattress apparently smoldered for almost four hours before starting the larger blaze.

Healdsburg Museum Director Hannah Clayborn briefly inspected the damaged house Saturday and said it appeared that most of the damage occurred in the rear addition to the historic cabin. Clayborn said the addition has not been dated, but she speculated that it could have been built in the 1930s. The homestead cabin was built by John D. Hassett in 1853. Hassett planed the lumber for the cabin at Felty Miller's pioneer saw mill on Mill Creek and later started his own saw mill at Mill Creek as well as a grist mill behind the house facing Healdsburg Avenue. He was squatting on the land for three years before buying it from town founder Harmon Heald. Hassett later became a local land baron himself. The cabin is also famous for being the birthplace of Ralph Rose, born in the cabin in 1884, who later became an Olympic shotput champion in 1904 and 1912.

In the months that followed the fire, the property owner Anne Serifem sought and obtained a demolition permit from the City while vocal residents championed its preservation. Architectural Historian Dennis Harris and Healdsburg Museum Director Hannah Clayborn led the fight to save the original portion of the Hassett cabin. The house had been added onto and converted to a three-unit apartment building in 1935. Harris's August 1987 letter to the *Healdsburg Tribune* editor castigated

the City for “incompetence, procrastination, and bureaucratic bungling” to allow the destruction of “the oldest building in Healdsburg and the oldest identified wood frame building in northern Sonoma County.”

For weeks, the vernacular homestead cabin stood empty, roofless and without the rear addition, as plans to save it were considered. The owner was surprised at the local outcry. To many residents, the Hassett cabin was an undistinguished wooden shack. Preservationists cheered when Glenn Benjamin, a veterinarian residing in Alexander Valley, stepped forward with an offer to relocate and restore the house. Dr. Benjamin explained in a September 1987 interview with Barry Duggan of the *Healdsburg Tribune* that his prior experience restoring several early barns gave him an appreciation for the “interesting old cabin...this is something like restoring a liberty ship.” Benjamin especially admired the hand-hewn beams used to build the foundation. His goal was to maintain the historical integrity of the house while making it a comfortable place for someone to live. “If you're looking at a profitable commercial venture, you can forget it,” Benjamin said. “But I think we have to keep these things around. People have called it an old shack, and indeed it is an old shack. But it can be a very charming old shack and it's one of a kind.”



Source: Healdsburg Tribune

Hassett cabin moved to new location, December 1987

Dr. Benjamin owned a parcel at the northeast corner of Piper and Fitch streets that already had an early 1900s cottage on it. That parcel was big enough to accommodate the Hassett cabin.

Benjamin obtained a permit to move the historic dwelling to its current site at 307 Piper Street. Anne Serifem donated the house to the City to facilitate the transfer. In early December 1987, the Hassett house was lifted and moved to its new home on Piper Street where it remains to this day. It looks as if it has always been there.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

Hassett cabin, 2018

In 2014, Dr. Benjamin sold the property to Matheson Partners III, LLC, a real estate investment company. Grace Lucero is co-founder and managing partner of Matheson Partners; a real estate agent with Vanguard Properties; and co-owner of Lucero Kline, a residential construction company. A general contractor since 1996, Grace Lucero has renovated and developed over 150 residential properties. The Hassett cabin has never looked better. Emma Hughes, owner of Brush Salon, cherishes living in the beautiful historic cottage “with interesting history so deep rooted in our community.” The successful preservation of this pioneer structure is an important milestone in Healdsburg’s architectural heritage.

Sources:

“Hassett” file, Healdsburg Museum.

Historic Homes of Healdsburg, Healdsburg Museum and Historical Society, 1998.

Healdsburg Tribune, June – December 1987.

Interview: Grace Lucero, Vanguard Properties.

Sonoma County Recorder’s Office Deeds.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

Dr. Swisher's residence at 642 Johnson Street, 1900. His son is sitting on the front porch steps.

Dr. J.R. Swisher House - 642 Johnson Street

by June Maher Smith

originally published Russian River Recorder, Autumn 1999

updated by Fran Schierenbeck, 2018

One of the most striking homes in Healdsburg is the historic Swisher House, an outstanding example of grand Queen Anne architecture. This house is the jewel of the Johnson Street Historic District, one of Healdsburg's two formally designated historic neighborhoods.

Built between 1880-1910, the Queen Anne style is patterned after English homes that were popular during the reign of Queen Anne: 1702-1714. The Industrial Revolution made the manufacture of buildings components faster and cheaper; railroads could ship goods around the country at a reasonable cost and in shorter times. Metal house parts and mass-produced wood trim became readily available to the growing middle class who embraced the style as a way of confirming

their modern tastes and prosperity. Character-defining features of Queen Anne architecture includes: asymmetrical house shape and roof; intersecting roof lines; turrets and towers; multiple windows of various sizes, bay windows, multiple porches, patterned shingles, decorative surface treatment, decorative trim, gables and dormers, and multiple paint and surface colors.

Dr. James Riley Swisher was the original owner of this impressive residence, which has graced the corner of Lincoln and Johnson Streets for many years. Just how many years is debatable. Sources differ on the year, or years, of its construction. According to one source, local contractor James Terry built the home around 1894 using three sets of mail order house plans to guide

him. However, the *Healdsburg Tribune* in its December 28, 1899, issue states that contractor A.F. Rath is "building a fine residence for Dr. J.R. Swisher in North Healdsburg." The city tax assessment figures seem to support the latter. The value of improvements on Dr. Swisher's land jumped from \$1,600 to \$2,500 on the 1900 tax rolls and went up again to \$3,500 the following year. Local lore tells us that Dr. Swisher allowed some of his patients to pay their medical bills with labor, such as adding a new fireplace or otherwise upgrading or making repairs in his home. At any rate, this lovely three-story home built of virgin redwood (which the doctor personally approved) is still one of the most striking residences in Healdsburg.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection
Dr. James Riley Swisher, c.1930

Dr. Swisher was born on a farm near Danville, Illinois on July 5, 1849, attended public schools and then studied agriculture and engineering at the University of Illinois. After teaching a few years in both Illinois and Indiana, he came to California in 1875 and enrolled in the University of California Medical Department. He received his M.D. in November of 1877 and immediately came to Healdsburg where he joined the practice of Doctors Thomas Seawell and Samuel Rupe. In 1879, Dr. Swisher married Bessie May Thompson

of Healdsburg and they became the parents of a daughter before Bessie's untimely death in 1883. The couple had planned to go to Europe the following year, she to study art and painting, he to study more medicine. Dr. Swisher went alone and spent two years studying throughout Europe and Great Britain. He resumed his Healdsburg practice when he returned in 1886.

Within two years, he had married again. His bride was Mary Frances Ryan, daughter of Healdsburg pioneer settlers. They soon had four offspring and thus it was that the Swishers moved into their new home with their family of five children. Mary Swisher loved to entertain and was noted for her elegant parties. She frequently wore kimonos, was interested in painting and art and must have had musical talent because she gave piano lessons.

Dr. Swisher was popular with the town's children because they knew he carried candy in his pockets to pass around. He kept a carriage horse and driver ready to take him on house calls day or night. They were housed in the carriage house, now a residence, which faced Lincoln Street. In winter, a single horse was tied to the back of the carriage. Then he could complete his journey on horseback in case the weather prevented the carriage from making it to the patient's home. Again, turning to the city tax assessments, we see that the Swishers' personal property in 1898 included his library, office fixtures, a piano, two wagons, three horses and a cow. In the early 1900s, Dr. Swisher owned one of the six automobiles in town. He was a member of several local fraternal organizations and was a highly respected citizen of Healdsburg.

When Dr. Swisher retired in 1930 due to blindness, he was a well-loved physician who had devoted 52 years of his life to his practice in Healdsburg. He died on January 31, 1934, after a long illness. His widow, Mary, subsequently moved to a home nearby on Grant Street where she passed away in 1939. They both are buried in Oak Mound Cemetery.

The ensuing years brought changes to the home. In the 1950s, owners Mr. and Mrs. Duffee converted the interior into three apartments. Later his sister, Beatrice Jamison, lived there and rented out rooms. John Elvin bought the building in 1981 and sold it in 1989.

The new owners, Cathryn Fairlee and Gregg Neilson, brought their talents to work on the home and gave it a new life both inside and out. They moved into the house and began their five-year plan of improvements and replacements. These included replacing the original roof and gutters; repairing the porch, including new stairs; designing new gingerbread and other exterior features to replace the missing or altered originals and painting the exterior in five colors. The unflattering cyclone fence around the front yard was removed and two palm trees were planted as shown in a 1900 photo.

Inside, Cathryn and Gregg brought the house back to its original floor plan, eliminating the apartments. This involved an incredible amount of detail work. Moldings and baseboards had to be restored and missing areas reproduced. They corrected the plumbing and electrical systems and made the chimneys safer. Floors, including the staircases, were refinished and recarpeted. Historical wallpaper and paints were used throughout and the missing original light fixtures were replaced with appropriate ones. Central heating was installed, and the pocket doors were restored. Their plan brought back the beautiful home. Cathryn and Gregg lived there a few more years and then moved to another home on the west side of town.

In 1998, Liz and Richard Pembroke bought the Dr. Swisher home and began giving it their own brand of T.L.C. They, too, have used their artistic talents to refinish, redo, remove and add to much of the interior. They have paid close attention to the details and have strived to maintain the original look by the use of older materials and reproductions that fit the era. They even discovered a fireplace in a corner of their master bedroom and retiled it. All four fireplaces now have gas log fixtures so they are usable once again. The kitchen has a new hickory floor. The whole interior reflects their love of light colors and has a bright and airy ambience. Both of them are artists and they have set up their studio on the third floor.

Passersby can easily see and admire the work the Pembrokes have done outside. The exterior stairway which led to an upstairs apartment is gone. There is a new picket fence at the sidewalk along the front side of the home. Another new fence closes off the backyard from Lincoln Street and

encloses a lush lawn area with trees. Two years ago, a new garage was constructed at the end of the driveway, designed to resemble a carriage house and be visually compatible with the Queen Anne. Colorful flowers at the front gate make an inviting entryway.

The house even has its own ghost. Both Liz and Richard have separately been aware of a "presence" in their bedroom. They believe Mary Swisher has visited them there, as that was the room where she read to her children before their bedtime. On one occasion they both heard footsteps on the stairs coming up to their room. They are not fearful; they say Mary is a friendly ghost and is probably just visiting to see how they are treating the home she loved.

We are thankful to have this beautiful old home in Healdsburg AND to have it so well cared for, restored and maintained by both its previous owners, Cathryn and Gregg, and the present owners, the Pembrokes. These two couples have given us back one of the most stunning homes in town. The restoration took much time and talent and it still continues!

Author's note: In the early 1900s when my mother Rossaline Mason Maher was a child, she lived next door to the Swishers and played with their youngest child, Ruth. She remembered in a taped interview, "Sometimes when Dr. Swisher made a house call Ruth and I would ride in his red automobile. The passenger door was at the back of the car." (J.M.S.)

Sources:

Interviews with Cathryn Fairlee, Liz and Richard Pembroke, and Letitia Clement.
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Century-Old Craftsman-Style Architecture: Highlights of Healdsburg Homes Tours

by Holly Hoods

In the West, the most popular residential building trend of the 1910s and early 1920s was the Craftsman or California Bungalow style. Healdsburg was no exception. Queen Anne cottages had proliferated here at the end of the 19th century, reflecting a growing middle-class housing boom. This Victorian style was highly embellished with lavish decorative millwork, verandas, complex rooflines and ornate detailing. By the early 1900s, popular tastes changed markedly, with a new appreciation and preference for the hand-crafted, high quality rusticity of Craftsman architecture over the visually exuberant Victorian architecture.

The Craftsman style emphasized continuity with the outdoors through the incorporation of large porches and the use of natural building materials in home designs. Architectural experts Robert Winter and Alexander Vertikoff distinguish true Craftsman architecture from Craftsman-style in their 2004 book *Craftsman Style*:

To a purist, the essential distinction is that a Craftsman house is unique, typically architect designed and artisan constructed, using the natural materials and flow demanded by the site and environment in which it is built. By contrast, a Craftsman-style house has many of the same design characteristics, but may well be a kit or stick-built by a developer using the same three plans over and over. The difference is in the handcrafted quality of the true Craftsman versus the stylistic elements that may be found in both.

Character-defining elements of Craftsman-style include exposed rafters, overhanging eaves, decorative braces, porches, columns that continue to ground level, broad-based porch pillars, low-pitched roofs and shed dormers.

The primary bungalow contractors in Healdsburg were George Day, Ed Guillie, W.H. Chaney, William H. Bush and John Armstrong. The following local examples of their work were featured on the American Association of University Women (AAUW) Home Tours 2001-2018.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection
807 Johnson Street

Peckham House, built 1916

**Current owners: Merlin and Bev Griessert
On 2001 AAUW Homes Tour**

The classic stucco Craftsman bungalow at 807 Johnson Street was built in 1916 for Fred McConnell, Healdsburg City attorney, and his wife Gladys. The house, which cost \$1,200 to build, was one of five bungalows constructed on Johnson Street during 1915 to 1916. In 1916, the *Healdsburg Enterprise* praised Johnson Street as one of the most “desirable residence streets in Healdsburg.”

The McConnells resided in the house for only a few years before selling the residence to George and Stella (Green) Peckham, newcomers to Healdsburg, in 1919. George D. Peckham, born in Marysville in 1866, was a printer by trade. His wife, Stella, was the daughter of Warren and Stella (Morrison) Green. Her parents were devoted followers of Madam Emily Preston, a charismatic religious leader and medical practitioner who led a health-oriented religious community from 1885 to 1909, two miles northeast of Cloverdale. Stella was born and raised in the Preston colony, but chose not to live in Preston as an adult when she met and married George Peckham. The Peckhams had no children, so the two-bedroom bungalow on Johnson Street suited them perfectly. They lived in the home for the rest of their lives. George passed away in

1938, Stella in 1952. Stella's brother Elisha sold the house to Paul and Ruth McCord, who owned it through the 1960s. Paul McCord owned and operated Plaza Meat Market. The present [2001] owners of the house, Merlin and Bev Griessert, bought it in 1996 from Janet Del Fava and Tom Rohrsen.

The Griesserts have furnished and restored the house with sensitivity to the historic period. They restored the original oak floors in the living room and study and between the living room and the dining room to conform to the original details. They removed two 1950s aluminum windows and completely remodeled the kitchen in 2000, restoring the original trim details. They also extended a pergola over the back deck and planted five wisteria plants. The Griesserts credit Tom Rohrsen for the attractive landscaping that frames the house.

The feeling of horizontality commonly associated with bungalow architecture is enhanced by several features of the house: the single, low-pitched front gable roof that spans the width of the building; the spreading full-width front porch and the wide windows with double bands of lights on the eastern and southern elevations. The classic features of this Healdsburg bungalow merited the building's inclusion in Paul Duchscherer and Douglas Keister's 1995 book, *The Bungalow: America's Arts and Crafts Home*.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection
438 Matheson Street

Scatena Bungalow, built 1914

Current owners: Ken and Diane Wilson

On 2004 AAUW Homes Tour

The prominent Craftsman bungalow at the southwest corner of Matheson and University streets was built in 1914 for Walter and Eliza Storey of San

Francisco. Storey, a former Fitch Mountain pigeon farmer, hired local contractor, Ed Guillie, to build the house for \$4,000. The *Healdsburg Tribune* described the floor plan of the attractive bungalow, nearly completed in April 1914, as "a story and a half, with six rooms on the main floor. The upper floor will contain a sleeping porch, bath and two rooms. In the basement will be a summer kitchen, two rooms and a tool shed."

The design of this home followed the Craftsman concept of using structural elements for decorative interest. The house has a recessed, full-width front porch and an open-gabled roof with a centrally-placed, double-gabled dormer. It contains several unusual features, including the use of simulated tusk tenons on the porch columns and double barge rafters.

Despite having a residence built to their specifications, the Storeys did not keep the Matheson Street bungalow long. In 1919, they sold the property to Silvestrio Scatena. Scatena was an Italian immigrant who had come to San Francisco in 1880 at the age of sixteen. He became a successful grape grower and winemaker in Sonoma County. Scatena moved to the Healdsburg area with other family members in the early 1900s and became a naturalized citizen in 1905. The Roma Wine Company, founded by the Scatena family, grew into one of the largest wineries in the state before Prohibition. He lived in the Matheson Street house with his wife, Amelia, and their unmarried adult sons for the next 30 years, until her death in 1943 and his death in 1949. The house remained in the Scatena family for 84 years, through three generations, including ownership by the Masinis and Selzles.

Ken and Diane Wilson, the current owners, bought the property from Silvestrio's great-granddaughter's estate in 2003. Like the Scatenas, the Wilsons are grape growers and winemakers: owners of Wilson Artisan Wineries, a family of boutique wineries in Northern California. They bought the house because of its convenient in-town location—good for their three teens—and because they admired its Craftsman detailing. The Wilsons have not changed the exterior but did fence the backyard to make it more private and usable. They have repainted the interior walls and have converted a first-floor bedroom into a family room. Ken and

Diane also removed linoleum and carpeting, revealing lovely oak and fir floors throughout the house.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection
730 Johnson Street

Petray/Tucker House, built 1915
Current Owners: Mike and Sharon Cowley
On 2008 AAUW Homes Tour

This stylish Craftsman home was constructed for James and Hattie Petray by George Day and William H. Bush, Healdsburg's most respected bungalow builders. According to the *Healdsburg Tribune*, the new Petray house boasted "every convenience of the modern home."

The house made local news in September 1916 when it survived a dramatic lightning strike. The bolt struck the rear of the building, tearing a big circular hole in the roof, splintering shingles and eaves on the south side. Inside the house, boards were cracked for several inches at every nail hole. Luckily no one was home at the time.

James Petray was elected County Sheriff in 1918. A few months later, June 1919, the Petrays sold the house, moving to Santa Rosa where Petray's office was located. The popular sheriff was shot and killed in December 1920 while attempting to help San Francisco police arrest three fugitive criminals. An outraged group of Petray's (Healdsburg) friends lynched the three men responsible for the sheriff's death. No one was ever prosecuted for the lynching.

The house has had very few owners. Harold and Mattie Tucker lived here from 1919 until the early 1940s. Harold worked as a car salesman. William John and Bruna Massoni bought the house

from the Tuckers. W. J. Massoni was a "wineryman" at Scatena Winery. Florence Massoni inherited the house from her parents. In 2000, Michael and Sharon Cowley purchased the residence from Larry Schuster and Di Grohmann. Over the past three years, the Cowleys have built a new garage and completely remodeled the back of the house, adding a basement, wine cellar and porch. They hired architect Tom Reddy to design the new construction to be faithful to the original architecture. The Cowleys also added landscaping and a bocce ball court to enhance their enjoyment of the backyard. The original garage has been converted into a charming guest cottage.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection
817 Johnson Street

Dewey House, built 1915
Current Owner: Elizabeth Candelario
On 2003 AAUW Homes Tour

This house is one of two California bungalows built side by side on Johnson Street in 1915. Sierich "Si" Hilgerloh, owner of the White House Saloon, a popular Healdsburg bar, commissioned the houses in the early 1900s. Hilgerloh had one bungalow constructed for himself and his wife. Next door he had this house built as a wedding present for his daughter Helen and her new husband, Victor Dewey. Dewey was co-owner of the Golden Rule Cyclery Shop where he sold and repaired bicycles.

The construction of the two bungalows was part of a 1915 building boom. The houses share a driveway leading to a common garage. They also contain some matching design elements, including rustic siding, gable roofs with knee braces and flared

edges on porch supports and window surrounds. The gentle pitch of the broad roof gable is repeated in the gabled roofline of the separate half-width front porch.

Helen and Victor Dewey moved into the house next door after the death of her parents in the early 1920s. The Deweys rented their own house to the Boos family. Attorney Herman Boos and his wife Edith lived at 817 Johnson for seven years, beginning in 1923. Their daughter Marie was born at home that very year. The house has changed little since Marie was a child.

In 1936, the Deweys sold the house to Robert Hassett. Robert, the son of a pioneer Healdsburg family, was a Railway Express agent in Healdsburg for 20 years. His job was to meet the train, coordinate freight shipments and deliver the day's mail to the post office. Robert and his wife Gwendelene raised a son in the Johnson Street house and spent the rest of their lives there.

Elizabeth Candelero, the current [2003] owner, bought the property from Alan Hassett, his son. She is only the third owner! Elizabeth has restored the house's original bungalow features, including wood floors, double-hung sash windows and beautiful built-in bookcases and cabinets. She has added several landscape features, including the showpiece fountain in the backyard and a row of grape vines that discretely camouflage the children's play equipment. Elizabeth has maintained the integrity of the 1915 house, while adding a few touches to update and personalize it.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection
337 Matheson Street

Miller/Demostene House, built 1912-13
Current owners: Bonnie and Jim Headley
On 2018 AAUW Homes Tour

This grand residence is a contributing building to Healdsburg's Matheson Street Historic District. John Armstrong, a carpenter from Wisconsin, constructed the two-story vernacular house for banker Joseph Hotchkiss Miller and his bride, the former Stella Harmon, a teacher. This folk house was Armstrong's vernacular interpretation of early Craftsman architecture. "Vernacular" describes buildings constructed by amateur carpenters, often using plan books from architectural offices, trade magazines or "how to build your own home" publications. The character-defining features of the residence include the side-gabled roof, exposed rafter tails, narrow lapped siding and asymmetrical fenestration (irregular window placement), emphasized by the shutters. The only projection from the otherwise flat façade is a gabled portico, supported by squared posts on a solid balustrade. Inside, the Craftsman character is evident in the clinker brick fireplace, the sumptuous wood paneling, wainscoting, built-in cabinets and shelves.

Manuele and Julia Demostene bought the Miller property in 1933. At the time, the Demostenes owned a fruit ranch on upper Bailhache Avenue. Like other locals who could afford it, the Demostenes maintained a "country house" and this "town house," which was convenient with kids attending high school in town. Manuele Demostene died in 1952. When Julia passed away 11 years later, their son, Leo, inherited the house. Leo's daughter, Peachie (Rosalee), purchased the property from his estate in 1974, residing here for over 30 years. Norm Dunlavy joined her when they wed in 1991.

The house has had only six owners since it was constructed and retains much of its original character. The vintage residence was in very good condition when current owners Jim and Bonnie Headley purchased the property in 2015 from Dane and Tara Jasper. Previous owners had replaced the front lawn with edible landscaping and a historically-appropriate partial fence. They removed asphalt paving, a tennis court (formerly used for practice by the Healdsburg High School tennis team), converting to a small-scale urban farm. The Headleys appreciate the charm of their spacious Craftsman home and its historic neighborhood, as well as its convenient location.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection
328 Grant Street

Dennes House, built 1913

Owner: Gina Riner

On 2004 AAUW Homes Tour

(David and Camille Jones, Owners, 2011)

The redwood bungalow at 328 Grant Street is one of the finest examples of Craftsman architecture in Healdsburg. When it was constructed for J. Ralph Williams, a cashier at Healdsburg National Bank, the house was front-page news in the *Healdsburg Tribune*. Built by local contractor George Day in three months, between April and June of 1913, the bungalow contained five rooms and was “arranged in accord with the latest ideas for the housewife’s convenience and comfort.” The latest ideas included a cooler in the kitchen, a pie safe, a chute to the basement and a pass-through between the kitchen and dining room. The interior also featured characteristic Craftsman details, such as built-in bookcases, cabinets, firewood boxes and a window seat. The exterior of the residence is distinguished by a full-width recessed front porch under the main gable with tapered columns atop clinker brick pedestals.

George Ackerman, a Shell Oil Company manager, bought the property from J. Ralph Williams in 1919. George and his wife, Isabel, lived here until 1921, when George was transferred to Stockton. They sold the residence to R.R. “Pat” Dennes, a banker, who moved into the house with Bess, his new bride. The Denneses raised two children at 328 Grant Street and lived together here for 60 years. Bess died in 1981; Pat died in 1986.

The house was rented from 1987 to 2001. Giovanna “Gina” Riner, an international marketing consultant living in Oakland, noticed the house while visiting friends across the street. When she admired it, she learned that it was about to go on the market. Four days later, Gina owned the house! She painted it in historic Craftsman color schemes. The floors—quarter-sawn oak with walnut inlay—were also refinished for the first time.

Bess Dennes, a gardening enthusiast, had a maze of boxwood hedges in the lower back yard. The large lot retains many of Bess’s plantings, including camellias, roses, and a plumbago bush, a staple of Craftsman gardens.

The house is currently owned by David and Camille Jones who appreciate and maintain its history and character.



The Healdsburg chapter of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) sponsors a Healdsburg Homes Tour as its main fundraiser each year. All proceeds from the tours support local education, with a sizeable portion presented to the Healdsburg Education Foundation and scholarships awarded to re-entry women pursuing college degrees.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

The newly restored 1871 Marshall House in all its 2018 glory.

Restoration from Ruin: 1871 Marshall House

by Holly Hoods

At the corner of North and Fitch Streets is a striking two-story residence, known locally as the Marshall House. It is one of Healdsburg's most successful preservation stories. This vernacular Italianate with Greek Revival elements has a steeply-pitched side-gabled roof and eaves decorated with scroll-sawn brackets. Other character-defining features include the entrance, bay windows and quoins at the corners. A balcony, supported by four Doric columns, tops the front door.

The house has had only a few owners. It was built for John Marshall, a blacksmith, for

\$3,500 in 1871. After his death in 1882, his widow married Arthur Cochran, an attorney. The Cochrans lived in the house until 1902 when they sold the residence to Robert Provines. At his death in 1905, Robert's brother inherited the property. He deeded the house to his five daughters in 1909. Miss Frances Provines, a bookkeeper, resided here until 1950, but unfortunately, she did little maintenance. The local children were afraid of the "haunted" house, by then completely covered and dripping with Virginia Creeper.

The residence was sold to the Frampton family, longtime next-door neighbors, in 1950. In

1968, Earl Frampton deeded the property to his daughter, Betty. She and her husband used the house for storage and eventually rented the first floor to tenants. Betty's health declined and the property fell into a state of severe deterioration. At her death in 2008, Betty's estate was divided between her children.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

The Marshall House shortly after completion, 1873.

Mark Goff and Phillip Engel purchased the extreme “fixer upper” property in June 2009. They spent the next eight years restoring the vintage residence, doing the much of the labor themselves, working around the time constraints of their full-time jobs. They appointed the house with period details wherever they could not repair the original.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

The Marshall House in an overgrown state, 1950s.

Mark and Phillip installed a foundation and replaced the roof, installed wiring, plumbing, heating and cooling systems, interior walls, floors and lighting. They repaired or replaced rotted woodwork, windows and doors.



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

Marshall House in a continued state of disrepair, 1978.

The couple endeared themselves to the community as they resurrected this vintage architectural treasure from ruin. They also documented their restoration efforts on their blog: www.227northstreet.com.

The Healdsburg Museum presented Mark and Phillip with a much-deserved Historic Residential Restoration Award in 2016.

The restored property is currently on the market.

Sources:

Healdsburg Historic Resource Survey, 1983, Edwin Langhart Museum.

Healdsburg Tribune, 1871-2008.

Historic Homes of Healdsburg, Second Edition, 1998, Healdsburg Museum and Historical Society.

History of Sonoma County, CA. 1880, Alley, Bowen and Company.

Interview: Goff, Mark and Phillip Engel, 2016.

“Marshall” file, Healdsburg Museum archives.



Source: Louise Armstrong

A sampling of Colombano Custom Homes – 235 Sherman Street., 624 Bianca Lane., 1440 Prentice Drive., 609 Coghlan Road

Houses That Fred Built

Fred Colombano's Contributions to Healdsburg's Residential Landscape, 1950 - 1970

Written in Collaboration by Alan, Lynne and Velma Colombano, Janet Jensen, Vicki Lawson and Alice Picchi

Fred Colombano's story is like that of many others born and raised in the Healdsburg area. His legacy, however, is extraordinary. It is rich, enduring and today constitutes a large part of Healdsburg's residential housing fabric.

Fred was born in Geyserville in 1923 to Italian immigrant parents, Eligio and Angela Colombano. He was the fourth of five children. His siblings, Louie, Dolly (Belleri), Vince, and Rita (Lawson) are familiar names in Healdsburg's story.

Fred graduated from Geyserville High School in 1941 and was inducted into the military in 1943. He served in the U.S. Army Air Force (which later became the U.S. Air Force) as a Staff Sergeant in the 62nd Bomber Squadron Airplane Armories in the Marianas.

Honorably discharged from the military in 1945, Fred came home and attended Santa Rosa Junior College where he studied mechanical engineering and aviation.



Source: Velma Colombano

Fred Colombano, 1961

He and a college friend, Ralph Amaroli, began working on construction remodeling jobs near the college. During this time, Fred took on a big job for his family. His parents, then living in a large, 21-room Victorian farmhouse on Nutter Road in Geyserville, wanted a smaller home. He tackled the remodeling project, eliminating the second story and reducing the size of the first. Following this project, Fred and Ralph formed a business partnership, for a time, building homes in the Santa Rosa Junior College area.

In 1949 Fred met Velma Cameron while attending a big band dance along the Russian River. They were wed in 1951. That same year, Fred obtained his California Contractor's License and he and Velma established Colombano Custom Homes.

COLOMBANO Custom Homes

Source: Velma Colombano

Colombano logo

Fred and Velma lived in Santa Rosa and raised three children: Alan, Lynne and Janet. Their first family home was built by Fred in 1951 on Jewell Drive.

In 1965, the family moved into a new custom home in the Grace Tract area. This home was designed by Lloyd Olson and structurally engineered by Donald Morton of Nor-Cal Engineers. This home design won Lloyd an award for residential design. Fred lived with his family in this home until his passing in 1970. During his career as a builder Fred built 140 homes and two commercial buildings throughout Sonoma County.

Healdsburg Homes

Fred's first few homes, including those for his family, were built in Santa Rosa and he might have continued building there exclusively, but his parents had another request. They wanted to retire to Healdsburg after living in Geyserville for more than thirty years. His parents bought two lots on Center Street and Fred built his first Healdsburg home for them from 1952-1953. While building on the second lot, Fred was approached by a gentleman and was asked to build a home for him in Healdsburg as well. This launched Fred's Healdsburg building career.

Fred built 109 homes and two commercial buildings in Healdsburg. All, but one of the residential homes, are still standing. One of these homes Fred built for his brother Vince in 1956 on Westside Road. This home was torn down in 2006 by the new owners with the intention of building a tasting room. The original owners or their families still reside in twelve of Fred's homes. Of the two commercial buildings, both are still in use.

While he built throughout Healdsburg, a concentration of his homes can be found in subdivisions on Bianca, Florence, Josephine and Pardon Lane, Prentice Drive and Bradley Court. Fred purchased the land for these neighborhoods from Mr. Gauntlet, whom he met while doing some repair work on his Tudor-style home on Fitch Mountain Road. Fred paid off the loan for the land as he built and sold the homes.

Most of the homes Fred built were custom homes, including those in the subdivisions. Custom homes allowed for more of a relationship to develop between Fred and the homeowner. However, during economic slowdowns, Fred built spec homes so that he could keep his crew working.

When built, most of the homes cost between \$11,000 and \$22,000, with later models costing up to \$39,000. In the early days of the business, Henry Trione's mortgage company, Sonoma Mortgage, was used for financing the homes. After about five years, Fred and Velma were able to finance the homes themselves.

Characteristics of Colombano Custom Homes

Most of the homes Fred built were ranch style, the dominant style throughout the country during the 1950s and '60s. Rambling ranch style homes were a reflection of the country's post-war middle class and easy accessibility to the automobile. This new style maximized the facade width, which was further increased by built-in garages that were an integral part of the home.

Fred's homes were usually asymmetrical, with long, low-pitched, hip rooflines and an attached one or two car garage. The front elevation of the homes often had picture windows—large by the standards of the time. Fred's later homes used mostly aluminum-frame windows. Most of the siding he used was clear redwood, usually installed horizontally, unless the owner requested vertical

installation. Some of his homes included brick or stone accent treatments on the exterior. As was typical of the ranch style home, Fred's residences also included private outdoor living areas to the rear. These were a direct contrast to the large front and side porches of most late 19th and early 20th century styles.

Fred's floor plans were simple, with living areas separate from sleeping wings. Because most of his homes were custom, they also included a lot of built-ins. Owners knew what they needed in the way of storage, so Fred was able to build it in.

Fred worked with a draftsman/designer, not an architect. However, he designed some of the homes himself and then turned over the concept to the draftsman to refine the drawings. In other instances, owners hired their own architects to design their homes.

Most of the lumber used was Douglas fir, with 2" x 6" redwood on the mud sills attached to the foundation and 1" x 6" for foundation forms. The boards were sprayed with diesel oil before pouring concrete into the forms. This made it easier to clean the concrete off the wood when the foundation was done. Fred would reuse these still structurally sound boards for subfloors and roof sheathing. This wood was not pretty, but it was a good way to reuse perfectly good lumber. Around 1963, he built reusable foundation forms of 2-foot-wide plywood panels in various lengths.

Most integral to a Colombano Custom Home was the quality. Fred was a perfectionist and he expected his craftsmen to be the same. He was very particular about getting things square and plumb. He always measured and cut the rafters himself. Recently, a contractor remodeling a 1960 home on Pordon Lane was amazed by how square everything was. Another contractor remodeling a 1964 home on Coghlan Road commented that even though there was some settling of the house, the original construction was very square and true.

The consistent quality of Colombano Custom Homes was a result of Fred's attention to detail and the highly skilled team of craftsmen he employed. The long-term carpenters were Chris Scalese, Faye Beeman, and O.J. Elven. In 2013, Chris recalled that on the job site, "there was no foolin' around...doors hung perfectly." He also recalled that Fred often said to him, "Chris, I'll

never fire you; you're my top man." Chris seemed very proud of this.

Fred used many skilled craftsmen over the years. One of these was Charlie Sharrock who worked as a cabinetmaker during the 1950s. He built cabinets for the houses until he retired. Fred later used Castle Industries custom cabinet shop. Jim Neeley was another excellent craftsman who did all of Fred's painting, taping, and texturing. The semi-smooth texturing was done by hand, not sprayed on. For masonry work, Fred used Heggardt and Bertacco for most Colombano Custom Homes. However, Gene Domenichelli did the masonry on the *Healdsburg Tribune* building. When tile work was needed, Fred relied on Jim Narduzzi for a majority of the homes. Fred's son, Alan, recalls working for his father at age 11 doing site clean-up and other menial tasks. He earned 75 cents/hour, which was helpful since he was saving for a baseball glove. During summers in the 1960s, when he was in high school and college, Alan worked for his father and learned the construction trade.

Over the years, some owners of Colombano Custom Homes have observed that there is a "brand" marking in a prominent location in their home. They speculated that Fred used a branding iron to indelibly mark the home as one of his. However, conversations with his wife reveal a different explanation for the "brand." Velma recalls that Fred would go to Meade Clark lumber yard to hand select the materials that he would need for the next week. The Meade Clark clerks would put his name on the lumber he selected, and then deliver it to his job site on Monday or Tuesday. This labeling is what looked like a "brand" to some homeowners.

An Enduring Legacy

Over a period of about 20 years, Fred Colombano didn't just build houses; he built homes with practicality, durability, and integrity. He developed neighborhoods which became settings for people's lives and components of a vibrant community. More than 50 years later almost all of the buildings constructed by Colombano Custom Homes are still serving their original purpose. Their values have increased enormously, not just in terms of dollars, but in terms of the solid contribution they make to the residential landscape of Healdsburg.

Healdsburg Museum & Historical Society Preservation Awards

by Pamela Vana-Paxhia

Highlighting the importance of preserving the architectural heritage of our community is a significant responsibility for the Museum. As part of our ongoing commitment, we recognize deserving projects that contribute to the architectural character of the greater Healdsburg area. We also want to use that recognition to encourage future efforts that will give new life to old structures.

Toward that end, each year we formally recognize some of our region's most exceptional examples with preservation awards for the owner(s) of one or more qualifying local residential and/or commercial buildings.

Award Categories

The primary categories of merit are Historic Renovation and Lifetime Maintenance. Both categories are open to both residential and commercial buildings.

The Secretary of the Interior's Preservation Standards serve as our overall guidelines. The intent of these standards is to assist the long-term viability of a property through the preservation of its historic materials and features while recognizing that these structures must still accommodate contemporary use.

In general, the candidate structure should:

- be at least fifty years old
- offer compatible use with minimal alteration
- maintain its distinguishing original qualities or character
- contain repaired (rather than replaced) deteriorated architectural features wherever possible
- utilize new material that matches the existing material and/or an accurate duplication whenever a replacement is necessary

For the Lifetime Maintenance category, the structure does not have to be a significant example of a particular period, but the property must meet the overall standards and have been properly maintained over a period of years.

In 2015 a new category with slightly less stringent requirements was introduced. The "Adaptive Re-use" category requires that at least 80% of the materials and footprint of the original building be preserved. This category recognizes that contemporary use often requires some significant adaptations to creatively repurpose a vintage building for present day use.

Additional information regarding the evaluation considerations can be obtained at the Museum. A detailed list of the Interior Department's Standards can be found on their website (nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation/rehab/stand).

Selection Process

The process begins with a solicitation of nominations from the community. Buildings are nominated by people in the community who appreciate the work that the owners, architects and/or contractors have done to preserve the architectural heritage of a particular property.

The nominations are reviewed by the Museum's Historic Preservation Committee. After making site visits, the committee members confer and make the final selections.

Past members of the committee have included the Museum curator, an architectural historian, historic restoration specialists, contractors and former Preservation Award recipients. The current committee is comprised of Architectural Historian Fran Schierenbeck, Executive Director/Curator Holly Hoods and historic restoration professionals Jon Lacaillade and me.

Awards are presented to the winning owners in January during the Museum's Annual Membership Meeting.

A comprehensive list of past winners is provided on the following pages. While impressive, there are still more deserving candidates to be recognized.

What would you nominate for future consideration?



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

1992 Winner – Dr. & Mrs. Gary Smith, 428 Tucker Street



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

2015 Award Winner – Mary Jo Bowling and Michael Sacksteder, 1081 Fitch Mountain Road

HM&HS Preservation Award Winners — Residential Renovation

<u>Year</u>	<u>Awardee(s)</u>	<u>Name of Building or Address</u>
1991	Dorothy & Jim Walters	Jeremiah Lewis House
1991	Mojicas	Alexander House
1992	Dr. & Mrs. Gary Smith	Adams House
1993	Cathryn Fairlee & Gregg Neilson	Swisher Mansion
1994	Cathy Lyeth	Haigh House
1995	Homeowners	300 Block of Plaza Street
1996	Karen & Mike Miller	301 Tucker Street
1997	Jean Platt & Family	Sarah Cole House – Thomas Cottle House
1998	Maggie & Harold Wetzel	Alexander Valley Schoolhouse
1999	Cathi & Steve Fowler	Honor Mansion – Butcher Ranch
2000	Mabel & Nello Baiocchi	14629 Grove Street
2002	Peter van der Zee	Grape Leaf Inn
2003	Daniel & Quincy Imhoff	556 Matheson Street
2004	Elizabeth Candelario	Dewey House
2005	Gina Riner	Ackerman/Dennes House
2005	Mary Lou & Jerry Eddinger	301 North Street
2009	Linda Barber & Jack Cunningham	McClish/Cunningham House
2011	Pamela Vana-Paxhia & Jon Lacaillade	402 Tucker Street
2012	Carmen & Bruce Selfridge	John D. Hassett House
2014	Paula deCastro & Alex Hill	Lorenzini-Hilderand House
2015	Mary Jo Bowling & Michael Sacksteder	Frank Petray House
2015	Camille & David Jones	James Mead House
2016	Mark Goff & Phillip Engel	Marshall House
2018	Therese Shere & Eric Monrad	Wilson House



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

2016 Winner - Hbg. Sr. Engr. Mario Landeros, Mel Amato, et al., Healdsburg Memorial Bridge



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

1992 Winner – Gobbi Building, 312 Center Street



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

2017 Winner – Mary & Eric Drew, 709 Healdsburg Avenue

HM&HS Preservation Award Winners — Commercial Renovation

<u>Year</u>	<u>Awardee(s)</u>	<u>Name of Building or Address</u>
1992	Carol & John Muir	Madrona Manor
1992		Gobbi Building
1993	Carrie Brown & John Werner	Jimtown Store
1995	Ken Martin	John & Zekes
1996	Genny Jenkins	Healdsburg Inn on the Plaza
1999	Lindsay & John Brandt, Janice & Joe Brandt	Brandt Building
2000	Ralph Scales	Alexandar Valley Community Hall
2002	Nancy Norton	Ravenous Restaurant
2003	Alexander Valley Board of Trustees	Alexander Valley Church
2004	William Wheeler & Royce Meyerott	Firmin Candelot Building
2008	Westside School District	Felta School
2012	Owners of G3 Enterprises, Inc.	Oliveto Winery Building
2013	Grandstands Renovation Committee	Recreation Park Grandstands
2014	Harry Bosworth	Bosworth & Son General Mercantile
2015*	Wayne and Lorraine Humphrey	Home Dairy – The Parish Café
2016	Russ Keil & Alan Cohen, AIA	Sam Meyer Building
2016	Hbg. Sr. Engr. Mario Landeros, Mel Amato, et al.	Healdsburg Memorial Bridge
2017	Mary & Eric Drew	Si and Minnie Hilgerloh House
2018	Chris & Mike Welty	Skinner Apartments

* Adaptive Re-use Category Winner



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

1992 Winner – Rose & Ernest Gondola, 439 Matheson Street



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

1993 Winner – Beth Robertson, 702 Johnson Street



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

2007 Winner – Nellafay & Paul Mortenson, 607 Johnson Street



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

2002 Winner – Norma Cousins, 403 Powell Avenue

HM&HS Preservation Award Winners — Lifetime Maintenance

<u>Year</u>	<u>Awardee(s)</u>	<u>Name of Building or Address</u>
1991	Elise & Francis Passalacqua	Passalacqua House
1992	Rose & Ernest Gondola	Charles Sheriffs House
1993	Beth Robertson	Letitia Clement House
1995	Del & Ray Lewand	Camelia Inn
1996	St. Paul's Parish	St. Paul's Episcopal Church
1998	Dr. & Mrs. Marty Griffin	Hop Kiln Winery
2002	Norma Cousins	A. Rafanelli House
2003	Dr. Paul & Kathy Miller	214 Matheson Street
2006	Thomas Tietz and Don Frediani Families	Don Frediani House
2007	Nellafay & Paul Mortenson	Dr. J.S. Stone House
2012	Pat Agostini McCracken	Agostini House
2013	E. Walter Murray	632 Healdsburg Avenue
2017	Marian & Pete Foppiano	Jacob Pimm House



Source: Healdsburg Museum Collection

Carnegie Library/Healdsburg Museum "This Place Matters," May 2018

Third Class



Healdsburg Museum & Historical Society
P.O. Box 952
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