

# PRESS RELEASE

## **Martinez Historical Society**

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Martinez, California**

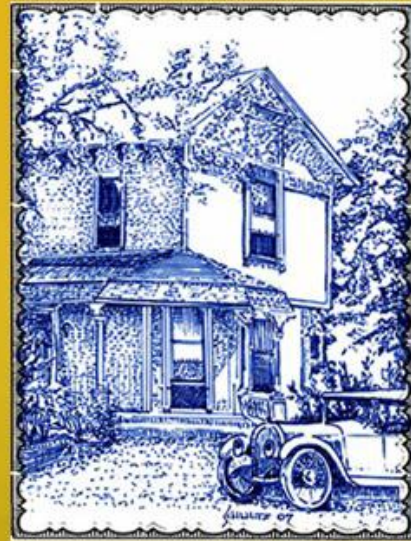
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## **Martinez Home Tour**

MARTINEZ – On Saturday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, the Martinez Historical Society held its 6<sup>th</sup> annual Historic Home Tour.

This year's tour included 7 private homes, 4 points of interest and 5 museums. The homes ran the gamut from elegant Victorians with high ceilings to Arts & Crafts homes with beautiful built-ins of rich, varnished wood. Kitchens featured impressive Wedgewood stoves, farmhouse sinks, tiled walls and glass-fronted cabinets. Bathrooms included pedestal sinks and bathtubs surrounded with Art Deco tile.

Several of the homes on the Tour featured beautiful gardens. "I heard several comments from visitors about how much they enjoyed the gardens around the Tour homes," said Sheila Grilli, who represents Martinez on the Contra Costa County Community College Board. One such home was that of Sabine Pitt's -- with its flower-filled garden on Alhambra Avenue. Local tour goers have driven past Sabine's house many times and they appreciated the opportunity to walk through the garden and see the interior of the home for the first time. Another garden -- in front of the "Pink Victorian" on Alhambra Avenue -- also delighted visitors with its profusion of fragrant roses. "It was as if the roses had timed their display just for the Home Tour", said Carol Russell, who was instrumental in selecting the homes for this year's Tour.

"The tour goers also enjoyed seeing the antique and classic automobiles that we placed in front of the homes," said Paul Kraintz, Manager of the County's Senior Nutrition Program and Meals on Wheels. "And this year we were fortunate that Steve Weir, Contra Costa Clerk/Recorder, agreed to lend us his newly acquired 1940 Packard for the Home Tour."

"As an owner of an historic home myself, I enjoy seeing how other people have restored their older homes", said John Curtis, President of the Historical Society. "I have gotten several ideas

that I will incorporate into my own home, the 1927 Granshaw House, which I hope to put on the Home Tour one day.”

The monument to the Martini was a point of interest on this year’s Tour. “The monument is of particular interest to me”, said Home Tour photographer Carter Wilson, “since I arranged for E Clampus Vitus to install the monument in 1992. We placed it on the exact location of the former saloon where Julio Richelieu invented the Martini in 1874.”

“At least 100 visitors stopped at the Martinez Museum during the Home Tour”, reported Andrea Blachman, Museum Director. “Museum visitors signed our logbook which enabled us to determine that about 2/3 of them came from out of town. They came from as far east as Sacramento and as far south as Santa Clara.” An estimated 450 people in total toured the homes this year.

For the last two years, the Tour has begun at the Shell Clubhouse, where complementary coffee and refreshments were available during the event. “Shell is delighted to be able to make the Clubhouse available for the Home Tour”, said Shell spokesperson Cathy Ivers. “Gay Gerlack did a great job of putting together the exhibits at the Clubhouse of vintage camera equipment and photographs. And we loved the music that Joe Warner played on the Shell piano; his parents own the ‘Pink Victorian’ which was on the Tour.

“We also had musicians stationed elsewhere during the event, said Home Tour Chair, Carolyn Boone Duncan. “In addition, we included Martinez’s very own Doll Hospital on this year’s Tour since it was in the vicinity of the homes. We included City Hall too, which began life as a grammar school in 1917, and which was graced for the day by an array of historical displays and exhibits put up by Barbara Patchin. Visitors were able to sit and rest in the City Council chambers while Harriett Burt spoke to them about the building’s interesting history.”

Carolyn went on to say “There are so many people to thank for working on the Home Tour that it is impossible to list them all. It takes the combined efforts of about 100 volunteers to put on this event. All of these volunteers are proud of Martinez, of its historic heritage, and welcome the opportunity to showcase our town for visitors.”

“We also want to thank our Home Tour sponsors”, said Historical Society President John Curtis. “The sponsors make it possible to maintain ticket prices at a reasonable level for tour goers while still raising funds to help the City restore the Old Train Station in Martinez and reopen part of the building once again to the public as a museum. The Home Tour’s gold sponsors are:

- Shell Martinez Refinery
- S and S Supplies & Solutions
- Cole Real Estate

And the bronze sponsors are:

- Shell Chemical
- Allied Waste
- Hagin’s Automotive
- Kinder’s
- Shell Western States Federal Credit Union

See photos below. Contact Janie Mori at [morijane@yahoo.com](mailto:morijane@yahoo.com) for additional information or visit the Martinez Home Tour website: [www.MartinezHomeTour.com](http://www.MartinezHomeTour.com)



An antique automobile is parked in front of the Castro Street Victorian which was renovated to enable it to function as a Bed & Breakfast.



Home Tour Docent Pat Corr, dressed in Victorian costume, greets visitors at the elegant entrance to the above home.





This is the Victorian parlor of the above home.



A gorgeous walnut bed upstairs in the above home.





The lush entrance to Sabine Pitts home on Alhambra Avenue with its beautiful garden.



The Craftsman interior of Sabine Pitt's home on Alhambra Avenue.





A docent greets visitors to the Haven Street house on the Home Tour. Like the house belonging to Sabine Pitts next door, this is also a Craftsman home.



This is a more expansive view of the home above with its intact Arts & Crafts interior which features tapered Craftsman pillars dividing the living room and dining room – which in turn features two built-in China cabinets flanking a built-in sideboard.





An antique auto is parked in front of this 1916 Craftsman Home on Alhambra Avenue.



The dining room of the above Craftsman home features the obligatory built-in china cabinet. It also includes Arts & Craft style wainscoting topped off with a dish rail designed for showing off the owner's crockery.





An antique car with a rumble seat is parked in front of this Alhambra Avenue Victorian from the 1870's (the Winslow House). The car is flanked by trees displaying colorful fall foliage.



This is the kitchen in the above Victorian. Note the glass fronted cabinets, the easy-to-clean subway tile (popular during the late Victorian era) and the Wedgwood stove upon which the owner was baking cookies to serve to her Home Tour guests.





This pair of beautiful Packards greeted visitors as they pulled into the Shell Clubhouse parking lot. The automobile on the left belongs to Steve Weir. The car on the right belongs to Paul Kraintz.