

[REDACTED]  
328 Bachman Ave,

Los Gatos, CA, 95030

11/13/2024

To the Historical Preservation Committee of Los Gatos,

Subject: Historical Documentation and Planned Renovations for 328 Bachman Ave

Dear Members,

We are writing to document the history of 328 Bachman Ave, Los Gatos, CA, 95030 and to outline our plans for renovations that respect its historical significance while adapting it for modern living.

### **Historical Timeline**

#### **1884-1885: Built by Fen Massol**

Constructed by Fen Massol, the house reflects a simple Victorian style. At the time, it was surrounded by almond orchards, which Fen's father, Florian Massol, cultivated after retiring from the wholesale hardware business.

#### **1893-1909: Owned by Frank Watkins**

Frank Watkins, a pharmacist and local leader, converted the attic into bedrooms in 1902 and installed a small telephone exchange in a back office of the pharmacy he ran, playing a pivotal role in early communication for the town of Los Gatos.

#### **1945 Onward: Owned by the McClure Family**

The McClures made significant updates, including adding living room windows, enlarging doorways, and constructing a side porch, which softened and brightened the home's atmosphere.

#### **1971 Onward: Owned by the Anderson Family**

The Andersons focused on restoration, polishing original hardwood floors, refinishing intricate brass hinges, and remodeling rooms to add features like a bay window. They also installed modern heating and added a white picket fence and arbor gateway to the property.

### **Planned Renovations**

As the current stewards of this historic home, we deeply appreciate its unique character and the stories embedded in its walls. However, as much as we love its Victorian charm, some features are less enchanting—drafts masquerading as ventilation and plumbing that seems to have a personality all its own.

Our plans aim to strike a balance between honoring the past and making the house practical for the future:

- **Functionality Updates:** Insulation, plumbing, and heating systems will be updated with a light touch, ensuring the home stays cozy in winter without losing its old-world charm.
- **Living Space Improvements:** Some interior spaces including kitchen and a bedroom in the back will be thoughtfully adapted to accommodate family life in the 21st century. Rest assured, these



## 96 M. V. B. Daves House

228 Massol  
C. F. Scammon, 1889

Martin Van Buren Daves, a florist and member of the prominent family for which Daves Avenue is named, commissioned this house from builder C. F. Scammon. In 1894, he sold to Dr. Eleonora "Alice" Yelland, possibly the first female physician in town. Fanciful Berkeley architect W. R. Yelland (1890-1966) was born in Los Gatos—could Dr. Yelland be the architect's mother?



228 Massol

## 97 Watkins House

328 Bachman Avenue  
1885

Fenilen "Fen" Massol apparently owned and possibly built this vernacular Victorian house shortly before joining with four other property owners to subdivide the Almond Grove. Fen's father, Florian A. Massol (1810-1890) had been in the wholesale hardware business with Collis P. Huntington in Sacramento in 1853. He retired in 1869 and came to Los Gatos in 1883. Fen was Florian and Orpha's only son.

Perhaps equally well-known was the home's second owner, pharmacist Frank F. Watkins. In 1893, Watkins combined his pharmacy with that of Almeron Skinkle to form the Watkins-Sinkle Corner Drug Store at North Santa Cruz and Main Street, under the town's signature cupola. The two partners were also agents for the Sunset Telephone Company. Watkins was a founding director of the Los Gatos Telephone Company in 1910 and he managed its growth 1917-1931.

The unpretentious home may have come from a midwestern farm house pattern book—the steep roof seems designed to handle snow.



328 Bachman



**BORN IN THE HOUSE GRAND-FATHER BUILT** at 124 Wilder, Elayne Shuman of 145 Wilder is something of a neighborhood matriarch—she has lived on this street all her life. The 1989 earthquake destroyed her home, but her son-in-law Dave Flick rebuilt it.



**ONE OF THREE** officially registered home names in town, this one, at 119 Tait, is joined by *Frog Hollow* (89 Fairview, see 83) and *Paradise Found* (399 Nicholson). The owner, speaking with a thick



# Times



# Observer

Volume XXXIX

15 Cents LOS GATOS, CALIFORNIA Phone 354-3900 TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 1976 NUMBER 04

## Teachers object

### Trustees vote funds for repair

By DONNA PEREIRA

In a checkmate move against objecting teachers, the Los Gatos Joint Union High School District governing board voted unanimously to earmark \$40,000 of \$104,000 coming from Senate Bill 220 as emergency funds for repairs at both Los Gatos and Saratoga high schools.

The action, recommended by Superintendent Dr. James Regan, was taken at the board's meeting Monday evening.

Board members were advised by Regan that under the new "Sunshine Law" (AB 4114) it is not necessary to negotiate if a condition of emergency is determined by the school board.

Otherwise, the law states briefly that all certified employee proposals be presented at a public meeting. Then, seven days must pass and the governing board must adopt its position on the issues in public session.

The teachers' initial request of a one per cent salary increase was sty-

mied by board members when they voted unanimously for no further salary raises, saying that public opinion leaned towards providing funds for student needs.

Representatives from (CON'T ON PAGE 8)

## Los Gatos landmark

### Regal simplicity marks this house

By DONNA PEREIRA

Queen Victoria's architects might have raised an eyebrow or two if they

could have seen what was going up on the corner of Massol and Bachman Avenues in Los Gatos around 1884.

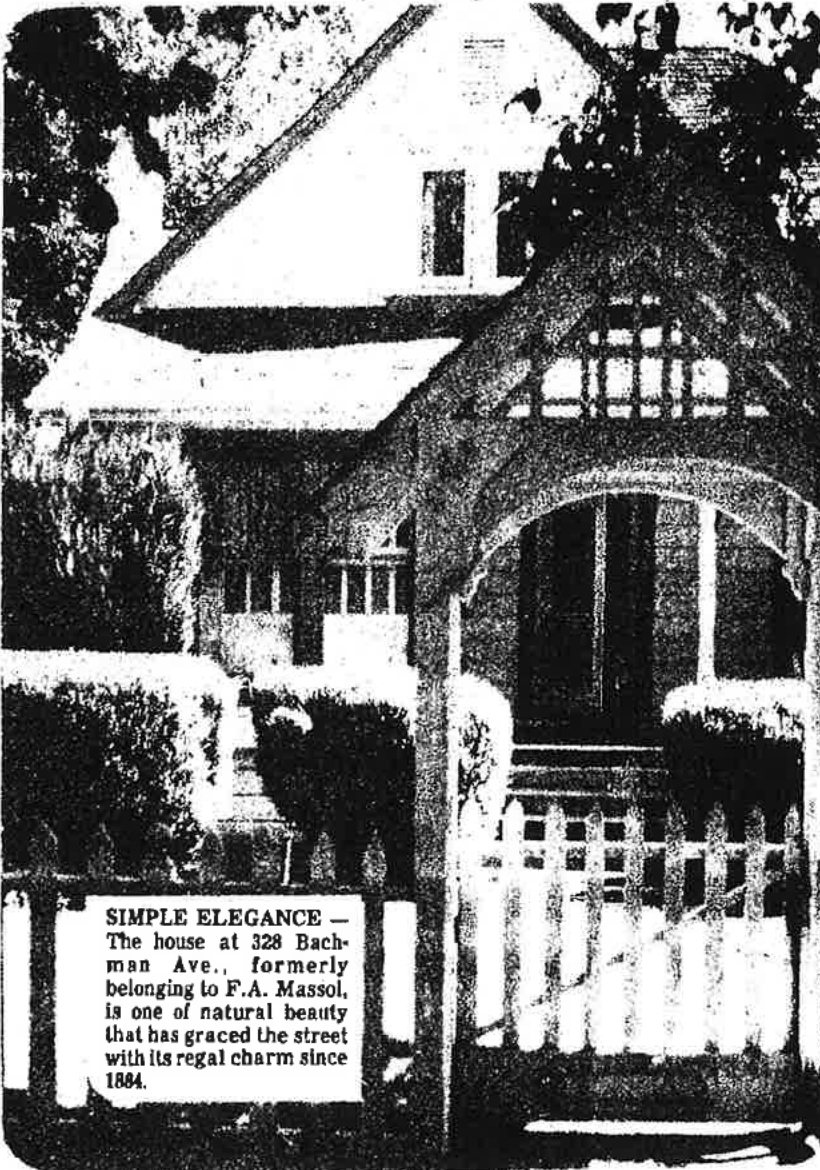
The house had none of their beloved ornateness — no fancy frills, no flirtatious lacework peck-booing provocatively from its facade.

But no doubt its regal simplicity would have pleased the Queen herself, for then, as now, the majestic structure seems to disdain any embellishment to its royal look.

One extravagance is permitted, however. It's the unbroken line of towering elm trees, stately in their own right, which have stood on two sides of the house like faithful subjects throughout the years. Other than their leaves on the lawn, no adornment seems necessary.

This charming house, presently owned and inhabited by the Spencer Anderson family, was first

(CON'T ON PAGE 8)



**SIMPLE ELEGANCE —** The house at 328 Bachman Ave., formerly belonging to F.A. Massol, is one of natural beauty that has graced the street with its regal charm since 1884.

## Saratoga to host p

Faculty and staff will play host to the parents of Saratoga High School students at the annual Back-to-School Night on Tuesday, Sept. 30, at 7:30 p.m. in the gymnasium.

Prior to the general meeting and class visitations, the Parent Teacher Student Association will sponsor a spaghetti dinner, beginning at 5:45 p.m. in the cafeteria.

The evening will begin with a general meeting in the gymnasium at 7:30. Parents will be dismissed

### TEMPERATURES

Friday	74-55
Saturday	80-49
Sunday	79-52
Monday	78-55

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y



original deeds found during a title search in the town archives.

### OWNERSHIP CHAIN

Mrs. Anderson, who is very interested in the history of the house, obtained copies of the old records and linked together its chain of ownership.

F. A. Massol claimed property which was bordered by Saratoga, Bachman, Massol and Santa Cruz Avenues. His 22-acre almond orchard was the oldest orchard in Los Gatos, most of the trees having reached the ripe old age of 15 in the year 1888.

Massol's only child was a son, Fen, who served Los Gatos as a councilman and was mayor of the town from 1894 to 1897. He was also considered one of the leading jewelers in Los Gatos and was active in the real estate business as well.

The Massols lived in their solid redwood home until 1892, when it was sold upon the death of the owner by his wife for "\$10 in gold coins" to Frank F. Watkins, a pharmacist with a drug store on Santa Cruz Avenue.

"He was a funny little guy," Dr. Horace Jones of Los Gatos recently mused. "Watkins had a very dry sense of humor — his head was slightly balding and he wore gold-rimmed specs."

### PHONE EXCHANGE

When the building occupied by the Sunset Telephone and Telegraph Company (where the Rex Hotel now stands) was burned in 1891, Watkins set up a telephone exchange in the small office behind his drug store. There he installed a public telephone and operated it on a commission basis.

According to Dr. George Bruntz, author of "The History of Los Gatos," the exchange remained there until 1909, when it was moved to the building now occupied by Crall's Book-

### ATTIC

The father of three daughters, he is believed by Mrs. Anderson to have converted the house's huge attic into bedroom for his offspring. There was only one bedroom downstairs and one other room which could conceivably have been one — it's now the Anderson's library.

Providing a more substantial clue in the opening of the attic, is the fact that the Andersons discovered all the locks upstairs engraved with the date, 1902 — a year the house was occupied by Watkins.

Having three daughters themselves, the Andersons now find the pharmacist's plan quite suitable to their own needs.

When Watkins moved, he sold the house to Mr. and Mrs. L.A. McClure. Mary McClure is credited by Mrs. Anderson and other townspeople who know her, with having lightened up the formerly dark and rather sober dwelling.

She added another window in the living room, along with a fireplace, and enlarged two downstairs doorways. She also included a side porch with a door leading from the dining room.

came to relax and talk of music with Mrs. McClure, a piano teacher.

In 1945, Mrs. McClure, then a widow, sold her home. The dignified old house was to change hands five times after her ownership, until it was finally bought by the Andersons in 1971.

But despite its many owners, the house remains basically the same. Mr. and Mrs. Anderson have spent many hours stripping, waxing and buffing its original hardwood floors downstairs and scraping layers of paint from Mr. Massol's intricately designed door hinges.

Antiqued patterns are sunken into the solid brass hinges, now polished to a shine, to give the unaffected house a tiny touch of ornateness within its walls.

There's still a furnace pulley in the dining room that was used to open the old converted coal burner vent in the basement, which sent streams of heat shooting through a grill in the dining room floor. The Andersons have since put a furnace upstairs and downstairs.

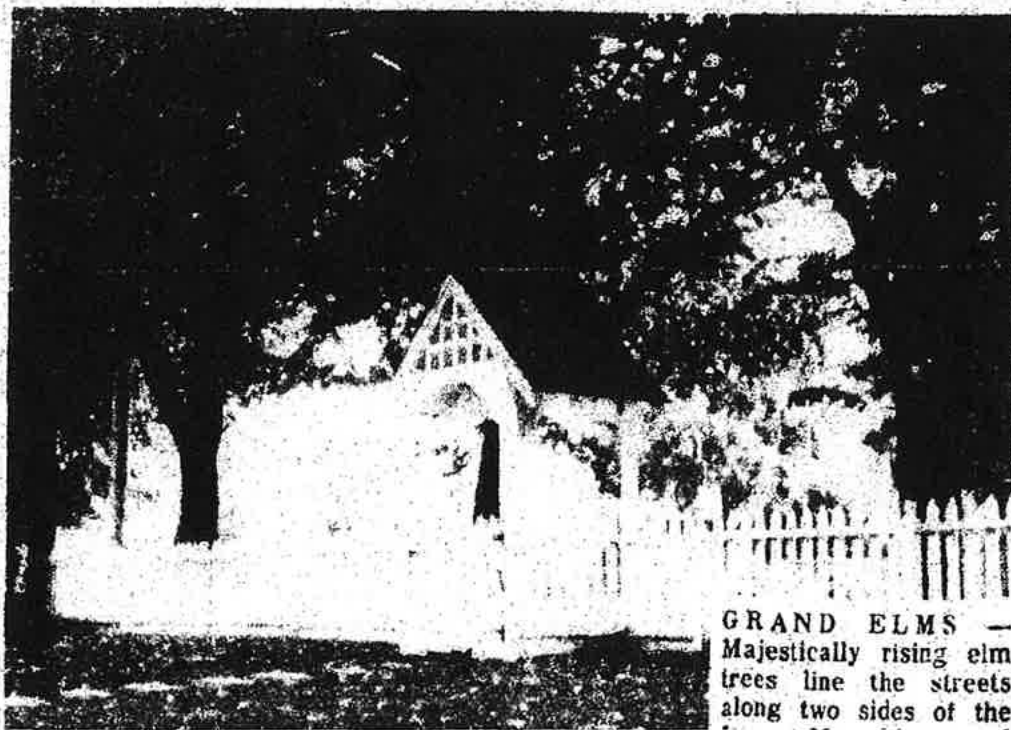
A brick chimney stands in the basement and

### INTERIOR

The Andersons have spruced up the interior of the house in many small ways, including applying gold leaf paint to the original dust catchers on the "attic" stairs and adding their hand-painted shutters to the living room windows.

A major project they're working on now, is the remodeling of a room downstairs, which will open onto the back patio. The building is being done by Mr. Anderson, and the room features a beautiful bay window overlooking the patio in the backyard.

On the exterior, the Andersons added the white picket fence that now surrounds the house, and the charming arbor gateway leading into the grounds. The wide front porch, which had once been screened, offers a restful place where the scenic beauty of the elms and surrounding area may be enjoyed. It is the same natural view of simplistic beauty that the queenly house has offered all of its occupants.



GRAND ELMS — Majestically rising elm trees line the streets along two sides of the



- METROSCAN PROPERTY PROFILE -

328 Bachman

Mary McClure - 1934 to approx 1945

1. Added fireplace in living room.
2. Enlarged narrow parlor & living room doorways
3. Added small porch off dining room.
4. Front porch was screened in with climbing roses & honey suckle.
5. Garage had been in lower back yard.
6. Downstairs bath enlarged sometime after 1945.

328 Bachman Ave. - Anderson



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LOS GATOS MUSEUM ASSOCIATION  
A Non-Profit Corporation  
Main and Taft  
Los Gatos, California 95030  
Phone 354-9782

CULTURAL HISTORY



NATURAL HISTORY

Dear Los Gatos Home Owner\*:

The Los Gatos Museum Association has been requested by the Town Council to compile a list of the older buildings within the city limits of Los Gatos for historical purposes.

If you have any information on the past history of your home or any other in the area, or any historical knowledge of Los Gatos commercial property, we would be very grateful if you would note those facts on the following form and return it to me within five days.

We will be concerned with only those buildings constructed (and still standing) between 1850 and 1900. The cut-off date is January 1, 1900.

Please telephone me at [redacted] if you have a question regarding the survey.

Your help will be truly appreciated.

Sincerely,

*Mardi Gualtieri*

Mardi Gualtieri (Mrs. Antony)

\*If you are renting your home and feel that it is worth investigation would you please inform me so that I may contact the owner for further details? Thank you.

HISTORICAL HOME SURVEY

(Answer as many questions as you can)

(Return in 5 days to:  
Mrs. Antony Gualtieri  
38 Alpine Ave.-Los Gatos)

(Please Print) <sup>New owner in June:</sup>

Name: <sup>Barbara G.</sup> FRANK J. BURGE <sup>Spencer Anderson</sup>

Phone: [redacted]

Address: 328 BACHMAN  
Street

LOS GATOS  
City Zip

Home-  
owner:  Renting:   
If renting, owner's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of construction: (known) \_\_\_\_\_ (estimated) 1894 - 1895

Builder's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of ORIGINAL owner: \_\_\_\_\_  
Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of subsequent owners:

- Mrs. & Mrs. Watkins (i.s. Mrs. F. Burge)  
Date Address
- Mrs. & Donald Packard " "

Other facts of historical interest please include on reverse side.

*Anderson purchased July 1971*



[PLEASE PRINT]

LOS GATOS HISTORIC PROPERTY PROFILE -

Los Gatos Museum Association  
Historic Home Survey

Street:

Duchman

Informant:

M. Gattien

House number:

328

Phone:

351-1940

Present owners: M & M Spencer Anderson

Phone: 4-5825

Estimated construction date: ca. 1900 - C.A.R., 1885 - A.E.G.; 1896 - G.T.R.

Ownership: <sup>1891</sup> Early Builder: Mass. I.S. ?

Original: FRANK F. WATKINS

Occupation: pharmacist

(year of purchase)

19\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_  
19\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_  
19\_\_ : Mr. Frank Furge

" "  
" "  
" "  
" "

(Present owner)

1971: M & M Spencer & Eleanor Anderson

" "

Occupants: (is City Dir. & Tel. Dir.)

19\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_  
1918: F. E. Watkins  
1923: " Mrs. Lillian Gould  
1935: L. A. McClure

Occupation:

" "  
" "  
" "

History: (Please identify information source.)

1. S. Dea Rankin Frank F. Watkins, co-owner with D. Skunkel Jr. of drug store located at intersection of Santa Cruz & Main (N.W. corner). His three daughters were Laura (later wife of Dr. Baird), Helen (Marjorie Holder) & Cecile.  
2. S. Tel. Dir. 1904 F. F. Watkins listed as Pres. of L.G. Cemetery Assn., also Cashier for Bank of Los Gatos.

Return to:  
Alpine Ave.  
Los Gatos, Ca.

Remodeling: (Please identify information source and year of change.)

M & M Spencer Anderson have undertaken extensive remodeling



(45 Broadway), were nurses or caregivers. One had been a patient, well have been patients. One reads about individuals not expected to live long who in fact lived for decades longer. Whether this was because of Los Gatos' extraordinary climate, we cannot say. But we are fortunate to enjoy its weather and its scenic beauty to this day!

### • ABOUT THE BELLRINGER PROJECT •



The Town of Los Gatos established the Bellringer Project in 1976, in concert with the nation's centennial celebrations. A total of 100 awards were to be presented to homeowners whose house was built before 1901 and who had demonstrated efforts to maintain and preserve their historic home. Initial criteria required work on the home to be complete prior to award; however, that proved too difficult, and some awards were made based on work in progress. In 1976, 62 awards were made, and 6 additional awards were presented in 1977. To reach the goal of 100, the Bellringer II project was established in 1987, in conjunction with the Town's centennial celebrations. An additional 32 awards were presented that year, satisfying the goal of 100 Bellringer awards.

Recipients received a certificate listing all the recipients and a doorbell plaque shaped like a cat's head. The award was designed by Mr. Ron Cassel, the metal shop instructor at Los Gatos High School, and the plaques were made by Los Gatos High School Shop students.

Bellringer Project plaques are attached to the front entry of homes receiving the award, notably the tour homes at 33 Glen Ridge and 45 Broadway.

THE MUSEUMS OF LOS GATOS HISTORIC HOMES TOUR

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