

# PRESS RELEASE

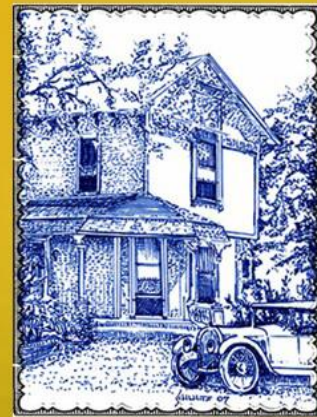
## **Martinez Historical Society**

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**Martinez Home Tour**

MARTINEZ – On Saturday, an estimated 500 visitors toured the vintage homes which were open this year during the Martinez Historical Society’s annual home tour. All seven homes were in the Arlington Way neighborhood just west of downtown. “It was so nice to have such lovely homes on the Tour. And all clustered in the same area,” observed retired educator Laura Miller<sup>1</sup>. Since the homes were so near to each other, most Tour visitors chose to get off the shuttle bus at the highest point on Arlington Way and walk downhill from home to home.

The European opulence and elegance of the home at the top of the hill was a hit with many tour goers. Belonging to retired opera singers, John and Marcia Hetzler, the 1927 home was also a study in good space utilization. The former attic with its Swiss feel was particularly charming with its niches, alcoves, dormer windows and recessed sleeping nook. “When the kids visit,” said Marcia, “they practically fight with each other to see who gets to stay up there.”

The builder of Ned and Elaine Seawell’s Craftsman home gave the exterior a swiss chalet feel when he constructed it in 1922. Inside, visitors were treated to an arts & crafts living room with beautifully paneled walls. The newly refurbished kitchen and breakfast nook were designed by local architect, Eileen Tumlin. There were “before” pictures so visitors could see the transformation from the 1950s kitchen to the current 2014 design.

Eileen Tumlin herself was on the tour with her mother. “I try to go on the Tour every year,” said Eileen. “I love to see the eclectic tastes of the homeowners expressed in their houses. One reason I became an architect was to help people turn their homes into an expression of who they are.”

Visitors were looking forward to seeing Jack Vosney’s romantic English Cottage style home, with its front gable clad in trumpet vines. Inside, the home included both vintage rooms and rooms that had been rebuilt but looked as if they dated from the 1920s. The reconstructed kitchen, for example, appeared to be largely original but actually had a new farm sink, new butcher block counters and newly-installed glass-fronted cabinets antiques to look as if they were 90 years old.

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<sup>1</sup> Laura Miller is also Congressman George Miller’s sister.

Tour goers were looking forward to seeing Marc and Amelia Hunter's renovated 1923 Craftsman because of the article on the home that appeared in September 25<sup>th</sup> edition of the Gazette. The newly restored house has been in the news because of its appearance in American Bungalow magazine, a first for a Martinez home. Inside the house, visitors enjoyed the rich warm colors, textures and designs that make a traditional bungalow home feel so inviting and so comforting. "And the garden in back was amazing too," said Ellen Heathcote, a community volunteer who was a docent in a neighboring home. Like several other homes on the tour, terraces had been constructed to create outdoor living space where a steep hillside previously existed.

The garden of Citrus Salon owner, Candice Gliato and her husband Travis, intrigued tour goers because it illustrated how giant timber bamboo could be utilized as a screen between adjacent homes to create privacy. Inside the 1928 Craftsman home was a dining room with a built-in sideboard flanked with identical built-in china cabinets. These built-ins were features often installed by builders between 1900 and 1930 to show the craftsmanship that went into producing a Craftsman home. In the Gliatto kitchen, colorful mid-century ceramics and furnishings complemented the 1920s beaded wainscoting and a beautiful Wedgewood stove.

Corrine Christiansen, who is well known for her work at New Leaf Academy in Martinez, put her own Craftsman home on the Tour. The 1922 house was notable for its greatly increased size following an addition which utilized modern materials and construction methods to create a large home which looked as though the entire house might be original. For example, a bathroom in the home appeared to have a vintage floor constructed of small black and white marble tiles in a basket weave pattern. "But the bathroom is actually new," said Corrine's mother, Barbara. "Corrine was able to find those beautiful miniature tiles at Lowe's."

Both of this year's mayoral candidates participated in the Tour. Incumbent Rob Schroder's 1928 Spanish Revival house, which was in impeccable condition, was on the Tour. And challenger Gay Gerlack was the greeter at the 1937 Shell Clubhouse where visitor's picked up their guide books and boarded the shuttle buses to begin the Tour.

Also on the Tour was the 1930 Masonic Temple. The dining hall in the Temple provided a welcome spot for visitors to sit down, rest their feet and enjoy coffee and cake, courtesy of the Masons. "We are proud of our building, it's architecture and it's rich history," said Christine Huff of the Eastern Star. "And we enjoyed showing our building to the Home Tour visitors today."

The Martinez Museum was also on the Tour. "Several hundred visitors stopped at the Museum during the Home Tour", reported Andrea Blachman, Museum Director. "We enjoyed talking to out-of-town visitors about the history of our town, which was founded during the 1849 Gold Rush. And we always get a surprising number of Martinez residents who visit the Museum for the first time during the Home Tour.

"There are so many people to thank for working on the Home Tour that it is impossible to list them all," said Carolyn Boone Duncan, Chair of the Historical Society's Home Tour Committee. "The list includes the committee members, the homeowners, the docents who volunteer to greet the visitors in the homes, and others. It really does take a community to put on an event of this magnitude."

The sponsors who make the Tour possible are as follows:

- Shell Martinez Refinery
- Cole Real Estate
- Shell Chemical Company
- Republic Services
- Shell Western States Federal Credit Union
- U.S. Bank

- Hagin's Automotive
- Bisio / Dunivan
- Dolan's Lumber, Doors & Windows
- Best Western Plus John Muir Inn
- State Farm Insurance, Matthew Rinn, Agent
- Les Schwab
- EcoMulch
- City of Martinez

## SAMPLE PHOTOS FROM THE TOUR



Homeowners Marc and Amelia Hunter pose with Gay Gerlack at the Shell Clubhouse, the starting point of the Martinez Home Tour.



Kathy Yates of the Martinez Historical Society sells history books at the Shell Clubhouse on the day of the Martinez Home Tour



A wonderful hammered copper sink in the kitchen of the Hetzler House



Lines from the libretto of the operetta Candide, stenciled on a beam of the Hetzler House.



A charming converted attic, with intriguing nooks, niches and dormers in the Hetzler House



Home Tour visitors arrive at the English Cottage style home of Jack Vosney



Jousting knights face off in this tile on the arts & crafts fireplace in the mayor's house.



A new addition to the 1922 Christiansen residence uses traditional Craftsman wainscoting.



A new bathroom in the 1922 Christiansen residence uses traditional black and white marble tile to emulate the flooring in a bathroom from the era in which the house was built.



Docent Ellen Heathcote poses next to the new addition to the 1922 Craftsman home owned by Corrine Christiansen.



Vintage cars are a part of the Home Tour. The 1930 Masonic Temple was only nine years old when this 1939 Cadillac Fleetwood 60 Special rolled off the assembly line.