

How psychedelics saved the Victorians

A colorful stretch in Bernal Heights



Nami Sumida and Jade Wang/S.F. Chronicle

These four homes are a part of one of San Francisco's most colorful blocks.

Acid-fueled color schemes made once-reviled houses famous

By Peter Hartlaub
CULTURE CRITIC

There was a time when San Francisco leaders couldn't demolish Victorian homes fast enough.

They were called an architectural "pestilence" and derided as "Gothic horrors." Even the beloved Painted Ladies along Alamo Square, stars of the "Full House" opening credits and now a Top 10 San Francisco tourist attraction, were in a zone slated for demolition.

Then something unexpected happened: Bright colors arrived.

A 1960s and early 1970s movement to save the ornate homes coincided with the first bold paint jobs on Victorians, layering the facades with seven colors or more. The trend appeared organically and then spread, like a rainbow wand had been waved up and down the block. And with the color came attention — and value.

"Victorians are survivors that have ended up winning," said Woody LaBounty, president and CEO of San Francisco Heritage, an architectural preservation group. **Victorians continues on A9**



S.F. Chronicle

A Victorian-style home in S.F. left in decrepit condition is slated for demolition in 1959. The city's Victorians were razed by the hundreds in the 1940s and '50s.

"People connect San Francisco with Victorians now. It's like getting rid of the cable cars. You wouldn't consider it."

Woody LaBounty, president and CEO of San Francisco Heritage

We analyzed 115,000 homes to find S.F.'s most colorful areas

By Sarah Feldberg, Nami Sumida and Evan Wagstaff
STAFF WRITERS

When Jenna and Stephan Abdo bought their Noe Valley home in 2021, it was painted a peeling green with bland yellow trim. When they looked at the color, they felt nothing.

So when the couple had to replace and repaint some siding on the back of the Edwardian house last year, it seemed like an opportunity for a bigger change. They wanted to take all the effervescence they felt about owning their first home and make it visible.

As it turned out, that looked like an eight-shade palette built around an aquatic teal with white and dark teal trim, red-brown accents and some well-positioned gold leaf.

"Ugh. I wish there was more of it," Jenna says, laughing.

The striking result might stand out in some towns. But in San Francisco, the Abdos felt empowered to make a statement in paint.

San Francisco is known for its colorful homes: Victorians **Houses continues on A8**

Prices for oil jump as war widens

Conflict endangers output, shipping

By Alex Veiga, Elaine Kurtenbach and Wyatt Grantham-Philips
ASSOCIATED PRESS

Oil prices continued to soar on Monday as the Iran war intensified, threatening production and shipping across the Middle East and straining energy supplies worldwide.

The price of Brent crude, the international benchmark, briefly surged to \$119.50 per barrel on Monday — its highest level since the summer after Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022. West Texas Intermediate, which is produced in the United States, soared to \$119.48 per barrel at one point.

Those prices fell under the \$100 mark later Monday. But that's still much higher than the roughly \$70 a barrel that crude was selling for before the U.S. and Israel launched the war against Iran on Feb. 18. **Mideast continues on A11**

Off-road group aids souls stuck in the snow

By Gregory Thomas
STAFF WRITER

By the time Emil Vasilenko and his buddies decided to turn their trucks around on the remote forest road and head back down to the main highway, they were all but trapped in a blizzard.

It was mid-February and the eight friends were attempting a 4x4 adventure across Mormon Emigrant Trail, the 25-mile back road in the mountains between Kirkwood and Pollock Pines that is a popular objective for off-roaders and snow wheelers. While attempting to U-turn on a patch of icy road high in the El Dorado County hills, Vasilenko's friend's Dodge Ram slid into a ditch and became stuck. All eight men, cold and wet, piled into Vasilenko's Toyota 4Runner. **Rescuers continues on A11**

Thrill-seeker was facing amputation — then he set his sights higher and higher

By Aldo Toledo
STAFF WRITER

Whipping winds tore across an exposed ridge on Mount Russell, but Mike Tagg would not turn back.

It was Sept. 17 last year, his 35th birthday, and he intended the 14,000-foot summit to be a gift that would hold special meaning forever.

This wasn't just another Sierra peak for Tagg — it was the last one.

"This is it," he thought. "This is the end of my self-imposed challenge."

That challenge, to climb all 15 of California's tallest mountains in a single season, would be

9 years after skydiving accident, man summits California's 15 tallest peaks in single season

tough for anyone. But for Tagg, who lives in Los Angeles, a summit is more meaningful than for most. There were years he wasn't sure he would ever walk again — let alone stand on top of California.

It was a bright, sunny day outside Taft (Kern County) in 2016. Tagg, who was training for his skydiving license, had just solo-jumped off a plane like he'd done countless times.

Everything felt routine, so he pulled his chute. But as he fell, the air suddenly turned choppy. Updrafts started buffeting him.

As he neared the ground, Tagg flared his chute to land, pulling on his brakes too hard. He was floating about 15 feet from the ground when he abruptly plummeted, landing straight onto his right foot.

He heard it before he felt it, snapping "like a two-by-four."

After writhing in pain on the ground, Tagg took a minute to compose himself. Nothing like this had happened before. A thrill-seeker always in search of an adrenaline hit, Tagg had somehow never as much as sprained an ankle.

Now he was on the ground with his lower tibia and fibula shattered. He tried to stand up, putting pressure on the foot, but he winced in pain and dropped onto his back. Maybe he could hop, he thought. But finding it too painful, he resorted to crab-walking half a mile back across the airfield.

As he sat in the ambulance heading to the hospital, he told himself the injury was temporary. Sure, it looked pretty bad, but he was young. Healthy.

But Tagg didn't know this was the beginning of the hardest decade in his life.

"I always thought, if you break something, you go to the hospital." **Climber continues on A7**