

Cannon defeats attempted invasions of Oakland

■ Weapon named Old Squatter provides witness to history

By Deborah Cooper

Sometimes a city's story can be traced through the history of a single object. Old Squatter, a cannon in the collection of the Oakland Museum of California, permits us to remember many key events in our city's past, because it was there to mark them. If only that iron cylinder could talk!

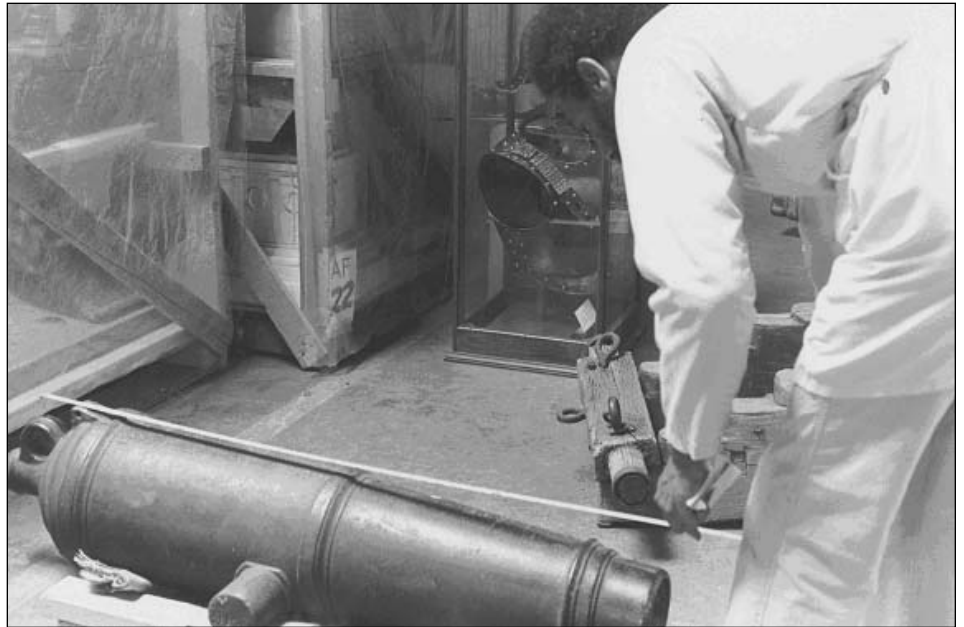
Old Squatter began life across the ocean hundreds of years ago, and today rests tranquilly in storage on a pallet. Let's trace its story, beginning with America's first war.

THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR

"Old Squatter" was made in England for the war with America—the Revolutionary War from our perspective—and captured by us in battle. The Americans mounted it on a U.S. sloop of war named *John Jay*, the ship that carried Benjamin Franklin to France for peace negotiations. Later the ship fought in the war of 1812, and sailed to the Pacific for service in the war with Mexico (1846-48). But *John Jay* did not make it safely 'round the Horn and, leaking badly, put into Valparaiso, Chile. Captain Gunn of Oakland purchased the ship there and made temporary repairs so he could sail her to the Union Iron Works in San Francisco for major repairs. *John Jay* then became a trading vessel, sailing among the islands of the Pacific, no longer in need of cannons.

THE SQUATTER WARS

The cannon next saw action on land. In 1856, the San Francisco Vigilance Committee sent it to Oakland to assist vigilantes in land ownership battles. Squatters, those who sought to "jump" someone else's land claim, faced violent reprisals from those they tried to displace. One or two men were killed in "jumper riots" in Oakland in the early 1850s. Legal feuds over land spanned much of the late 19th century in the East Bay.



OLD SQUATTER: Ralph Stowers prepares the cannon, no longer on display, for preservation in museum storage, ca. 1979. The cannon's wooden carriage is in the background.

Who owned what acreage was a bit of a murky area. Spanish land grants, such as the Peralta grant covering all of contemporary Oakland, parceled out lands that Ohlone Indians had lived on for centuries.

Then came the rush to California after the discovery of gold in 1848, many settling on rich lands instead of mining for gold. Reports, such as William Halley's in his 1876 *Centennial Yearbook of Alameda County*, called Oakland founder Horace Carpentier a squatter on Peralta lands. Beth Bagwell's book, *Oakland, Story of a City*, includes a 30-page discussion of land titles, which she termed, "the mess produced in federal courts by the annexation of California."

When a rough band of would-be squatters boarded the steamship *Clinton* in San Francisco around 1856 and sailed for Oakland, they were met at the foot of Broadway by vigilantes well armed with guns and with the former Revolutionary War cannon loaded with nails and buckshot. Rather than fight, the *Clinton's* sailors turned tail and returned

to San Francisco, but not before the vigilantes fired a cannon shot across her retreating stern, earning the name "Old Squatter" for the cannon.

THE CIVIL WAR

Old Squatter next saw service in the Civil War, not in battle but as a voice proclaiming Oakland's support of the Union. In 1860, it was fired to honor Lincoln's election to the presidency. Then Southern sympathizers, called Copperheads, stole Old Squatter. Members of the Oakland Guard captured Jack Cohane, suspected leader of the rebel group. "They marched the suspect down to the wharf at the foot of Broadway . . . When the stubborn fellow refused to talk they fastened the rope around his body and kept dousing him in the estuary. Up and down he went until he agreed to say where the gun was hidden"—right near his dunking, in the water under the wharf at the foot of Broadway ("The Knave" column in the *Oakland*

See **CANNON** on page 2



Cannon

Continued from page 1

Tribune, Feb. 5, 1967). The Guard recovered the cannon and began firing it so that “on every occasion when the news came of a Union victory, the voice of Old Squatter would echo through the oak trees, over the valley beyond the Contra Costa range, notifying the settlers and residents that the thirty-four stars were still safe” (“Ye Olden Oakland Days” by Henry Maloon, *Oakland Tribune*, Jan. 16, 1922).

Attempts to silence Old Squatter by spiking it were foiled. Henry Maloon was among those who “procured a small hand drill” and with three others spent a night drilling “through that four inches of solid iron until a new vent was made” to keep the cannon operable. The day after Lincoln’s assassination in April 1865, Old Squatter was fired in salute every half hour between sunrise and sunset. “The report of each shot called to the minds of a people weeping, and a sad city that a great man had sacrificed his life for his country,” wrote Maloon.

A SALUTE TO THE RAILROAD
Maloon, who had arrived in Oakland in 1852, went on to relate that he fired Old Squatter’s last salute in 1871 to mark the arrival of the first Central Pacific Transcontinental Train into Oakland. “The train, composed of three cars drawn by the locomotive Reindeer, came from the East by way of Seventh street and stopped for a few minutes, at the little station on Seventh street. As the train came to a stop, I pulled the lanyard which fired the last shot which will ever pass from the old gun.”

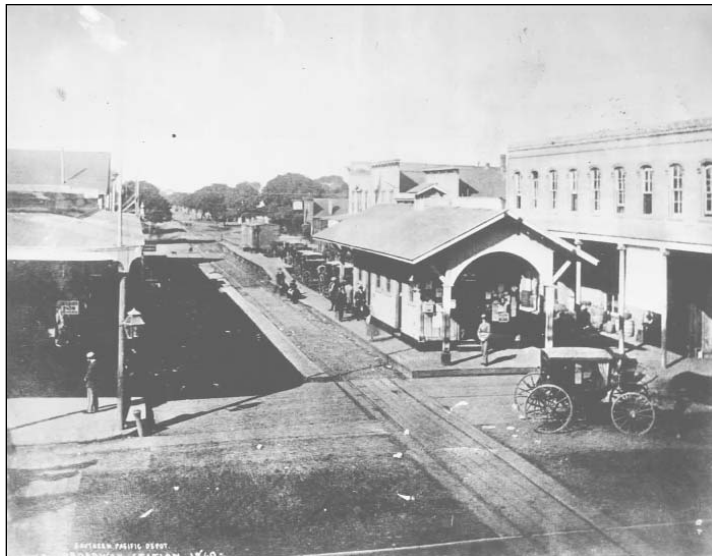
THE LAST HURRAH?

One report suggests that Old Squatter, loaded again with a heavy charge of powder and nuts and bolts, met a boatload of Denis Kearny’s followers fleeing the wrath of San Franciscans after the Sand Lot Riots there between 1877 and 1882. According to “The Knaves” in 1967, “Seeing that their reception was not going to be a peaceful one the would-be invaders moved on to other pastures.” No shots fired.

WITNESS TO HISTORY SAVED

After these battles, the Old Squatter quietly spoke to memory of the past rather than loud salutes to the present. By 1906, Henry Maloon reports that the Oakland Guard, supported by the Public Works Dept., had the cannon mounted in front of the city jailer’s office near 5th and Washington, with a “metal shield” to tell its story to passersby. Maloon’s next report in 1922, tells of rescuing Old Squatter from an auction of “junk” at the city’s corporation yard at 15th and Franklin streets. Maloon and other Oakland Guard members “removed her from the debris, mounted her on her carriage and placed her where she now stands at the museum building on the shore of Lake Merritt.”

Old Squatter remained on display outside the Oakland Public Museum (now the Camron-Stanford House) through the 1960s, preserved as a monument to Oakland’s sense of “right” for settlers and for the Union. Retired museum curator Tom Frye remembers the cannon in a courtyard outside the museum. “Old Squatter sat on its crumbling wood carriage next to a World War I German cannon and a World War II U.S. submarine depth charger in a little cul-de-sac outside the Oakland Public Museum. Few people had any inkling of the remarkable role in history this old can-



THE CENTRAL PACIFIC RAILROAD station at Seventh and Broadway in Oakland’s downtown, 1869.

Oakland History Room

non had played. The time to resurrect the story of Old Squatter is long overdue.”

With the opening of the “new” Oakland Museum, down Oak Street from the old Oakland Public Museum, the cannon was placed with the museum’s collections in storage in a warehouse on the waterfront. A major, federally-funded project in the 1970s allowed the museum to organize and preserve its collections, including the cannon, in palletized units, as pictured on page 1. The whole collection was moved to a better warehouse on the Oakland Army Base in 1980.

In 2007, the museum’s collection was moved to a vastly improved California Collections and Research Center near the Fruitvale Bridge. The cannon remains behind the scenes, a part of the museum collection. Nevertheless as a witness to critical moments in Oakland’s history, it remains a compelling voice, and judging from its history stands ready to answer the call if need arises again! ■

Deborah Cooper is retired Collections Coordinator of the Oakland Museum of California. She notes: Much of the museum’s collection is preserved in the new California Collections and Research Center, a state of the art collections preservation facility. Limited research access will be available after the museum completes reinstallation of its exhibition galleries.

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Pardee Home loses director, needs community support

By Allyson Quibell

In a 2007 *OHA News* article, Kathleen DiGiovanni noted that the Pardee Home Museum faced a critical financial situation. Fast forward to January 2009, and not only is the country in an economic crisis, but so is the home.

Due to lack of funds, the Board of Directors of the Pardee Home Foundation made the decision to let go David Nicolai, who had spent the past 17 years as the home's executive director, curator and caretaker. (David is now in China teaching English.) It is safe to say that the future of the home is uncertain.

For those still unfamiliar with the Pardee Home, it stands on the corner of 11th and Castro on the edge of downtown Oakland. It was built in 1868 for Dr. Enoch Pardee, a prominent eye doctor and was home to two Oakland mayors, Enoch and his son, Dr. George Pardee, who went on to become California governor from 1903 to 1907.

The house itself is an unusually fine example of Italianate architecture and the interior is filled with mementos documenting the lives of one of California's most significant political families. The collections range from a grand collection of candlesticks and a brilliantly preserved Victor gramophone, to a handmade quilt with a patch from a Mary Todd Lincoln dress and a curio cabinet holding two human skulls and an armadillo basket (yes, made from an armadillo!).

It has all been preserved as it was at the time of the death of Helen Pardee, the last surviving daughter of Governor Pardee. She left her family's home and its contents to the nonprofit foundation that she

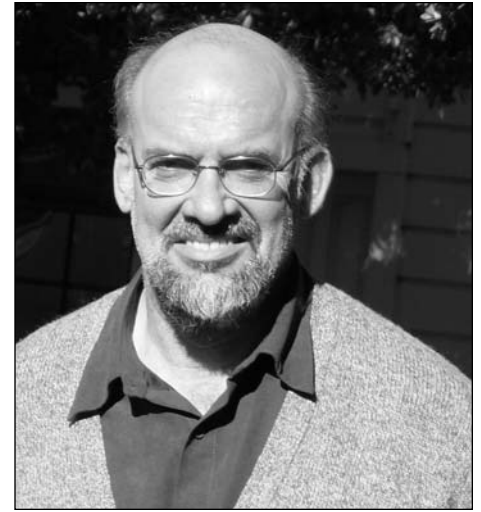
created in her will, intending the house to be enjoyed by the citizens of Oakland as a public museum.

So, where did the money go? Board member Annalee Allen explained that in addition to a lack of visitors over the years, the home's main funding source (a private foundation) had stopped being able to provide as much financial support. The Pardee Home Foundation could no longer support a director's salary.

Nevertheless, she and board president Deanna Lyon both indicated that they plan to move forward. "This is not the end of the house . . . We are not locking the doors and turning off the lights," Allen said.

Nicolai, however, is skeptical. While he wished the museum the best in the future, he wonders if the board has a viable plan in place to keep operations going, and predicted that the foundation might not be able to pay the bills by the end of 2009. Only time will tell.

While Allen added that the board is committed to taking care of the house and



DAVID NICOLAI

making it available for public access, she stressed the vital importance of help from the community, whether it be in the form of monetary or volunteer support.

Do you think the home is worth saving? Have *you* ever taken a tour? Perhaps there would be no better time. ■

Erika Mailman



THE PARDEE HOME in its heyday.

Pardee Home Museum

Contact the Pardee Home to make a tour reservation or to lend your support.
510-444-2187
www.pardeehome.org



Artist Hugh Livingston plays with sound in historical settings

By Kevin F. Dwyer

Musician Hugh Livingston moved to Oakland 10 years ago, looking to settle down after a long period of frenetic musical work. He describes Oakland as an easy place to carve out a niche and be involved. It seems he has carved *several* niches in Oakland, where he merges sound manipulation with historical, architectural, environmental and other settings.

Livingston was on hand when OHA and other preservationists rallied to save several Victorian homes on San Pablo Avenue in downtown Oakland. The area was the site of the Uptown redevelopment project built by Forest City Enterprises. Archeologist and OHA member Anna Naruta provided developers and the city with her research, demonstrating that those homes were part of Oakland's "San Pablo Avenue Chinatown."

Though the Victorians were ultimately razed, Livingston obtained windows from one of them to use in an installation entitled *Re-Sound*. The sound installation memorialized the destroyed home's private space, its walls delineated by the windows hung on cables. A computer randomly triggered the playback of sounds that historically would have been heard indoors in the home, such as vintage radio newscasts, the sound of shuffling *mahjong* tiles, an *erhu* (Chinese violin), people speaking Chinese, and sewing machines (at one time the home was also a clothing factory). Outdoor sounds emitted as well: trolleys, trains, street noise. Livingston said he liked the idea that the windows still resonated with the vibrations of 150 years of sound heard both inside and out.

Commenting on Livingston's work, Naruta says, "Hugh has found a way to evoke memory, remembrance, and the echoing voices of the past and incorporate them into the present as we pursue our busy lives. He shows us that not only old buildings, but fragments, sounds, stories, sensory experiences can make us conscious of the many spirits of place, time, and people that inhabit Oakland."

City Portrait: Port of Oakland, another Livingston installation, documented the many sights and sounds associated with Oakland's bustling port. Livingston and

photographer Bruce Lynn made numerous visits to the port's train tracks, ferry terminal and the waterfront, recording sound and imagery as they went. They were particularly interested in the commercial freight operation and obtained permission to go up on the giant cranes to document freight unloading operations. When asked if he experienced vertigo while atop the crane, Livingston says, "There were gale force winds, up to 45 miles per hour, and driving rain. The whole crane slides back and forth in the wind. The walkways are open steel grating, so you can see the ground below. It was certainly exhilarating!"

In 2006, the lost Victorian's windows "spoke" again. Sculptor Bruce Beasley invited Livingston to add a dimension of sound to his private West Oakland sculpture garden: a one-day installation. This installation included floating speakers with copper sails in a reflecting pool, sound transducers on interactive stainless steel sculptures and talking architectural salvage windows. The windows "learned" from rhythms they heard, imitating and storing them and then improvising their own sound based on what they had picked up. And talk about creative re-use: these windows were the same ones featured in the *Re-Sound* project! After dismantling that earlier installation, Livingston stored the windows in a West Oakland location, holding them for a contractor who was to re-use them in restored Victorians. Unfortunately the would-be green builder faded into history.

SOUNDS FOR SACRED GROUND

In 2008, Livingston planned to construct a memorial garden of sound for Mountain View Cemetery. Sound sources were to include birdscapes, running water (from the source in the High Sierra), European church bells, and a *shakuhachi* (traditional Japanese flute). The sound would emerge from transducers mounted on the bottom of the birdcages. He also planned a submerged garden of windows radiating sound from a reflecting pool. Unfortunately, rain cancelled these installations.

A sound installation in a cemetery may ruffle more traditional feathers. Sacred



HUGH LIVINGSTON

ground, some would argue, calls for silence. Certain sounds can't be helped: birds, the hum of a hearse engine, the buzz of an occasional lawn mower. But European churchbells and Japanese *shakuhachi* emanating from birdcages? Perhaps not at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Cemetery in Lincoln, Nebraska. But Mountain View Cemetery is here in Oakland. As Livingston observes, "There exists a mix of cultural traditions from Asia as well as the West, which have practitioners in Oakland." Livingston's would not be unwelcome sounds at Mountain View Cemetery. Here, silence serves an important role, but there is room for the unquiet as well. Just outside the cemetery gates is the (unaffiliated) Chapel of the Chimes. While wakes, funerals and memorial services are its bread and butter, Chapel of the Chimes also hosts Jazz at the Chimes, a monthly concert showcasing a diversity of musicians. Advertising for a recent concert boasted of a swinging, sparkling vocalist with a repertoire full of surprises (artist Ellen Robinson). So much for whistling past the graveyard: this place gets its groove on!

Livingston feels that the cemetery expresses a harmony between humans and

See **LIVINGSTON** on page 10



Fox Theater Oakland back on its splendid feet

By Erika Mailman

With a glamorous gala on February 5, the Fox Theater reopened with clamor, music, spotlights and excited patrons. The once-grand theater sat abandoned for decades, growing mushrooms in its carpeting and occasionally hit by graffiti and fires of unknown origin.

Who resurrected this 1928 vaudeville and talking movie palace? The effort started with volunteers, people who spent hours each week creating alliances with city staff and investors to help fund a thoughtful renovation. These volunteers raised funding for the theater when some thought it was a blight on the neighborhood and should be torn down.

They toiled thanklessly until the day of exhilaration came, and the doors flew open for an incredible success story!

One of those thankless volunteers was Pat Dedekian, who along with others formed the group Friends of the Oakland Fox (FOOF), originally an offshoot of OHA.

Dedekian said, "Friends of the Oakland Fox began in 1998 as a subcommittee of the Oakland Heritage Alliance. OHA encouraged not only its members but also the community at large to attend, and the twice-monthly meetings were quite well-attended."

A year later, the group converted to 501(c)3 non-profit status, because not all FOOF members cared about historic

preservation; some had other reasons for wanting to see the Fox restored, she said. Oakland attorney Patrick Campbell filed the paperwork.

"We decided on 'Friends of the Oakland Fox' because we liked 'FOOF' better than 'FOFO' (Friends of the Fox Oakland)," said Dedekian, recalling that the mission statement specified a restoration that did not alter the Fox's historic structure, and that the building's use should be for live entertainment—"at that time we talked of Broadway shows," said Dedekian—rather than movies or other uses.

Another key volunteer was Robert Brokl. "The conventional wisdom is that preserva-

See **FOX** on page 10



A NIGHT THAT SPARKLED. Moving clockwise from top left, Gary Knecht, Naomi Schiff and Bob Brokl gather at the gala, knowing their personal connection to the theater made its reopening possible; a lamp in the lobby demonstrates the detailed decorations throughout the Fox; the marquee shines along with spotlights on the roof; the dance troupe the Deco Belles poses in the lobby; FOOF president Pat Dedekian speaks on stage about the journey to restoration; FOOF board member and OHA's former director Kathy Ferreira enjoys the vintage cars parked out front.

Photos: Erika Mailman



Hildy stirs her gossip soup, once again

Here's the place to get the latest gossip on Oakland's historic front. Around the Town is compiled by our crack newswoman Hildy Johnson.

■ **What a fine stew we're in:** Why, it seems like yesterday we used to see the huddled masses of the unemployed living in Hoovervilles. Ye gods . . . that *was* yesterday! How did that happen? And what should we call these suburban camps and campers now—Bushtowns? Cheneyvilles? GOPer Cities? Well, since I don't like standing in line, I've been practicing making my own soup. Lots of soup. I'm actually thinking of making acorn soup, from those mighty Oakland oaks, just like the Indians used to. And what, you may ask, is my secret to making soup? Chicken stock for body and a jolt of gin for punch. Try it, you'll feel better. Really. And it just goes to show that Grandma and Emeril Lagasse were right!

■ **Seeing stars:** Perhaps it's the economy or nostalgia or neuralgia that make me think of Fred and Ginger dancing 20 feet tall across a shadowy screen. Ye gods . . . I *do* see something. Why, it's the Fox Theater reborn on Telegraph Avenue! If I rub my eyes hard enough (without scratching my corneas), I can see stars outside! One small step for uptown, one giant leap for Oakland! Thanks to everyone involved for making this happen!

■ **Geritol = Guitar:** With so much history going on, especially in Washington, D.C., I have to tell you my two favorite Inauguration

highlights.

#1: I was *amazed* when I saw Pete Seeger singing FOR something rather than AGAINST something. Really, it made my world turvy-topsy.

#2: I was amazed that Pete Seeger was still alive! Ye gods! How old is he? 190? Maybe a diet of singing and strumming is just what the doctor ordered to get us back on our feet.

■ **You say goodbye, I say hello:** *Ni hao.* Which means "hello" in Chinese. That's what David Nicolai, former director of the Pardee Home Museum, is learning since he has left Oakland for China where he will teach English. Perhaps he will also teach



AROUND THE TOWN
By Hildy Johnson

them about preservation? I heard the Chinese government razed over 6,000 buildings encompassing 500 years of history for the Olympics. *Zai Jain*, old Beijing. *Zai Jain*, David. *Goodbye.* Meanwhile, the Pardee Home is hurting due to dwindling finances. Now that is a sobering thought. If you have an extra *Renminbi*, *Yen* or *Rupiah* or even some old greenback, consider a small gift for this 141-year-old gem.

■ **Going to the chapel & we're going to buy it:** Speaking of goodbyes: Chapel of the Chimes may be up for sale. The Julia Morgan designed building (close to where she is buried, a few hundred feet away in Mountain View Cemetery) is owned by Lifemark Group, which owns other similar properties in the Bay Area. Besides providing end of life arrangements for the deceased, it is used for concerts and by OHA for its monthly lecture series. What better place to celebrate life and ponder the vicissitudes of life? ■

OHA is grateful for the generous support of its members.

Ron & Joan Sipherd, Janice W. Yager, Gordon McBride, John Brennan, Louis & Sally Lewis, Gaye Lenahan, Helen Lore, Jane Ellison, Jacci Harris, Diana Edgerton, Stinnett Household, Bonnie Killip, Lynne Costain, Janet Rodriguez, Howard Egerman, Betsy Merck, Peter Frazier, Fari Barzegar, Jo Anne Baca, Cathy Garrett, Joyce Hendy, Stoner Lichty, Beverly Kraut, Archer/Knowles Household, Sandra & Bill Threlfall, Richard & Carol Nitz, Susan Dinkelspiel Cerny, Anne & William T. Woodell, Aida Peterson, Jane & Roy Sandstrom, John Blaisdell, Bill Essert & Wooden Window, Judy & Tom Jackovics, Klara Komorous-Towey, John Nelson, Sam Cohen, Suzanne Baker-Shoup, Sharon Ashby, Ray Mellana, John & Barbara O'Hara, Eileen Marrinan, Paul McCarthy, Jessea Greenman & Darlene Ceremello, Arthur & Norma Dunlop, Sandra Tillin, Ilene Weinreb, Jerry & Jerome Joseph, Adrienne DeBisschop, Linda Carlson, Judy Jacobs, William & Nan West, Caryn Combis & Jerry Barclay, James C. Steele, Mr. and Mrs. John Moore, Helena Katz, Claire M Lucas, Arthur Levy, Leonard & Mary Ann Benson, Ellen Wyrick-Parkinson, Virginia Leach, Rose Whitfield, Lorraine Heinemann, Edward & Mary Phillips, Deborah Hill, Russell Gates, Anonymous, James & Sandra Holst, Albert S. Dutra, Jr., Ann Stepan, Vicky K. Friedman, Suzanne Masuret, Marc Tamo, Joan Dark, Judy & Fred Porta, Marcia & Jim Larsson, L. Thomas Frye, Richard Colvig, Bruce & Candis Kerns, Romer Stevenson, Andrew & Billie Wiesenthal, Suzanne & Michael Ziegler, Mary Catherine Dino, Carol Sheerin & Joel Toste, Charles Chapman, Carol Strickman, Joseph B. Young, Annalee Allen, Laurie McHatton Burke, Christopher Buckley, Emmi Govers, Huston Household, Barbara Sutherland, Ernest Grafe, Eldien Kistner, Mary MacDonald, Mr. & Mrs. Thomas White, William Yamaguchi & Mary Kanemoto, Doug Dove, Kathryn Hughes, Dea Bacchetti, Kevin Dwyer, Alison Finlay, Naomi Schiff, Stephen & Valerie Garry, Rita Marie Dykes, Matthew & Jane Gabel

Welcome to our new members!

OHA is pleased to welcome these newest members to our roster:
Cheryl Koehler, Deborah Greene, Peter & Dana Barnett, Daniel Schulman, Carolyn Doelling, Stephen Kearney, Jean Quirk, Betty McEady, Carl Kohnert & Kathleen Mohn, Michael & Sandra Coleman, Len Giannini, Mary Luke, Lynette Francis, Lawrence & Roberta Abel, SKS Broadway, Daniel Levy



Landmarks Board meeting summaries

By Naomi Schiff

Following are summaries of the meetings of the city of Oakland's Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board.

■ **Jan. 14, 2008: Mills Act** workshop was offered for property owners considering application for the tax abatement program.

Broadway/West Grand Project: Developers requested to remove a historic façade previously incorporated into plans, in exchange for a donation to the **Fox Oakland** project, and reported on some other design changes. The first phase of the project had already removed some historic resources. The second phase would spare a Julia Morgan façade on Broadway, believed hidden under later facades. Board recommended that the developers' proposed demolition be denied, that additional study of costs, schedule, and mitigations be undertaken.

412 Monte Vista: Developer planned to relocate and reuse existing historic house, constructing a 40-unit, seven-story building around it. Board asked to advise on cultural resources aspects for an initial study for an EIR. Board requested review of mitigations for moving house and raising its elevation, information on shadow effects, studying a lower density alternative, and other impacts.

Estates Drive Reservoir: Notice of Intent to Landmark was brought by neighbor Joan Ruderman. EBMUD owns the reservoir, which has interesting landscape features and fountains. EBMUD wanted to alter the reservoirs for seismic and leakage reasons, and change the landscaping. Valerie Garry represented OHA and advocated for landmark review. Board passed a motion to adopt the evaluation sheet for preliminary eligibility, and postpone the next review until community and EBMUD have been able to discuss.

Thomas Biggs has been appointed to join the LPAB.

■ **Jan. 30, 2008: Goal Setting Meeting.** Stated 2008 goals: continue work on **Mills Act** program, modify the demolition ordinance to better protect historic resources, work toward a landmarks website, request information on the façade grant program, explore formulas for mitigation measures requiring monetary contributions for the

demolition of historic resources, continue study of cultural landscapes, communicate with planning commission about the relationship between preservation and sustainability.

■ **February and March, 2008:** No meetings held; no agenda or minutes exist.

■ **April 14, 2008:** Status report from Marge Stanzione on **16th Street Train Station**.

222 19th St.: Comments for design review (**Schilling Garden**). Developer David O'Keefe described design revisions to the plan for a 42-story building near Lake Merritt on the site adjoining Snow Park. Architect Ian Birchall opined that the landscape was not of great historic importance. LPAB members commented on the lack of historic analysis, impacts of its proximity to the adjoining historic buildings, the A1+ rating of the garden itself, the inappropriate appearance of the glass curtain wall skyscraper, the lack of economic analysis, and parking issues. Many neighbors and members of the development team commented on the controversial plan.

Mills Act application review criteria were discussed.

A subcommittee reported on the draft EIR for **Highland Hospital**.

■ **May 12, 2008:** Carol Brookman announced the 125th anniversary of **Heinold's First and Last Chance Saloon**. Presentation on Peralta House given by Kirk Peterson.

Estates Drive Reservoir: Community and EBMUD had been meeting about alternatives, and were continuing the discussion.

Broadway/Grand: Further discussion of removal of historic façade at 23rd and Valley Street. LPAB recommended retention of the façade and did not accept the proposed amendment to demolish it. Should the Planning Commission permit demolition, LPAB recommended a financial contribution to the **Fox Oakland** Theater of \$216,000, that the demolition permit not be issued until building permits are issued, that the EIR addendum is appropriate, and that with all these provisions, the board could find that the public benefit might outweigh that of retaining the original structure.

Municipal Boathouse: Design review of the proposed color scheme for the Measure DD-funded restoration of the boathouse.

Kelley Kahn announced her resignation from the LPAB.

Throughout the summer and fall, LPAB discussed a key issue for the city, zoning updates in the Central Business District (hereafter, CBD). The District extends from Freeways 880 and 980 to Lake Merritt, with a northern border around Grand Avenue.

■ **June 9, 2008:** OHA reported on the FEIR for **Highland Hospital**, and its request for additional time to comment upon it.

See **LPAB** on page 9

Calendar

The OHA calendar lists events, activities and meetings related to history and preservation that may be of interest to our members. To submit items, call 763-9218 or e-mail info@oaklandheritage.org. All phone numbers in 510 area code unless indicated.

EVENTS

March 12: WINDOW RESTORATION AND FABRICATION: Bill Essert, President and CEO of Wooden Window, presents as part of OHA's Lecture Series. This time at a special location: Wooden Window, 849 29th St., Oakland. 7:30 p.m. \$8 members, \$10 nonmembers.

April 9: NORCAL MOD: ICONS OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA MODERNIST

ARCHITECTURE: Pierluigi Serraino, architect, discusses his book *NorCalMod: Icons of Northern California*. This time at a special location: AIA, 1405 Clay St., Oakland. 7:30 p.m. \$8 members, \$10 nonmembers.

May 14: OHA'S ANNUAL PARTNERS IN PRESERVATION AWARDS: This event celebrates the best work in architectural preservation in Oakland. 7:30 p.m. at Chapel of the Chimes, 4499 Piedmont Ave., Oakland. \$8 members, \$10 nonmembers.

TOURS AND EXHIBITS:

Oakland Tours: Discover Oakland's changing skyline, landmarks, churches and high-rises on one of the many free guided walking tours. Call the tours hotline, 238-3234, or visit www.oaklandnet.com and click on the sight-seeing/tours link.



Report from the Preservation Action Committee

Rezoning downtown a concern

By Naomi Schiff

Central Business District Rezoning: As zoning regulations change in downtown Oakland, our Preservation Action Committee is working to incorporate historic preservation as a key component. This is a significant moment in city planning, and vigilance will ensure a more beautiful downtown of the future.

The city's **Zoning Update Committee** met Jan. 28, 2009. Its staff has revised their proposal somewhat, but still do not fully address our requests for height limits in historic Areas of Primary and Secondary Importance (APIs and ASIs). Nor did the proposal meet the demand, put forward by the Coalition of Advocates for Lake Merritt (CALM), for lower heights around the lake along the Lakeside Drive frontage. On the plus side, the ZUC instructed staff to study view corridors and Transfers of Development Rights (TDRs), and to further explore a "fine grain approach" to zoning in historic areas. Next stop will be full planning commission, in March or April.

One issue in APIs is the need to preserve their integrity so that property owners within them can be eligible for the 20% federal tax credit if they wish to undertake rehabilitation

projects on historic buildings.

Promisingly, ZUC shows strong support for an expanded **Mills Act** program, so that downtown properties would become eligible for this tax incentive. Up until now, most downtown projects have been too large to fit within the dollar limits established under the pilot program. We hope that as City Council reauthorizes the Mills Act incentive as a permanent program, limits will be significantly increased to accommodate larger projects.

OAK TO NINTH

The City Council held a hearing on the reworked sections of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR), required by Superior Court Judge Jo-Lynn Lee, on Jan. 20. OHA presented information on seismic risks to building high-rises on unstable soils. Stuart Rickard objected to what he felt were gratuitous negative staff remarks on his Ninth Avenue Terminal Partners' proposal to reuse the historic building on the wharf. Others pointed out deficiencies in the analysis of cumulative impacts.

A team of representatives from the California Public Utilities Commission made a strong and very pointed presentation criticizing the response to train-pedestrian-traffic safety conflicts. They questioned why

the EIR documents ignored serious risks. At each of three EIR stages, the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) submitted opinions saying the crossings would be extremely dangerous and are inadequately mitigated. City Council asked the developer on the spot to verbally promise that he would bear any costs based on later CPUC requirements, which he did. However, doubt remained in the minds of those presents as to whether the city might still end up paying for CPUC-required infrastructure improvements.

Despite around 30 speakers and plenty of sympathetic words from council members, the Council voted unanimously to approve what OHA and others felt was a flawed document. Our attorney Arthur Levy is considering OHA's next step.

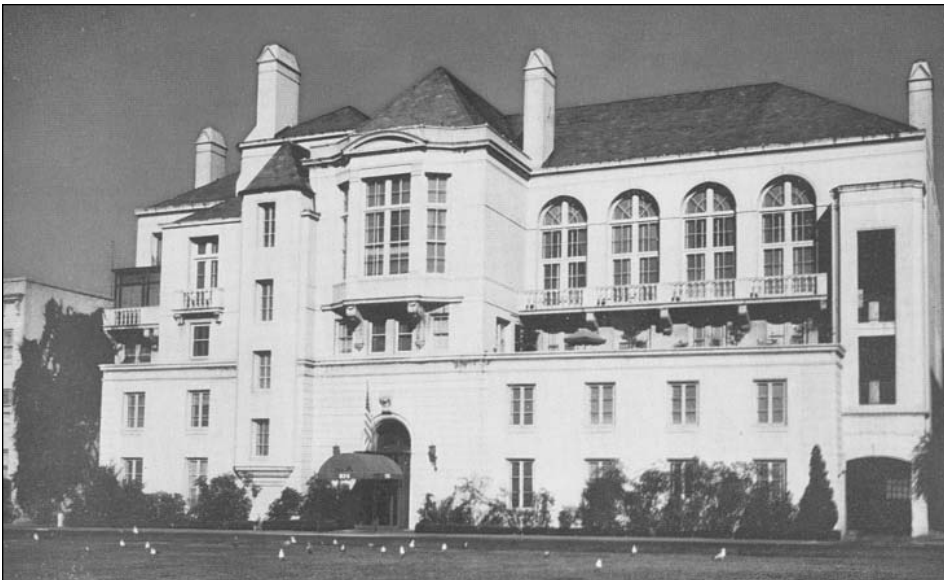
TWO BIG SUCCESSES

The Fox Oakland Theater's reopening shows that advocating for preservation of historic buildings works . . . especially if you have a lot of energy, money, and patience! (See page 5 for more.)

Far more quickly than the Fox's decades of advocacy, a fine resolution seems to be in the offing for the property at **412 Monte Vista**. Here, neighbors objected to the relocation and drastic remodeling of a historic Walter J. Mathews house and the addition of a large condominium building around it. That project did not go forward. Instead, the Pacific Boychoir Academy proposes purchasing the property from the adjoining Plymouth Church, locating its school in the old house, and maintaining the historic structure with modest renovations.

BELLEVUE CLUB APPLICATION

The Bellevue Club Foundation submitted an extensive application, written by John English, for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Originally a women's club oriented toward athletics as well as social activities, the Bellevue operated as one of the women-oriented institutions that played a prominent role in Oakland for decades. The Bellevue is still functioning, now open to all, and occupies a prominent site at north edge of Lake Merritt. Members may remember several OHA events held there, or going on a tour through the building, with its fascinating and elegant interiors. OHA has sent a letter supporting the application. ■



THE BELLEVUE CLUB seeks National Register status.



LPAB

Continued from page 7

Boardmember Neil Parish gave a presentation on the **Western Pacific Depot**. Brian Kendall gave a presentation on the **façade grant program**.

Acting Planning Director Eric Angstadt presented the **CBD rezoning project** and requested comments, saying it would return on a future agenda. LPAB discussed building heights, and how the zoning proposal would address historic buildings. Speakers from CALM addressed the heights at the lake's edge. OHA asked how the Historic Preservation Element recommendations would be incorporated, and how historic buildings would be protected. LPAB members requested cross-sections and/or 3-D models for visualizing height and massing.

300 Lakeside Drive (**Kaiser Center**) Scoping Session for an EIR: Owners intend to design two new high-rise towers on Webster Street, and partial reconfiguration of the roof garden. Project will return to LPAB.

The LPAB unanimously approved landmark nominations for the **Altenheim** and **Studio One**, reaffirming earlier resolutions passed in 2006.

■ **July 14, 2008:** Joyce Roy reported on the **Army Base** and potential demolition of historic resources.

Jack Biringer urged the LPAB to recognize Maury I. Diggs as the designer of the **Fox Theater**, commonly credited to Weeks and Day, but in fact executed by Diggs.

1032 39th St.: Madison Park proposes development of up to 101 residential units on the Emeryville/Oakland border. Board interested in a partial project alternative which might retain some of the historic façade.

■ **Aug. 11, 2008:** Christopher Buckley reported that **St. Mary's Church** has closed, and suggested that the LPAB investigate the Diocese's plans.

Discussion of the **CBD rezoning** attracted residents and developers with a wide range of views. Board commented on heights, preservation issues, and planned additional workshop meeting to discuss further.

Mills Act: Board recommended 10 applications to be forwarded to the City Council for the 2008 program, and five to be rolled over to 2009.

2820 Summit St.: Discussion of an addition to **Temple Sinai**, a City Landmark. The Board generally approved, supporting staff recommendations.

■ **Sept. 11, 2008:** Special meeting on the **zoning** update, with particular attention paid to questions of height limits, conditions under which demolitions are permitted, maintaining integrity in historic districts, and spacing between high-rise buildings. Requested that staff come back with ideas about heights in areas where height is a characteristic feature of a historic district, and identifying those districts.

■ **Sept. 15, 2008:** Board heard a presentation about **Treadwell Hall** at California College of the Arts.

Frank Flores of Madison Park Investments presented a plan for windows at the **Press Building**, 406–412 12th St., to meet the National Park Service request for more historically-compatible windows. Board gave unanimous approval, with request that staff review final plan.

Board unanimously approved 11 heritage property nominations associated with **Mills Act** applications.

Discussion of **CBD rezoning**, especially air rights and Transfers of Development Rights (TDRs), height limits, ideas for position and widths of high-rise towers and view corridors. Public speakers from OHA and Coalition of Advocates for Lake Merritt (CALM) brought up treatment of Areas of Secondary Importance and heights around Lake Merritt. Discussion of design guidelines, and recommendation to the Zoning Update Committee that they look at a "fine-grain" approach, as suggested by OHA, by adjusting zoning in smaller increments.

■ **Oct. 20, 2008:** Board again reviewed 1032 39th St. Developer said historic, C-rated building would be demolished. Continued to Nov. 17 meeting.

Presentation on **Oakland Army Base** Area redevelopment plan, which entails demolition of 800-series warehouses. Voted to accept the design, but hopeful that some of the smaller warehouses (Nos. 812, 821, 822, 823) could be retained, such as the ones in use by the film center.

Tramell Crow, developer at 2935 Telegraph Ave. (formerly, the **Courthouse Athletic Club**), requested demolition, due to complaints of vandalism and because the compa-

ny planned to demolish eventually anyway. OHA advocated for retaining the building, as future plans seemed somewhat doubtful. Board passed motion to grant demolition request only with the payment of all city fees on a nonrefundable basis, including plan submittal, plus increasing contribution to the façade grant program by \$30,000.

Discussing **CBD rezoning**, the board appointed a subcommittee of Kirk Peterson and Thomas Biggs to come up with strategies for the board to choose from. Committee would delve into fine-grain strategy and ideas about handling demolition.

Chair Parish promised he would attend City Council to support the **Mills Act** contract projects.

■ **Nov. 17, 2008:** Thomas Biggs gave a presentation about **First Unitarian Church**. Betty Marvin gave a presentation on **Sanborn Maps**.

1032 39th Street: Board recommended additional effort to address preservation of the corner portion of the building, moved that there be no demolition until building permit is issued, and that the building be maintained in the meantime.

1900–1930 Broadway, 1901 Franklin St. and 415 20th St.: Scoping session for a 56-story building, demolition of a one-story retail building, and rehabilitation of the historic **Tapscott Building**. Peter Wang, developer, presented the project, and comments were received on aspects for EIR review.

CBD Rezoning: Discussion of ASIs and APIs. Board approved a motion clarifying position on heights, and recommending a "fine-grain" approach. A subcommittee to make recommendations on ASIs.

Neil Parish announced his resignation after the December meeting.

■ **Dec. 8, 2008:** Further CBD discussion focused on the **zoning** treatment of ASIs. Board gave advice to staff on further work to define LPAB recommendations. Board agreed unanimously that staff should review establishing view corridors, in particular to allow views from Lake Merritt toward historic buildings in the Downtown National Register District, such as **City Hall** and the **Tribune Tower**.

Special election: Kirk Peterson as Chair, Delphine Prevost as Vice Chair. Thomas Biggs joined the Broadway Retail Corridor Specific Plan advisory committee. ■



Livingston

Continued from page 4

the natural setting. It embodies the naturally wild elements of 19th century philosophy in contrast to nearby urban rigor. It speaks to the taming of the American West but also to the Asian philosophy that all of nature flows from the same spring: trees, water and mankind are equally part of nature.

AN AMBITIOUS PLAN

This year, Livingston has ambitious plans for a multifaceted project at the cemetery, and he hopes rain will simply “go away.”

Fox

Continued from page 5

tion is an uphill, as often as not losing, battle, and to have even a prayer for success you must have a strong wind at your back . . . and luck,” said Brokl.

“The success we had saving the Fox fits that outline. It was a ‘no-brainer’ putting the Fox on the 1998 Most Endangered List I organized for OHA (even the Sears & Roebuck Building and Floral Depot were on it in that period, which indicate how bad things were!), then the press picked it up . . . It helps that theaters, like many schools and churches, inspire nostalgia,” he added.

Another early, hard-working member, Gary Knecht, very squarely assigns kudos to OHA and the work of its board member at the time, Brokl. “Without OHA and Bob Brokl, it’s unlikely, almost impossible, to think that this could’ve ever happened. Bob was the needle that poked the city and cared enough to make this actually happen,” he said.

FOOF board member Naomi Schiff said, “The people who were on the OHA board spent a lot of time worrying about the Fox. They were the ones who paid attention to the fact that it was leaking and falling apart.”

Because of Brokl’s publicizing of the leaking roof, City Council finally agreed to pay for a new roof, which preserved the building while FOOF got moving on the sign project (also funded by City Council) and local developer Phil Tagami began to draw up plans, Schiff said.

“Gary Knecht more or less singlehandedly got hold of a modest state grant that was the first of many sources of outside funding. He

He is designing a series of sound installations and live musical performance events.

Describing the installation Livingston says, “Instrumentalists and vocalists reflecting Oakland’s cultural diversity will be spread across the landscape, enticing strolling visitors to approach as they hear the distant sound. Each performer will be surrounded by a multichannel sound environment installed in large trees, which will enhance and comment on their performance. The music will be composed as a giant operatic event, with common threads being heard simultaneously from faraway sources.”

kept all the papers from that time, which includes early feasibility info,” she added.

Around the time of the 2001 restoration of the marquee and blade, Knecht connected with a former Fox Theater employee, Robert M. Campbell III. Knecht shared one of the emails received from Campbell:

The last film that was shown there was a double bill of “Lady Sings The Blues” and “The Godfather.” I was the usher at the time and on a weekend, there were only 15 people in the theatre; it was sad. Everyone was going to the Roxie, to see a triple bill of movies like “Coffy, Cotton Comes to Harlem, and The Swinging Cheerleaders” at half the price. The Lux on Broadway was having bingo games and the T&D showed porn. I remember working the Fox when the film “I Am Curious Yellow” came out in the late ‘60s. It was rated X and there were at least 900 people in the theatre. It got shut down by the Oakland Police as being obscene. Strange that same night, the T&D got shut down for showing a movie called “My Bare Lady.” The Fox and T&D resumed operation the next day without any further problems.

The secret passageways, and the way to get into the Fox without a key, the one lane bowling alley (now gone) and numerous other gems, stand the Fox out as one of the most mysterious, beautiful, and lavish theatres on the west coast. I wonder what ever happened to the pagoda boats recessed in the walls, and the beautiful black and silver stencil work of the San Francisco Bay Area that was right above the entranceway of the theater. ■

Livingston has a particular interest in assembling musical gestures from different cultures and across the span of musical history that represent nature sounds. The songs of German Romantic composer Schumann were his initial inspiration: his settings of contemporary poems evoke the imagery of wind in the forest and rushing rivers. Schumann’s piano accompaniment uses particular cultural signifiers to represent the text.

Livingston is also interested in Chinese and Japanese music. The folksongs in these traditions often derived from the experience of nature. He explains that Tang Dynasty poets constantly referenced nature, as is similar in Japanese haiku.

Livingston originally planned to only use instruments associated with the outdoors. For instance, the ancient Chinese *guzhen*, a seven-stringed instrument which Livingston says is probably the most quiet of any instrument ever made. It is considered the choice of poets and philosophers, traditionally played outdoors near a stream, under a tree. However, Livingston proceeded to also consider instruments not traditionally heard out of doors. For instance, the oboe was intended for the concert hall, yet it is commonly associated with a pastoral feeling. One thinks of Beethoven’s music, evoking shepherds playing to their flock, or Von William’s attempts to capture pastoral settings in his work.

Livingston will be collaborating in this project with a number of musicians who reflect Oakland’s diverse talent, including Chinese instrumentalists, Indian instrumentalists, an Irish pipes player, an oboist, artists who play the Chinese *guzhen* and Japanese *shakuhachi* and *koto* (a form of zither), and a number of percussionists.

The project will involve a considerable amount of planning; it will open in April 2009. In the near term, Livingston is working on *Soundwalks*: stereo recordings that can be downloaded onto iPods, so that visitors can take a private tour, listening to a blend of sound, music and narrative spoken by the cemetery’s own docents.

Through *Soundwalks*, visitors will hear about the cemetery’s history, its eclectic population, and its landscape architecture.

Keep your eyes (and ears) open for Hugh Livingston, coming to a cemetery near you! For more information, visit www.livingstonsound.com. ■



Our year-end campaign successful

By Dea Bacchetti, President

Best wishes for 2009! As we ring in the New Year filled with hope and challenges, not only do we have a new president in the Oval Office, but we also have one at OHA. We held our annual elections this January and I was elected president. I have been on the board for four years now and am excited and honored to head an organization that means so much to me and our members.

I wanted to take this opportunity to give Valerie Garry our deepest thanks for all of the work and expert guidance she has given us the past few years as our board president. Thank you, Valerie! She remains an active board member and we look forward to her continuing involvement.

I also thank Joyce Roy, who has left our board, for all of her years of service. Joyce was not only a board member but also a very active member of our Preservation Action Committee. We wish Joyce the best in her new ventures.

Mary Becker has also left the board to focus her attention on the San Antonio Neighborhood Association; thank you, Mary, for your service, and we wish you the best.

With the downturn in the economy, developmental pressures involving historic

resources ease as a result. We will continue to urge the city to use this as an opportunity to develop better policies for protection of our resources. These times can also spur community revitalization through the rehabilitation and re-use of historic resources. The re-use of existing structures is less expensive than new construction, encourages the revitalization of neighborhoods, and is an inherently “green” activity. Going green is good for the environment *and* your community!

Many thanks to all of our members who contributed to our year-end campaign. We set the bar high this year, and I am happy to report that we raised a little over half of our overall goal. While we did not reach our goal, we did surpass last year’s campaign, so I consider this a success. Thanks to all who dug deep into their pockets during these troubled economic times. Your contributions, big and small, make a difference.

On a very sad note, we express our deepest condolences to Joan Brown and the Brown Family on the passing of Ron Brown. In addition to being a longtime member of OHA, Mr. Brown served on our walking tour committee for several years and undertook the indexing and cataloging of our past tours. We will miss him tremendously. ■

Looking for special places & beautiful spaces

By Valerie Garry

All over Oakland, people—and organizations—restore, rehabilitate and bring wonderful historic and cultural resources back to life. We want to celebrate those special spaces and historic places that have received TLC and should be celebrated.

OHA seeks nominations for its 2009 Partners in Preservation Awards. The awards honor Oakland citizens, organizations, projects, and programs that show a commitment to excellence in historic preservation.

Nominations may include residential, commercial, and industrial buildings, multiple-dwelling properties, cultural landscapes and maritime properties, as well as new construction or infill projects in historically sensitive sites or designated historic districts.

To receive a nomination form and application, call the OHA office at 763-9218 or send an email to info@oaklandheritage.org. All nominations must be postmarked by Friday, May 1, 2009.

Winners will be honored at the 2009 Partners in Preservation Awards and Reception on May 14, 2009 at the Chapel of the Chimes, 4499 Piedmont Ave. ■

CONTRIBUTORS: Dea Bacchetti, Deborah Cooper, Kevin F. Dwyer, Kathleen DiGiovanni, Kevin Flynn, Valerie Garry, Allyson Quibell, Naomi Schiff, Chela Zitani
PRODUCTION: Erika Mailman

OHA News welcomes contributions: research projects large or small, historic photos and reports on preservation issues or events. Send to news@oaklandheritage.org.

MISSION STATEMENT: OHA is a nonprofit membership organization which advocates the protection, preservation and revitalization of Oakland’s architectural, historic, cultural and natural resources through publications, education, and direct action.

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- \$45 Cornerstone** (individual)
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New member Renewal

I'd like to contribute _____ to the OHA Leadership Fund, and help assure the future of historic preservation in Oakland.

Send to: Oakland Heritage Alliance
446 17th St., Suite 301
Oakland, CA 94612
www.oaklandheritage.org
For info: 510-763-9218



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Salem Lutheran Home: a bit of Stockholm in Oakland

By Kathleen Leles DiGiovanni

A little-known gem of a building lies in the San Antonio district, a stone's throw from the city's Central Reservoir. A residence for the elderly, the Salem Lutheran Home has its roots in the Bay Area's Swedish Lutheran community. The main building, tucked into a cul de sac at the end of East 29th Street, even looks like a little bit of Stockholm with its curvy Scandinavian lines and its Viking ship weathervane.

Salem Home lore has it that two Lutheran pastors, Dr. Carl O. Lundquist of Ebenezer Lutheran Church in San Francisco and Rev. C. Arthur Johnson of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Oakland, first talked about establishing a Lutheran "old people's home" over baseball at the Seals and Oaks ballparks.

Perhaps more officially, members at the annual Northern District of the Lutheran California Conference, held at St. Paul's in February 1924, voted that a three-person committee should create "a proposition towards establishing an Old People's Home in the district." The committee's proposal was adopted at the District's September meeting. In October, an eight-room house was "discovered" at 2361 East 29th St. and promptly purchased with privately-raised money for \$7,000. By January 1925, only 11 months after the project's first proposal, the Lutherans had renovated, dedicated, and populated the house with its first guests. Dr. Lundquist served as the first superintendent and chaplain, while Sister Anna Johnson worked as matron.

Between 1926 and 1929, the Lutherans built three more cottages on the property, and

in 1930 planned to replace the original farmhouse with an institutional complex. Through a competitive process, the church would select the architect and planner for the new complex. On May 24, 1930, three architects submitted their proposals for a building complex to the Salem Home board. The judges chose Henry Higby

Gutterson's Scandinavian-revival-styled plan. Locally prominent Gutterson was part of John Galen Howard's Panama Pacific International Exposition design staff, supervising architect for San Francisco's St. Francis Woods development, and a prolific residential designer in the period revival style. He is best known for Berkeley's Second Church of Christ, Scientist on Spruce Street and Berkeley's Rose Walk complex of homes.

The pages of "The Messenger" monthly tracked the Home's progress, from its conception through the completion of the main building and well beyond. Someone clipped and carefully pasted those articles into the Home's scrapbook along with photographs of Home events over several decades. The scrapbook also includes an undated list of House Rules including the following: "Radios are not to be used before seven



AN UNDATED, hand-colored postcard of the home.

o'clock in the morning nor after ten o'clock in the evening." Records reveal that in 1933 a one-time payment of \$3,300 provided life-time care for a Salem Home guest.

By the Home's 25th anniversary in 1949, the compound included the main building and 11 cottages. Over the years, the Lutherans purchased adjacent properties to make up today's complex of independent living apartments, assisted living areas, and a skilled nursing unit. Subsequent additions to the complex preserve the flavor of the original period revival style, if interpreted in more contemporary fashion, like the 1967 chapel.

In 1997, the Home partnered with the Mercy Retirement and Care Center (originally Our Lady's Home) to form the Elder Care Alliance, to provide non-sectarian residential care for the aged. ■



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