



Alec and Claudia Webster, trustees of the Helen and Will Webster Foundation

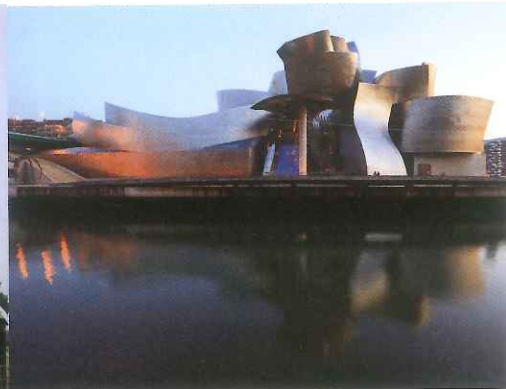
\$5 million gift to give old barn new purpose

When Alec Webster started paying attention to the old Cowell Ranch Hay Barn, a century and a half of use, disuse, and the elements had taken a steep toll. By the time he started really caring, it was clearly falling down.

Still, he saw an amazing opportunity. If restored, the barn could be a way to honor the history of UC Santa Cruz and the land itself, bring new focus to South Campus, add momentum to adjacent environmental and food sustainability programs, and become a catalyst for others to invest in the university.

Webster and his wife Claudia knew they could make the difference, do something that, if cared for, will stand for another 150 years. As trustees of the

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Architect Frank Gehry to be honored at 2013 Founders Celebration

The iconic architect **Frank Gehry**—legendary for his designs for buildings including the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain, and the Walt Disney Concert Hall in downtown Los Angeles—will receive the Foundation Medal at UCSC's Founders Celebration 2013.

The award-winning architect is often described as one of the most important and influential architects of our time.

Don and Diane Cooley, long-time supporters and advocates of UCSC, will receive the Fiat Lux Award.

The Alumni Achievement Award will go to **Jock Reynolds** (Stevenson '69, psychology), artist and director of the Yale University Art Gallery.

These awards are part of the campus's celebration of creativity, innovation, and the arts at UCSC. The Founders Day Gala Dinner will be October 18 at the Cocomanut Grove in Santa Cruz.

The celebration continues with the Maitra Lecture on December 5, to be delivered by renowned theater director **Peter Sellars**.



The historic Hay Barn was built in the late 1860s.

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Helen and Will Webster Foundation—named after Webster’s parents—they announced a gift in March of \$5 million. It will be used to restore the Hay Barn as the centerpiece of a revived campus entrance and home for UCSC’s innovative sustainability programs, and to fund programs centered there.

They had grown to love the barn and its heritage. Its hand-hewn beams, mortise and tenon joinery, determination to stay standing—all spoke of timeless principles.

A former UCSC staff member, Webster worked on campus for 14 years. But he used the west entrance to get to Science Hill, not the main entrance that would have taken him by the Hay Barn each day. As a designer and machinist for precision instrumentation developed in the Santa Cruz Institute of Particle Physics, his work contributed to groundbreaking science here and far, including Switzerland, where it helped CERN hunt for the Higgs boson.

In his late 40s, he decided to go back to school and complete his degree, which he started at UC Santa Barbara many

years earlier. He enrolled at UCSC as a re-entry undergraduate. A year after he stopped working at the university, he became an alum (College Eight ’02, environmental studies).

As a student of environmental studies, the barn began to show up more often in Webster’s line of sight—it’s near the campus farm. He studied agroecology and soil conservation and was inspired by the work being done to research sustainability practices and train farmers in them.

The Websters’ philanthropy at UCSC began in 2006. One of their first gifts was \$30 to Friends of the Farm and Garden. They’ve supported a variety of programs, from scholarships to the Grateful Dead Archive, but most significantly those associated with food sustainability and environmental studies.

The barn is part of the 32-acre Cowell Lime Works Historic District, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The property had been in service as a cattle ranch and quarry as well as a lime works. As part of the new university, several of the old buildings were restored and put to use—including

the old cookhouse, which became an Admissions Office, and the Cowell family house, which first served as a provost residence and later other uses. The Hay Barn was among those ignored.

“If you don’t preserve it, everyone forgets,” Webster says. “If these buildings disappear the connection to the land and its history will be lost.”

He hopes many others will step forward, whether it is to help with the Hay Barn and other projects in the historic district, or one of the many other areas where private support is also needed to turn things.

“It’s a good time to get out there and do something different,” Webster says.

Meanwhile, he and Claudia and the scores of others on campus and in the community who have come together to bring this project to the fore are looking forward to seeing the Hay Barn standing tall in 2015, which is also when the university will celebrate its 50th anniversary.

For more information about the Hay Barn restoration, visit review.ucsc.edu.