



Presentation to **Alameda City Council 2024**

Valerie Turpen, President Alameda Museum

Alameda Historical Society



Oakland Tribune



ALAMEDA CITY'S RELICS ARE
SAVED BY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1948

Alameda Historical Society is founded and Fred Croll is elected President.

1950

The City funds renovation of a room in the basement of the library for meetings and displays of a historical collection. The Historical Room opens in 1951 on Wednesdays 1:30 pm - 4:00 pm.



Acc. No. 00.315.1

Fred Croll
*was Deputy
Assessor for
the City of
Alameda in
1906.*

*He is shown
above at the
office in
1909.*

THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

March 2020 - June 2021

We are continuing to live with the effects and consequences of the Coronavirus Pandemic. With stay at home orders in Alameda and across the world, life as we knew it ceased in March 2020. The doors of the museum closed for fifteen months.

- Our lecture series was canceled.
- Estate sales ceased.
- The museum lost our Treasurer of many years.
- Curator George Gunn retired after 50 years at the museum.
- Board members, members, and docents moved.

The museum desk calendar remained on March 15 for over a year.



Accomplishments During Closure

- The *Alameda Museum Quarterly* continued to be published.
- Pop-up exhibits filled the museum windows.
- The museum created an ebook online of Imelda Merlin's book *Alameda, a Geographical History* which is out of print.
- The museum archives were converted to a searchable database in CatalogIt. Over 20,000 3 x 5 accession cards were scanned for their typed content. Each object continues to be photographed.
- A scanner was purchased thanks to grant funding. This will help record hundreds of photos, negatives, and 35mm slides in the collection.
- The textile collection was reviewed, researched, and photographed and is being preserved in handmade acid-free boxes.
- The newspaper storage racks were re-organized for easier access.

The Quarterly

Our newsletter tells stories of our city relying heavily on the museum archives and those doing research.

ISSUE NUMBER 3 • SEPTEMBER 2022

Alameda Museum Quarterly

ALAMEDA'S RADIO PIONEERS

by Bob Rydzewski, Fellow and Deputy Archivist, California Historical Radio Society, Alameda, CA.

In the earliest years of the twentieth century a group of young Alamedans played an outsized role in the evolution of what we know as "radio" but which they called "wireless". And appropriately the story, untold for over a century, recently emerged from research begun at the California Historical Radio Society (CHRS) located on Central Avenue right here in Alameda.

Today we mostly think of radio in terms of broadcasting, but it was around for several decades before that became its primary use. Marconi first proved that a "wireless" signal could be sent across oceans in 1901 and for about the next 20 years its biggest use was in military and commercial communications with ships at sea. It was the "high tech" of its day that excited the imagination of teenage white kids, who set up their own amateur stations to transmit and receive messages. But the field back then was very different from ham radio today.

First, there were no laws regulating it. You didn't need a license to get on the air and transmit. Anyone could send out messages on any frequency with as much power as they could muster whenever they felt like it. Since useful vacuum tubes had not yet been invented, signals were produced by generating sparks. Communication was in Morse code dots and dashes since much more sophisticated electronics were needed to send and receive "phone" (voice and music rather than just a tone). You didn't buy a radio; you bought or made the parts and put them together yourself. Men's sewing needle, boric acid, coils of wire, sheets of glass, tinfil—these were all standard ingredients for self-constructed sets which were truly "as primitive as can be." The power usually came from a light socket, with fuses and even neighborhood power sometimes becoming casualties. But some early amateur radio



FRED MUDGETT
University of California
(Berkeley) Yearbook, 1909.

operators, lusting after a stronger signal, opted for climbing up power poles and trying to tap into high voltage lines; tragically—but not surprisingly—a few were electrocuted.

It's been known that the San Francisco Bay Area was a hotbed of early radio activity, but the outsized contribution that Alameda amateurs made to the development of radio has not been acknowledged. Research shows that Alameda could more than hold its own against larger Bay Area cities when it came to pioneering amateur stations and their operators. Even before 1910, within a few blocks of Park Street there lived at least four young Alamedans whose wireless transmissions would end up having repercussions that reached from San Francisco to Washington, D.C. to the East China Sea.

Fred Mudgett and the Great San Francisco Earthquake

Fred Mudgett lived with his parents at 2305 Santa Clara Avenue, across the street from City Hall. His connection with the latter was a quite literal one: a long antenna wire stretched from his radio shack clear over Oak Street and was tethered to the flagpole atop the now long-gone City Hall clock tower, the highest point in Alameda. "I was always taken up with electrical toys and that wonderful power attracted me," recalled Fred. "I began the study of electricity about 8 years ago [1897] as a pastime." Fred graduated from Alameda High in 1904 and was soon enrolled at UC Berkeley. By 1905 his Alameda station, called FM (his initials), could communicate with nearby amateur stations, U.S. Navy stations at Goat Island (today's Yerba Buena Island), Mare Island, and the Farallons, as well as with some ships at sea, according to the Alameda Daily Argus.

Continued on page 2...

AMQ September 2022

Fred Mudgett, age 14, attached his radio antennae to the City Hall tower. He was the only connection the world had with San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake.

AMQ March 2022

The memoir of Arthur Hayashi, a high school student when Executive Order 9066 was signed February 19, 1942.

ISSUE NUMBER 1 • MARCH 2022

Alameda Museum Quarterly

A MEMOIR

Arthur Tadashi Hayashi
October 22, 1922 - May 6, 1944

The author penned this memoir for his children.

The Alameda Museum received a floppy disk and a printed copy of the story in 2006.

The recent conversion of museum archives to a digital format has made it possible to share his story with you. It has been edited for length and clarity.

The Hayashi family: Tadashi (Arthur), Musumi (Mimi), their mother Chitase holding Haseo (Grace), their father Haseki, Hajime (Paul), and Akira (James or Butch). Image: Florence Nakata Omasi.



We, the Japanese, were the largest ethnic group in Alameda. It was a white man's town with about three black families and a few Hispanic families. As I look back now, I realized we lived in an area in Alameda bounded by the estuary north, to Santa Clara Avenue to the south, and Broadway in the east, to Willow Street to the west. Both the Buddhist Church and the Methodist Church were located in the middle of this area. I don't know if it was a matter of deliberate choice or whether we had no choice in the matter as far as real estate was concerned. Because we lived in a small area, whether by design or choice, we had our own Japan town.

The majority of families lived in the small area. Most of the men in our community were gardeners, and we had five nurseries and two florists. Our community had our own grocery stores. Our next-door store made tofu and other Japanese goodies. We had an auto garage and gas station, shoe repair, barber, bathhouse, and our own doctor, Dr. Iraki (Walter Keisuke Iraki, a Stanford graduate). We also had a laundry across the street and two cleaning

shops. Down the street was the Yokohama Cleaners and ours was called Tokyo Cleaners. Although my father had a cleaners, I can still see him riding his bicycle every day to do housework. My father would then come home to press the clothes at night. My mother would watch the store throughout the day doing alterations and ironing of the laundry which we took in.

Within our small community we had a Buddhist Temple and a Methodist Church. Both had a Japanese Language School. The Buddhist Language School was patterned after the schools in the old country. When the bell rang for the start of classes, the kids lined up by class, bowed together to the teachers, and then marched into class. At the Methodist Japanese School, when the bell rang for the start of classes, we would wander in from the basketball court because guys like me only went to Japanese language classes because our mothers insisted we go to class. We went to Japanese Language School after regular school, between 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm, which cut into our playtime.

Continued on page 2...

ISSUE NUMBER 3 • AUGUST 2020

Alameda Museum Quarterly

ONE WOMAN'S QUEST FOR HEALTH CARE IN ALAMEDA

by Myrna van Lunteren

WHEN SETTLERS FIRST CAME to what was to become Alameda, medical care as we know today, grounded in strict scientific research and augmented with tested medications and preventative vaccines, was beginning to take form.

Early doctors established themselves in the developing town. These doctors were trained at specialized medical departments of universities, obtaining an official degree of M.D.—Medicine Doctor. Doctor of Medicine. By the 1890s, for instance, Dr. John Taylor McLean, Dr. C. George Bull, Dr. George Potter Reynolds, Dr. William Barclay Stephens, Dr. William Tappan Lum, Dr. Weston Olin Smith, Dr. Maurice W. Brown, Dr. A.A. Stafford, Dr. William A. Clark, Dr. E.M. Keys, Dr. Henry M. Pond, Dr. Mary Delano



Kate Creighton, Superintendent of the Alameda Sanatorium and Doctor W.D. Smith break ground for the new Alameda Hospital in August, 1924. Nurses and dignitaries, including Mayor Frank Otis (center) assemble for the occasion. Image: Alameda Museum.

Fletcher, and Dr. Kate P. Van Orden all had active practices in Alameda.

In the first years of modern settlement, nurses were also present in Alameda. Their duties centered around taking care of physical day-to-day needs of invalids, often elderly, and as a result, these were temporary assignments; either the patient got better, or they died. Often nurses were specialized in taking care of men rather than women.

This changed, however, in line with the increasing change in the practice of medicine. Nurses were being trained to do more than basic physical care. Hand-in-hand with a change in attitude towards female doctors, the profession became more respected. The first hospital allowing women on staff—in fact, originally run completely by and for women; both Dr. Kate Van Orden and Dr.

Continued on page 2...

AMQ August 2020

Jack the mailman wearing a mask makes a delivery to the Nurses' Home on Clinton Avenue during the 1918-1920 flu pandemic.



Pop-Up Exhibits

An Assemblage of Hats

Showcasing items from the museum archives. These shows were visible online and in the storefront on Alameda Avenue.

VISIT OUR POP-UP EXHIBIT 2324 Alameda Avenue



**ALAMEDA
MUSEUM**

ONLINE AT
[AlamedaMuseum.org/
temporary-exhibitions](http://AlamedaMuseum.org/temporary-exhibitions)

**An
Assemblage
of
HATS**



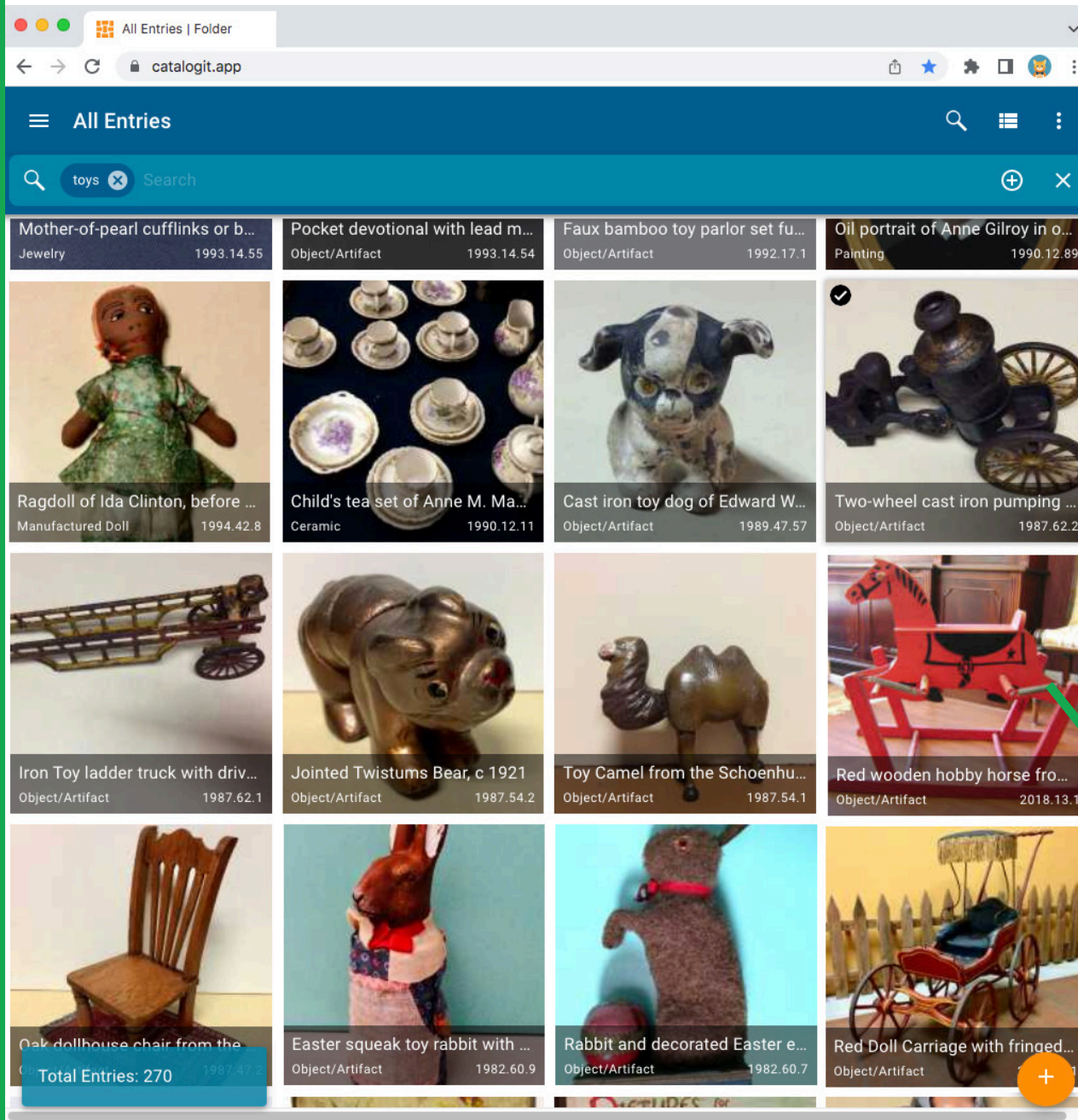
Pop-Up Exhibits

Making History 2020

An archive of images, statements and events that became history in 2020.



Digitizing the Collection



The museum has over 20,000 objects in its collection. Originally the donation record was typed on a 3" x 5" card and filed in drawers.

Today the information is archived in a digital database widely used by museums.

 **Catalogit**

Acc. No. 18.13.1
*Wonder Horse c. 1950s
purchased at Stone's
on Santa Clara Avenue.
The shop sells bicycles
today.*

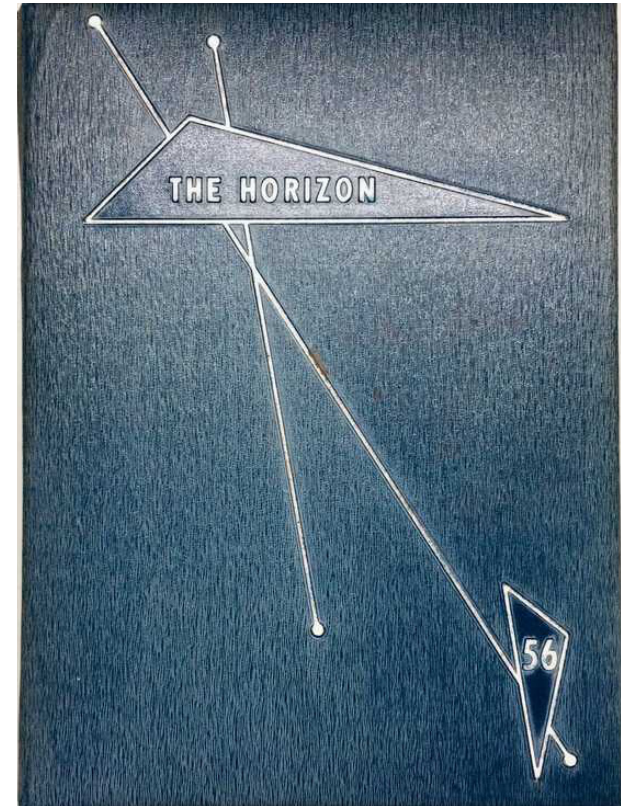
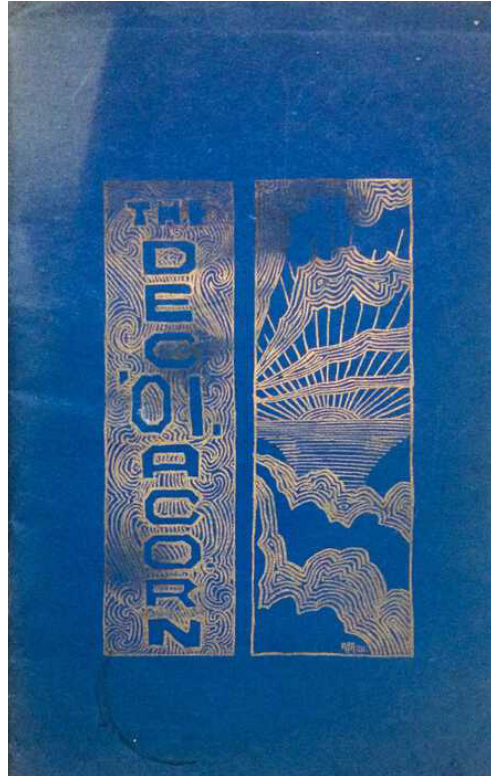
Preserving the Collection



Beth Sibley organizing and cataloging high school yearbooks.

Acc. No. 96.112.4

*Alameda High School
December 1901 "Acorn"
yearbook. Soft-bound
booklet, with gold design.
Size: L 9-3/4" X W 6"*



Acc. No. 16.40.1

*Encinal High School started
operations in 1952; 1956 was
the first year a Yearbook was
produced featuring the first
graduates.*

Preserving the Collection



Textile expert Nancy Martin, assesses a donation to determine its age and to review the materials it is made of.



Acc. No. 22.1.1
Two-piece satin and floral cut velvet wedding dress. The panel is edged with metal and glass buttons.



Acc. No. 82.26.1

A gown purchased at Kahns', Movieland Shop, Oakland, CA. Worn by Mrs. William Murray, wife of the Mayor of Alameda, 1931-1935, to a ball held at Neptune Beach, January 30, 1934.

The dress is a replica of a gown worn by Lupe Velez, a famous movie actress of the time.

Assessing the Collection

The Alameda Free Library held a collection of Native American artifacts when the museum was established in the basement of the Carnegie. These possessions of the Ohlone people have moved with the museum since that time. Today the Alameda Museum has reached out to three local Ohlone tribes for advice and collaboration on the best path forward.



Acc. No. 91.1.26
Pierced abalone shell.



Acc. No. 91.1.69
Obsidian spearhead



Acc. No. 91.1.167
Large circular stone hollowed out.

Native American artifacts.



Visitors

In 2020 we began counting visitors and having them list their reasons for visiting in the guest book.

2020 January - March

62% Exhibits
34% Research
4% Shop

2021 June - December

51% Exhibits
44% Research
5% Store

2022

78% Exhibits
18% Research
4% Store

2023

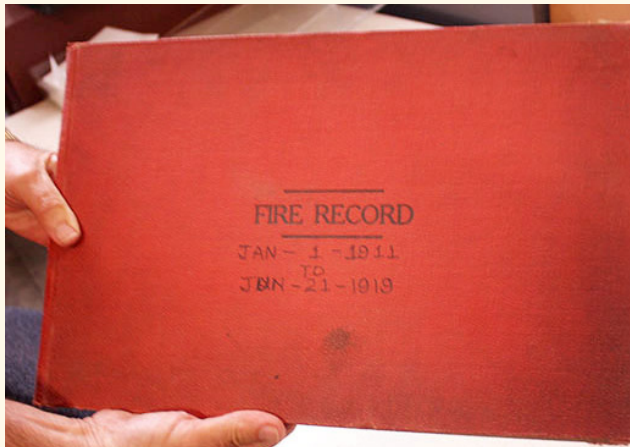
74% Exhibits
12% Research
14% Store

2023 Monthly Visitors

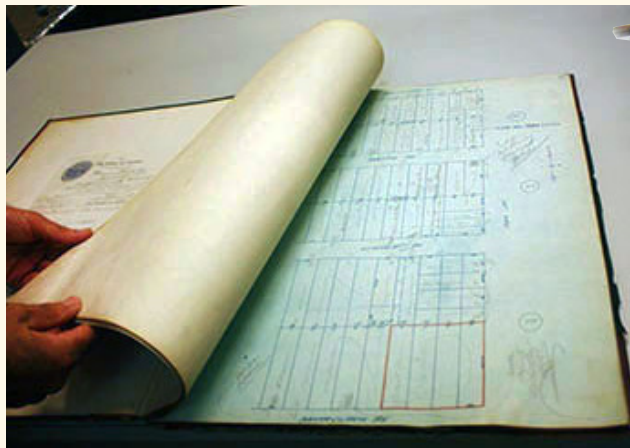
January	224
February	239
March	242
April	281
May	278
June	308
July	918
August	290
September	412
October	428

Research

The museum holds records that allow researchers an accurate glimpse into the city's history.



FIRE RECORDS



BLOCK BOOKS



PHOTO ARCHIVES

contain a variety of subjects: public buildings, homes, city departments, civic events, and portraits.

The globe shown above in the Carnegie Library is now on exhibit at the museum.

Research

Research questions are answered weekly by email, phone or in person. An appointment is requested for research using the newspaper, maps, documents, blueprints, and photo archives. Projects we have assisted with include:

- Central Avenue Safety Improvement Project: *JRP Historical Consulting*
- Clement Avenue Safety Improvement Project: *JRP Historical Consulting*
- Alameda Marina Development: *AHC Archaeological/Historical Consultants*
- US Maritime Training School: *Page & Turnbull, architects; Planning Dept. City of Alameda; UC Berkeley Environmental Design*
- California Radio Society, Alameda Sun, and Alameda Post: *Newspapers, photo collection, fire records, police records, block books*
- Alameda Japanese American History Project: *Documenting materials pertaining to the Japanese residents of Alameda*
- Family Histories: *Photo search, businesses directories, yearbooks, newspapers, family Bibles, scrapbooks*
- Native American Collection: *Archive list, photos, maps, newspapers*

Virtual Lecture Series 2022

In 2022 our lecture series became virtual hosted by board member Rasheed Shabazz on Zoom. Seven events were held including:



Virtual Lecture Series 2023



Placing Yourself in History: The Challenges of Writing a Memoir
with historian and author
Dorothy Lazard



Chicana/Latina Arts Histories in the Bay Area

with Dr. Martina Ayala
Executive Director of the
Mission Cultural Center
for Latino Arts



Muwekma Ohlone Tribe:
Preservation, Recognition
and Sovereignty

Charlene C. Nijmeh is the Chairwoman of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe. She is from the Marine-Sanchez lineage that descends from the first peoples of the San Francisco Bay Area.

Deeply Rooted:
Celebrating Filipino/a/x
migrations, struggles,
and contributions
in Alameda



Plan for the Future

Executive Director and the Strategic Plan

The Alameda Museum has reached a point that it can no longer be managed and run on volunteer power. We need an Executive Director to work with the board to solidify and implement a strategic plan. We are in the process of filling the position.

Museum Assessment

The museum will engage in the STEPS program (Standards and Excellence Program) a self-paced assessment program designed specifically for small- to mid-sized history organizations to review their policies and practices.

Online Archives

The museum has established an online archive available to the public through the CatalogIt Hub on the museum website at AlamedaMuseum.org. We plan to have the CatalogIt database information available at the front desk.

Research

Historian Dennis Evanosky is currently at the museum on weekends to answer questions and assist with research. Questions are answered via email or phone as received. We can also assist with research by appointment on weekdays.

Plan for the Future

Native American Collection

The museum has sent a letter to East Bay Ohlone groups requesting a review of the collection and to discuss a responsible outcome for the items. We have met with one tribe and are in communication with the others.

Outreach

Increase community outreach to promote awareness of our resources and promote collaborations with the museum, specifically with groups that have been underserved.

Exhibits

Reimagine our gallery space to broaden the stories told and histories displayed.

Internships

We have re-established our high school community service internship and hope to expand our internships for longer periods.

Meyers House

Increase programming at the Meyers House to include in depth displays on the Meyer sisters who were college educated career women at a time when that was unheard of.

Lecture Series

Continue and expand our lecture series to include hybrid / in person lectures.



**ALAMEDA
MUSEUM**

*Preserving the Past for the Future
Since 1948*