

# GENTRY

## GOLD

OUR HOLIDAY  
EXTRAVAGANZA

ANNUAL HOME  
RESOURCE GUIDE

DEC '07 WWW.GENTRYMAGAZINE.COM  
\$4.99US

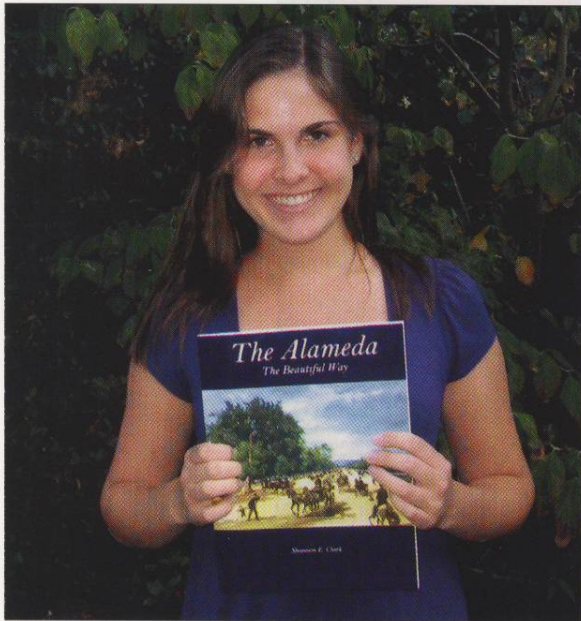
12>



0 71486 01800 1



## A Trip Down Memory Lane



Most of us in the Bay Area know El Camino Real simply as a busy roadway that cuts across neighborhoods and suburbs, takes us to Target and Costco, or holds us in seemingly endless lines of traffic. But to Menlo School graduate Shannon Clark, class of 2005, a drive down this historic roadway means much more. While still in high school, Clark began to uncover the rich but forgotten history behind San Jose's notable section of El Camino known as The Alameda, and immortalized its story in her recently published book *The Alameda: The Beautiful Way*. Gentry caught up with the young UCLA junior on none

other than El Camino Real for coffee and a chat about research, writing, and San Jose's historic street.

### **What inspired you to uncover this aspect of the area's history?**

My father is president of the Alameda Business Association, and they were trying to find ways to revitalize the area. Only 27 of the original 69 historic houses there are left, and we wanted to bring the area back to life. He asked me if I could research the history of the street, so I went to Kelly Park Library and started. A huge history began unraveling, and I quickly realized I could create a book of it. We decided it could be a fundraiser for the ABA to help improve that historic area.

### **How did you set about researching and writing the project?**

I started working in my last month of high school and used all my knowledge from AP History class to do this book. I began doing interviews, and after I met one person, another door would open. I still have people contacting me with histories to share about The Alameda. I'm thinking of doing a second version of the book.

### **How do you think a community can benefit from knowing about its past?**

It gives people pride in where they live, knowing that history can draw attention to an area and help improve it. People are now creating historic murals along The Alameda, businesses are doing better, and now we have a farmer's market there every week.

### **What did you learn from this project, and what do you hope your readers will learn?**

That there is a story behind every location. People thank me all the time for helping them realize the value and history of where they live. [www.the-alameda.com](http://www.the-alameda.com) ■