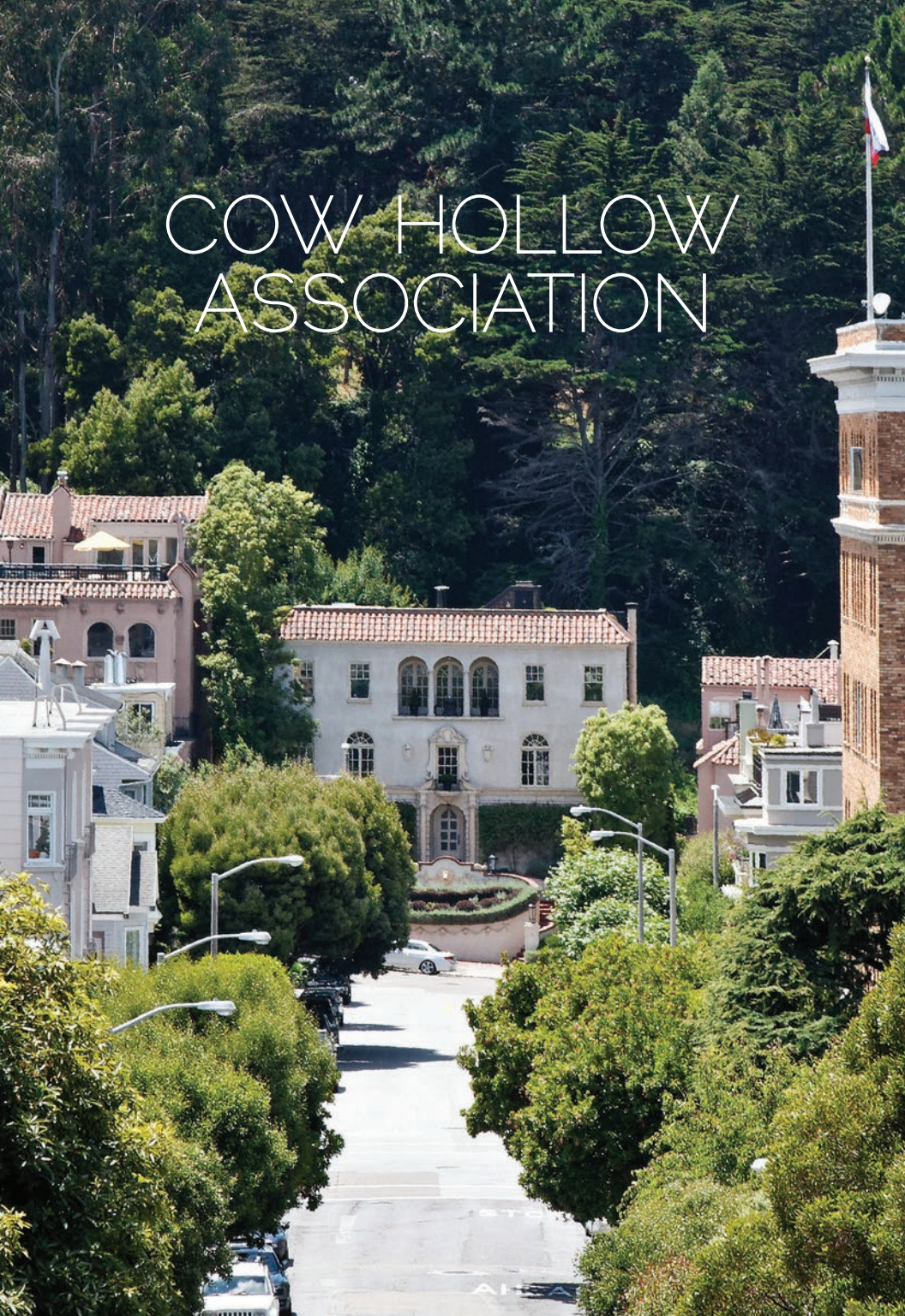


COW HOLLOW ASSOCIATION



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WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK

Butch Hayes of Compass Real Estate, Cal-Mart and First Republic Bank
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David Parry for historical and architectural information.

Cow Hollow History

The first known residents of the neighborhood we now call Cow Hollow were the Yelamu tribe of the Ohlone/Costanoan people. Before the arrival of the Spanish, the Costanoan lands stretched as far south as Big Sur and as far east as the Salinas Valley. It is generally thought that they arrived in the Bay Area in the 6th century AD. These hunters and gatherers were able to subsist on the bounty available. Obvious foodies like the generations that followed them, they feasted on acorns, nuts, seeds, and berries as well as mussels, seals, bird eggs and deer.

The first European settlements on the San Francisco Peninsula occurred in 1776 with the simultaneous establishment of the Presidio of San Francisco by the Spanish military under the authority of Lt. Jose Moraga, and Mission Dolores by Franciscan friars under the leadership of Father Junipero Serra. The Presidio of San Francisco was established as the northernmost Spanish military outpost in Alta California. Spanish soldiers probably gathered wood and hunted for deer in what is now Cow Hollow. Natural spring water was available within the Presidio, but additional supplies could be had at the spring-fed lake known during the Spanish period as Laguna Pequena ("Little Lagoon"), and during the American period as Washerwoman's Lagoon. The lake, whose shoreline touched Filbert Street to the south, Franklin Street to the east, Lombard Street to the north, and Octavia Street to the west, was the most important feature in what would become the neighborhood of Cow Hollow.

The era of Spanish colonial rule was short. In 1821 Mexico declared independence from Spain, taking with it most of the remote province of Alta California. During the period of Mexican rule, a small village grew up around a dusty plaza (now Portsmouth Square) near Yerba Buena Cove. The village, also known as Yerba Buena, served as a minor trading center inhabited by a few hundred people. In 1839, a few streets were laid out around the Plaza, allowing settlement to expand part way up Nob Hill. In 1846, civic authorities hired a surveyor named Jasper O'Farrell to lay out Market Street and to divide the land on either side of the wide artery into blocks and lots.

Residential development of Cow Hollow occurred very slowly except for the eastern portion near Washerwoman's Lagoon. Urban residential development would have to wait for better access in the form of public transportation. Other factors retarding residential growth were the large number of dairies, hog farms, and slaughter-houses in the area, which contaminated the water supply. Although the Department of Public Health ordered the removal of the dairies in 1855, most did not leave Cow Hollow until the 1870s when development pressures began to force the issue.

The removal of the dairies was only the first step toward residential development. About the same time the City hired contractors to remove the sand hills that still dominated much of Cow Hollow. The sand was dumped into the Bay, creating the earliest dry land in what is now the Marina. Residential development occurred in fits and starts. Truck farms still predominated on low-lying tracts closer to Lombard Street. Zoning did not exist and landowners could build whatever they wanted.

By 1890, Cow Hollow was a strange hodgepodge of grand estates such as the Casebolt House, built in 1867 and still standing at 2727 Pierce Street, blacksmith shops, truck farms, and small clusters of Victorian row houses built on speculation.

The 1906 earthquake and fire made thousands of San Franciscans homeless. In the aftermath of the fire, many residents in the destroyed area moved to outlying parts of the city to rebuild. After 1906, the eastern reaches of Cow Hollow began to develop quite rapidly.

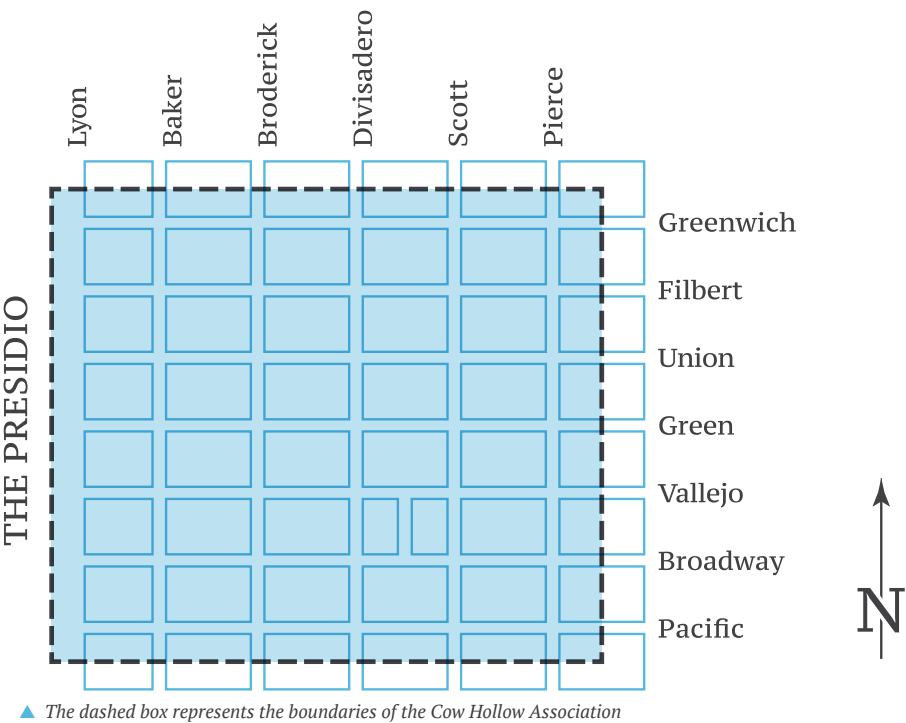


▲ Circa 1910 postcard of Union Street homes between Divisadero and Broderick Streets

Location

Cow Hollow is located on the north side of San Francisco between the Presidio (part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area) to the west, the Marina to the north, and Pacific Heights to the south. The Cow Hollow Association covers the residential area from Lyon Street to Pierce Street and Pacific Avenue to Lombard Street as outlined below. Principal shopping, dining, and entertainment are found just outside our boundaries on Fillmore, Union, and Chestnut Streets.

COW HOLLOW NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARIES





▲ A view west toward the Presidio along Green Street includes the Russian Consulate (inactive, with the flag pole on the right), and 2601 Lyon Street at the far end of the street just in front of the Presidio.



▲ A view of the Bay to the north from Divisadero Street



▲ A view of Russian Hill to the east from Scott Street

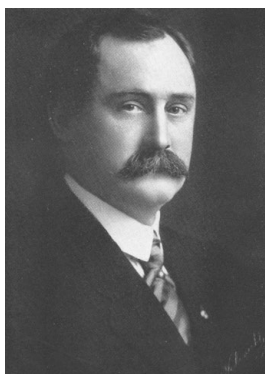
A Sampling of Cow Hollow Homes

The neighborhood's traditional grid street layout provides ease of circulation and block dimensions that are characteristic of many older San Francisco residential neighborhoods. The fact that this street and block arrangement is preserved even on the steeper blocks in the neighborhood creates a reasonable uniformity of building lot coverage and setbacks, building height, views, and mid-block open space.

These attributes of individual lots and structures largely define the Cow Hollow neighborhood character. Cow Hollow's topographic features exert a defining effect on the architectural features of the homes. In addition, the topography influences the microclimate in Cow Hollow, specifically the sun, fog, and wind.

There are too many significant Cow Hollow homes to photograph and comment on for this booklet, so we have provided some representative buildings to offer a glimpse of the neighborhood's architecture and history.

The Cow Hollow neighborhood exhibits a diversity of building types: large single-family detached residences in the higher elevation areas; one and two family attached residences on smaller lots throughout much of the neighborhood, and multi-family structures typically on corner lots and in the lower elevation areas. Despite this diversity of building types, buildings are predominately two and three stories.



Many prominent architects contributed to Cow Hollow's neighborhood character. William Walter Rednall (1859-1946) was one of the most prolific architect/builders and responsible for much of Cow Hollow's attractiveness and uniformity.

Rednall was born in New Bedford, Massachusetts in 1859, one of five children. At the age of 20, he moved his family to San Francisco. Rednall married Carrie Springer in December 1887, and they lived in a number of San Francisco homes.



◀ 2500 Filbert

In September 1904 Rednall had the chance to buy a prime Cow Hollow view parcel from real estate developer John C. Brickell on the northwest corner of Filbert and Scott for an outlay of \$14,500. This was too good to pass up. Rednall initially saw the opportunity to subdivide the parcel into five lots and designed the buildings at 2500, 2506, 2512, 2518 and 2524 Filbert Street. He moved his family into 2500 Filbert Street upon completion.



▲ 2526 Vallejo Street

Another Rednall-designed building is the brown-shingled home located at 2526 Vallejo Street built in 1922.

Rednall also built this fine Mediterranean-style corner home at 2800 Vallejo Street in 1924 for former Olympic Club rugby player, insurance broker and real estate investor, Felton Taylor.



▲ 2800 Vallejo

In 1929, Rednall designed and built an 18-unit building at 3101 Scott Street, on the corner of Greenwich, one block down the hill from his residence at 2500 Filbert Street.



▲ 3101 Scott Street

William W. Rednall died on August 9, 1946, aged 87.

We are fortunate to be able to enjoy the legacy of his work in Cow Hollow today.

The house at the corner of Pierce and Vallejo was constructed in 1905 for Eugene E. Schmitz who had been the City's mayor in 1902. The Second World



▲ 2501 Vallejo Street

War left many Norwegian seamen stranded outside of Norway when the Nazis invaded Norway in 1940. In 1941 Norwegian Consul, Lars Christensen Sr., who was also a ship owner, bought and gave the house to the sailors of Norway as a seaman's center, a "home-away-from-home," and the building became known as the Norway House. In 1992 Norway House opened its doors to non-seamen and became a bed & breakfast. In October 2003 the Norway House Foundation sold the property to a private family.



▲ 2727 Pierce Street

The Casebolt House located at 2727 Pierce Street, one of the most renowned homes in Cow Hollow, was completed by Henry Casebolt in 1867. William C. Hoagland and John J. Newsom were the architects of this Italianate manor house.

Henry Casebolt was a blacksmith from Virginia, who came to California around the Horn in 1851 with his 11 children. He used enormous ship's timbers to support the four corners

of the 4-story home. At the time, Mr. Casebolt owned the entire block, which included a spring, a cow pasture, vegetable gardens, a barn, a carriage house, a windmill and a lake with an artificial island as well as a waterfall. Mr. Casebolt invented the cable car grip, which is still in use today, virtually unchanged from the day he invented it. Mary Casebolt attended San Francisco High School. She was a member of the first class in 1858. She was a "faithful & diligent scholar," according to her report card.



▲ 2820 Scott Street

The history of this Italianate-style mansion began in 1905, when Eugene and Olive Grace purchased the lot and commissioned James A. McCullough to design and build one of the first houses on Scott Street between Green and Vallejo. The estimated cost was \$12,000. The Graces arrived in San Francisco in the 1890s. A local newspaper described Eugene Grace as “a thoroughbred Southern gentleman.” Grace worked in the wholesale food business.

It is rumored that in the 1920s, 2820 Scott Street was suitably prepared as the

temporary residence of Queen Marie of Romania, friend of sugar heiress Alma de Bretteville Spreckels. It is also suggested that she did not actually come to California because the Southern Pacific Railroad demanded a payment for her private train to use their track.



▲ 2880 Green Street

2880 Green Street was built in 1917 and designed by Edward E. Young, who was born in Carthage, Missouri in 1870. He moved to San Francisco in 1902 and started work as a contractor. During his 30-year career, Young’s output was prolific, building several hundred structures. His work included the Francisca Club at 595 Sutter (1919) and Hotel California at 403 Taylor (1925). A block to the east of 2880 Green Street he designed the apartment

building at 2790 Green Street in 1922, which became the Russian Consulate.



▲ 2485 Union Street

windows, decorative cornices, and ornate lobbies, all of which are present at 2485 Union Street.

This six-unit building was originally built as apartments and converted to condominiums in 1979. It is located on the southeast corner of Scott and Union Streets. The building was designed in 1925 by H. C. Baumann, who was born in Oakland in 1890. Baumann's many San Francisco apartment buildings typically have projecting bays, rounded



▲ 2601 Lyon Street

Headman. In 2001, 2601 Lyon was used as the location for the filming of the movie, *The Princess Diaries*, starring Anne Hathaway and Julie Andrews. It was also the home of Bob Lurie, former owner of the San Francisco Giants, from 1980 to 1994.

2601 Lyon was designed by August C. Headman in 1924. It is an Italian Renaissance villa with a Beaux-Arts double-curved staircase. 2601 Lyon is the center of a group of six structures; the other five being duplexes at 2525 through 2637 Lyon, all designed by

2676-86 Union Street was designed by Samuel Newsom in 1908 for Theodore Kytka, who advertised himself as a handwriting expert. Apparently he was more than that. A document released by the CIA in 1978 intended to teach U.S. postal inspectors how to detect secret ink included this comment attributed to



▲ 2676-86 Union Street

Theodore Kytka written circa 1917, “There are a number of other methods used by spies and smugglers, according to the skill and education of the criminals, such as placing writings under postage stamps, wrapping messages in medicine capsules and engraving messages on toe-nails, which later would be made visible with powdered charcoal.”



▲ 2980 Vallejo Street

2980 Vallejo Street was designed by Edgar Mathews as his own home, completed in 1908. For five years, it was the only home on the block. It is a classic Mathews home, appearing as a small English cottage with a steep roof line, overhanging entry porch, curved window sashes, and low brick wall. Mathews

and his wife lived in the house until 1935. The subsequent owner commissioned Earle Bertz to expand the home on the downslope towards Green Street. Today it is five stories tall in the rear with each level having views of the Bay.

Cow Hollow Flora and Fauna

As one ambles along the East/West streets or struggles up the North/South streets of Cow Hollow, one is bewitched by the profusion of street trees and the multitude of front gardens. While most of the lush greenery of the neighborhood is tantalizingly hidden in the back yards, residents often create miniature oases of beauty that delight the passer-by.

The micro-climate that prevails in Cow Hollow permits abundant choices for garden styles. Fragrant jasmine, spectacular bougainvillea and not-as-delicate-as-it-looks wisteria are common along our streets. The sunnier south-facing gardens have an easier time establishing themselves, but intrepid gardeners are known to coax the north-facing plots to bloom.

A huge variety of trees grace Cow Hollow from the occasional towering redwood to the delicate cherry trees. Many of the trees are quite mature and have transformed the once semi-barren landscape of sand dunes from earlier days. Numerous addresses have at least two sidewalk trees; corner lots can have as many as ten. It is now the responsibility of the city to maintain street trees. Sidewalk repair now falls on the homeowner.

Cow Hollow's proximity to The Presidio, a unique urban National Park, makes it an easy jaunt for some of the Park's wildlife. Raccoons are plentiful and are met with varying degrees of welcome by the human denizens. Skunks have been known to wander into our yards, resulting every once in a while in a needed tomato bath for an unfortunate dog.

Birds are prevalent in Cow Hollow, often nesting in both the street trees and the rear gardens. Commonly seen birds include rock and mourning doves, starlings, vireos, larks, swallows, scrub jays, robins, mockingbirds, warblers, hummingbirds, Western gull and sparrows. From time to time, an egret, screech-owl, red-tailed hawk or kestrel will venture beyond the Presidio gates. The famous parrots of Telegraph Hill love to fly in formation into Cow Hollow, turning our otherwise relatively calm neighborhood into a loud bird party zone, particularly after indulging in a few too many juniper berries.

Cow Hollow Association

The Cow Hollow Association (CHA) was established in 1946 to protect and preserve the residential character of one of San Francisco's most distinctive neighborhoods. We are one of the most active San Francisco associations with a commitment to community involvement and improved quality of life.

CHA members receive notifications of important issues as they arise via newsletters, emails, and the Association's website, cowhollowassociation.org.

The Association is comprised of residents, both homeowners and renters, who live within the Association's boundaries. CHA's general membership meets once a year at an annual meeting in May, and the Board meets monthly. In between, lots of volunteer work gets done by committees.

Active CHA Board committees include: Zoning, Traffic/Parking, Neighborhood Enhancement and The Presidio. The CHA committees provide a strong voice on matters that affect both the neighborhood and the City at large. Some of the issues include:

- Work with CHA neighbors on zoning issues
- Help remodelers and developers comply with Cow Hollow Neighborhood Design Guidelines
- Recommend parking permit changes to reduce the impact from construction projects
- Represent the neighborhood on SFMTA initiatives – as an example, keeping large commuter buses off our neighborhood streets
- Opposing new zoning laws that would allow taller buildings on Lombard that could affect Urban Vistas and homeowner's privacy.
- Continue to press for the undergrounding of overhead utilities and wires.

Join the Cow Hollow Association today!

Full Name(s):

Address:

City:..... State:..... Zip:.....

Email address:

Home Phone (optional):

Cell Phone (optional):.....

Send \$45.00 check to:

Cow Hollow Association, P. O. Box 471136, San Francisco, CA 94147

Board members meet monthly on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm.
The term of office is two years. Many Board members move onto the CHA
Advisory Board where their years of experience continue to serve our community.

Please see our website **CowHollowAssociation.org** for a list of current Board
members




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