

KEEPING UP



Governor's Mansion restoration project

Gov. **Brown** and First Lady **Anne Gust Brown**, along with their two corgis, **Sutter** and **Colusa**, will soon call the white Victorian at 1526 H Street home. The **Brown** family will move into the Governor's Mansion once a major renovation project currently underway wraps up, by the end of the year or early 2016. They will be the first residents in the building since **Ronald** and **Nancy Reagan** moved out in 1967 after Mrs. **Reagan** called it a "fire trap."

The renovation work on the 15-room, seven-bathroom house includes upgrades to antiquated electrical and plumbing systems, security enhancements, and installing sprinkler and fire safety systems as well as a modern heating and air conditioning system.

Construction crews have been working on the project since January, and last Friday reporters and photographers were invited for a tour of the house to see the progress firsthand. **Marybel Batjer**, secretary of the Government Operations Agency, along with **Roger Gross**, project construction manager; **Dan Osanna**, supervisor of the cultural resources program for CA State Parks; and **Brian Ferguson**, deputy director of Dept. of General Services led the tour of the 138-year-old building that has housed 13 governors including **George Pardee**, **Hiram Johnson**, **Earl Warren** and **Pat Brown**, **Jerry's** father.

Large portions of the floors, windows, staircase banisters and delicate features including ornate, handmade door knobs and hinges were covered in bubble wrap, paper and plastic as construction continues. **Osanna** says it's crucial to protect those historical features and that's why they're working to make improvements without compromising the character of the house. "We really try to find areas that are tucked away," **Osanna** said. "The closets for example, those were great places to use as chases for plumbing and electrical, so that it wouldn't be obvious."

Several energy and water efficiency upgrades are also being made including installing low-flow water faucets and fixtures. And, reporters were able to climb two flights of narrow staircases up to a cupola to watch as crews were mounting rooftop solar panels. There's also a new electric vehicle charging station in front of the carriage house (where some previous tenants kept their horses and buggies).

The governor's spokesperson, **Evan Westrup**, says while **Brown** doesn't currently own an electric vehicle, there's always a chance he may in the future. With all the energy efficiency upgrades, **Gross** says the project has been given a LEED rating of silver. "Considering this house was built in 1877, that's quite an accomplishment that we were able to get LEED at all," **Gross** said. One of the highlights of the preservation work was a mural dating back to the 1870s that remains on the ceiling in what was used as a billiards room. "That's the stuff we're trying to save," **Osanna** said. Modern tile was being installed in the bathroom in the master bedroom

suite, which also has a large walk-in closet with shoe storage and window seating. No signs of a doggie door for **Sutter** and **Colusa**, but **Batjer** doesn't expect the pets will harm the historic home. "Colusa is still in her obedience training, and she's doing very, very well and Sutter, as I understand, is 85 in dog years, so he's slowed down from what he used to be," **Batjer** said. "This house has had a lot of children live in it so I'm sure they've had a variety of animals and it's done well by them all."