

THE RECORDER

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ALM

Bar Talk

PEOPLE AND PRACTICES

Historic Victorian passes from one lawyer to another

Law firm networking events, where clients and lawyers can mix and mingle, are usually the kind of thing held in dull conference rooms or downtown bistros. But on Thursday, Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton lawyers got to schmooze with their clients in one of San Francisco's most notable Victorian mansions. And as it turns out, the home, now owned by Sheppard employment law partner Jennifer Redmond, also has a bit of history within the legal community.

Sidebar

The networking event for women attorneys and their clients was held at the Charles Dietle House on Page Street, built in 1885, which for many recent years had housed law offices. A personal injury attorney owned the home until last year, and had worked there himself along with several other attorneys.

Redmond said that because it was an office rather than living space for so long, some corners looked as if they hadn't been cleaned in years.

"It was kind of disgusting



JASON DOY

SIGNS OF THE TIMES: A Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton partner held a modern networking event for women attorneys and their clients in her recently restored 19th-century Victorian last week.

in here," Redmond said. "The walls were gray. There was some sort of furnace incident that left black, sticky smoke on

the walls."

Still, Redmond said she loves restoring houses, and is proud of the results her "year of blood,

sweat and tears" had produced.

Indeed, the house, officially San Francisco Landmark No. 48, is a stunner, full of high ceilings and the kind of wood-carved detailing that regularly brings tourists passing by. Known for its "stick style" architecture, the home has a flat roof and square windows, as opposed to other San Francisco Victorians' rounded windows and towers, according to several tourist and historical Web sites.

The home is also notable for having survived the 1906 earthquake and fire. As Redmond explained, it sits beyond Van Ness Avenue, along which firefighters had dynamited homes to create a firebreak to stop the spread of the post-quake blaze.

"We usually have events like this in our offices," said M. Elizabeth McDaniel, longtime managing partner for the firm's San Francisco office. "Everybody likes to look at people's homes — especially a house like this!"

— Jessie Seyfer