



## This home, built outside 'Colony' period, still local authentic 'historic' residence

**Editor's Note:** Atascadero's "Colony Home" period is considered to be 1915 to 1924. E.G. Lewis was forced into involuntary receivership in 1925 and the community was run by Seattle Attorney Oscar Willett, who formed the Atascadero Development Syndicate (ADS). Headquarters for the ADS were on the mezzanine floor in the original Carlton Hotel. The home owned by Tom and Peggy O'Malley was built in the city's "second" historic period. The Historical Society felt this home would be an excellent one to be included on its annual home tour.

By Happy Larsen  
Staff Writer/Photographer

Walking up to the O'Malley house at 6650 Portola Road is like taking a step back to the Roaring '20's.

Harry and Minnie Peterson built the house around 1927, in the "Hollywood" style. The Petersons had purchased the property, which was mainly pastureland and orchards, in the early 1920's and lived in a guesthouse until the main house was finished.

Harry Peterson owned the first gentleman's clothing shop in

Atascadero, which was in La Plaza, on Traffic Way and Olmeda Avenue.

The house is slowly being returned to the 1920's era by Tom and Peggy O'Malley, who have owned the property since 1995. Many of the items in the house are from the original home of the Petersons, and some have been purchased from historic places throughout the community.

While the original wrought-iron work on the house was created by the same person who did the work over at Hearst Castle, the wrought iron balcony that is on the front of the house today came from the Atascadero Inn (which, by the way, was created from the old La Plaza building in which Harry Peterson had his men's furnishings store).

The O'Malleys have other historic memorabilia from the Carlton Hotel coffee shop and other businesses from Atascadero's past. Part of the original artifacts in the home is the piano that is in the front room was owned by Minnie Peterson, according to Tom.

"I have a scar on my eyebrow from falling against this piano as a small boy," he said.

Tom's parents built the house

next door to the Petersons in the 1940's and he attended the "Good News Club" at the Peterson home when he was younger. He also did yard work for them when he was in elementary school.

He owns his parent's two and half acres next door still, and has landscaped the total five acres between the two houses into a beautiful garden.

The O'Malleys are continually doing improvements on the house to renovate it to its original time period.

"We had to remove the 60's look that had been done to it," said Peggy.

The house was owned by the Mulder family for eight years after the Petersons, and then the Adams family lived there for 20 years before the O'Malleys purchased it.

The Petersons at one point had turned the house and outlying buildings into six rental units for military families during WWII.

"They had some difficulties financially after the Great Depression," said Tom. "So they rented out part of the house and the buildings to the military to pay for things."



Tom and Peggy O'Malley enjoy the outdoor patio of their vintage home. News Photo by Happy Larsen.

## You can buy tickets at each home

Tickets for the Historical Society's annual Colony Home Tour Saturday (tomorrow), 1 to 4 p.m. are \$10 per person for members and \$12 to non-members.

The Colony Home Tour is a fundraiser put on each year by the Society to help with ongoing activities, insurance, maintenance of the Colony House and gardens and more.

Members of the Society serve as docents at the homes. Sally Tippman is chairwoman of the Colony Home Tour. The four homes in this year's tour include:

- 4400 Portola Rd. -- The Caulder-Garrry House which was built in 1917. It has been owned by the same family since it was first built;

- 7250 Portola Rd. -- Built in 1915 by Marie S. Longmaid. Owned today by John and Ladonna DeCou;

- 6650 Portola Rd. -- Owned by Tom and Peggy O'Malley. The home was built in 1927;

- 8780 Junipero Ave. -- built in 1915 by William Jones. The home is owned by Chris Dumas and April Stevens.

Tickets are available at the Chamber of Commerce, the Historical Society Museum or you can get them at any of the homes on the tour. You can go in any order.

The line drawings of each of the four homes shown on the tickets were drawn by local artist Ken Gouff for the Historical Society, something he has done for several years. In addition to drawings of all the homes, each ticket contains a brief description, the address and a map. If you need additional information, call Lon Allan at 466-8529 or the Museum at 466-8341.

**ABOVE:** This home looks pretty much the way it did when it was completed in the 1920s. **RIGHT:** Tom and Peggy O'Malley at their decorative front door. Wrought iron on front window came from old Atascadero Inn. News Photos by Happy Larsen



## AMERICAN OAK WHOLESALE SALE



Bookcases  
Starting at  
**\$39<sup>98</sup>**

Desk - 68w x 29deep  
Return - 48w x 29deep  
Desk w/Return  
**\$699<sup>98</sup>**



Breakfast Nook  
68x53 • Table 49x35  
**\$599<sup>98</sup>**



4 Drawer  
File Cabinet  
**\$299<sup>98</sup>**

**AMERICAN OAK WHOLESALE**

Financing Available East side of Highway 101, half way between Templeton & Paso Robles  
Open Monday - Saturday, 9am - 6pm • Sunday 10am - 5pm  
Subject to stock on hand • All Products Similar to Illustration

Visit our website:  
[www.american oakwholesalers.com](http://www.american oakwholesalers.com)

Applies to  
new orders only

**2650 Ramada Dr. • Paso Robles • 238-3242**