



Preservation Awards include father-son legacy

By Dea Bacchetti

With photographs contributed by the various PIP nominators.

Once again, our organization proudly held its annual Partners in Preservation awards ceremony. It's always such a pleasure to recognize those individuals and organizations that are working to make Oakland a better place. If you weren't able to join us that evening, enjoy learning about the winners, below.

STEWARDSHIP

USS *Potomac*: The USS *Potomac* served as Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidential yacht from 1935 to 1945. Today, Oakland visitors find it a fascinating heritage tourism destination . . . but it was certainly a long journey for this amazing ship!

After many adventures and many owners (including Elvis Presley at one point), the ship was seized in 1980 as a front for drug smugglers. While impounded at Treasure Island, she sank. After being raised and unceremoniously dumped on the Oakland Estuary, she sat abandoned and rotting.

In 1981, the Port of Oakland purchased the ship at a U.S. Customs Service auction, knowing an enormous restoration project lay ahead. Almost all the wooden furnishings, decking, and paneling had rotted away; the only original wood left was that of two teak doors on the pilot house.

To help fund restoration, James Roosevelt, son of FDR, appealed directly to President Reagan. In 1982, the Reagan administration offered \$2.5 million . . . but required matching funds. The Port formed the Potomac Association as a nonprofit educational organ-

ization in 1983, which by 1988 had raised the money through private donors. Restoration began in July of that year at the Colberg Shipyard in Stockton, California. While some professionals were paid, volunteers—mostly retired military or marine workers—provided their services.

Every effort was made to outfit the ship in the style of the FDR era. The U.S. Coast Guard required modern navigation and communication equipment, but this technology was installed alongside historical equipment to provide visitors with an educational experience.

In 1990, the vessel was designated a National Historic Landmark. In 1995, she opened to visitors from her berth at Jack London Square. Since then, more than 250,000 people have visited, and 21,000 middle and high school students have sailed for free on educational cruises.

The *Potomac* cruises the San Francisco Bay each year from April through November.

REHABILITATION

Stearns Residence at 50 Ramona Ave.: Roman and Annette Stearns loved their small, 1913 Craftsman Bungalow at the end of Piedmont Avenue. But with one toddler and another child on the way, the historic home seemed a little too cozy. Rather than move, they explored building an addition.

Roman first bought the home in 2001. In 2006, when he married Ugandan artist Annette, they agreed any addition would have to augment the architectural restoration that had already begun. They met with architects and builders, setting objectives for the expansion that would remain within a



PERGOLA AND FISH POND at beautifully-restored Green Gates on Monte Vista Avenue provide a peaceful retreat.

\$125,000 budget and retain the Craftsman style in architecture and finish.

The final result adds a very bright, airy master bedroom with cathedral ceilings that opens, via French doors, to the back yard. A small but cute infant nursery will eventually be converted to a guest room and office, when the infant is old enough to share the third bedroom with his brother. The master bath features stylish ceramic tiles, is accented by bead board wainscoting and custom-made medicine cabinets to match molding and detail throughout the home, and the brushed nickel fixtures bring a contemporary flare to a traditional design. The addition reused original all-wood double-hung windows and single panel doors, and matched the original trim, molding, and hard wood floors. It added two small bedroom closets, a linen closet, a large walk-in master bedroom closet, a large storage area, and a cottage-like storage shed in the back yard.

REHABILITATION

5628–40 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way: In 2009, a high-speed chase on Martin Luther King, Jr. Way ended with a car catapulting



USS POTOMAC at Jack London Square.

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PIP

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into the Gerson Overstreet Architects office building.

The early 20th-century commercial building had already suffered from neglect. Shuttered for many years, its front windows were boarded up and the doors were deteriorated. The 2009 car crash seemed to deliver a final blow, destroying much of the building's interior and exterior, including its distinctive decorative brick façade.

However, Harry Overstreet, the firm's historic-minded architect, recognized opportunity in unfortunate circumstance. He contacted Betty Marvin of the city's Cultural Heritage Survey, and discovered the building was constructed in 1923 and provided a "good example of decorative brick on a commercial building of the period."

With this inspiration, Overstreet began planning a rehabilitation project. His challenges included finding a source for matching bricks to restore the tri-toned brick design on the exterior. Today, the building retains 90 percent of its original façade and maintains its original commercial use, as home to an Oakland family-owned business. It provides a good model for the rehabilitation of the kind of early 20th-century brick commercial buildings that survive downtown and along many of Oakland's arterial streets.

ADAPTIVE REUSE

Bar Dogwood, 1644 Telegraph Ave.: This three-story National Register retail building, was built downtown 1922–23. It's made of brick with a cast iron frame. It had been through several renovations over the years;



THE BAR DOGWOOD TRIPTYCH: the car that smashed into its facade, left; a before shot, middle; and a very pleasant after shot, right.

the façade and interior were in poor shape, having been partitioned into small rental spaces. The corner building was also notorious for having cars crash into it from Telegraph Avenue, and during early construction a car jumped the sidewalk and destroyed a portion of the marble splash.

Renovation began in November of 2009 and ended in February of 2011. Owner Alexis Filipello received a façade improvement grant through the Oakland redevelopment program. She often used reclaimed or recycled materials, including the wood floor which was originally barn siding, the locally-harvested bar top, the reclaimed antique mirror behind the bar as well as the light fixtures and speakers made from old Victrola horns. She described the atmosphere she was striving for as a cross between Art Deco and rustic lodge, hence the Deco-inspired backbar mixed with taxidermy. Historic Oakland photos further add to the bar's grounded feel.

REHABILITATION

In-law cottage at 4120 Gilbert St.: The owners purchased this property with the intention of modernizing the 1917 "in-law" cottage for their mother. The top priority was to create a contemporary plan for the small, dark cottage and to make it seismically safe, energy efficient and accessible for a senior citizen. The second priority was to maintain its historic, Arts & Crafts character.

Zoning regulations and structural issues were most challenging: the building could not be moved, no more than 50 percent could be demolished, and the footprint could not be increased by more than 10 percent. Worse, the foundation stood in a pool of water, most of the subframing was infested with beetles and termites, and the original stove was the only source of heat. This 537 square-foot uninsulated cottage had to be completely modernized in less than six months to fit the

owners' goals; alas, construction took place January 2006 through January 2007.

Besides the obvious necessities (such as a new foundation with subpump, insulation, double-glazed windows, and new exterior shingles), the existing floor, wall, and roof framing was left intact while new framing members were inserted between existing members to satisfy the 50 percent demolition limit. To improve livability, the wall between the kitchen and living room was removed to create an open family-room type of space. A sunny, south-facing bay window expanded the kitchen while a "barrier-free" shower room was relocated to a sunny corner of the in-law. An "on-demand" water heater was mounted to an exterior wall to save floor area and a new hydronic heating system was installed to save energy costs which were skyrocketing at the time. The finishing touch was two new leaded glass windows in the living room.

STEWARDSHIP

Green Gates at 232 Monte Vista: Nestled in the glen that extends alongside Monte Vista Avenue between Harrison Street and Piedmont Avenue is a line of early 20th-century brown shingles. In their midst stands a large stuccoed Mediterranean villa, complete with descending terraces, terra cotta medallions, tiled fountains, courtyards and Spanish wood trim. The house has two fishponds, three



IN-LAW COTTAGE on Gilbert Street.

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fountains, two courtyards, and a surprising variety of sculptures and terra cotta pots. Neighbors frequently peer through the gates for a glimpse.

According to Daryl Rush, a local contractor whom owner Fred Martin engaged to help shore up the property, many workers looked at Green Gates's problems and said, "Just tear it down." Lucky for us, Martin has spent years and considerable funds to preserve the property, much of the work invisible to the eye.

Along with significant exterior work, the interior has also been lovingly preserved, with the original doors and framing, arches that match the window arches, living room fireplace, and the dining room wallpaper with murals depicting a Mediterranean landscape extending around the whole room. According to Martin, the son of the first owner majored in art history at UC Berkeley in the early 1920s, and after graduation went to Italy where he fell in love with Renaissance Italian art. Coming home, he had the house and grounds remodeled into an Italian villa. He became the first director of the Palace of the Legion of Honor, and sold the house to George Arnold, who filled the home with imported furniture and relics.

The Martins bought the house at auction when Arnold died. Martin continues the home's artistic history. He is professor emeritus of painting and drawing at the San Francisco Art Institute where he served as Director 1965–1975 and 1983–92. The Oakland Museum has featured a retrospective of Martin's work and he recently exhibited his paintings in Sacramento.

Martin noted the similarity of the Della Robbia medallions to those on the Julia Morgan building on Piedmont Avenue, and believes that Morgan used to live on the street behind, Monte Cresta.

REHABILITATION

5421 Brookdale Ave., 3304 Coolidge Ave., 5728 Brookdale Ave., 4700 Brookdale Ave., 3328 Stuart St., and 3135 Madera Ave.: Mint Condition Homes acquires severely distressed residential properties—be they foreclosed, bank-owned or probate properties—and thoughtfully renovates them. They use green design methods and then offer the renovated home for sale in an affordable price



ST. LEO THE GREAT feels even more great after its renovation.

range, creating much-needed stability for the neighborhood's property values.

Five out of six of these homes have had all new reinforced concrete foundations poured, and all have had electrical, plumbing and mechanical systems overhauled, roofs redone or repaired, new dual-paned wood windows put in to replicate building era details, and vintage salvaged pieces as well as new green materials incorporated into their overall design. Notably, 4700 Brookdale Ave recently earned a Greenpoint Rating™ from Build It Green.

For renovation details on each of the six properties, please visit our website, www.oaklandheritage.org.

REHABILITATION

3781 Leighton St.: This 850 square-foot bungalow was built by Charles MacGregor in 1906. Sanborn maps declare that he owned the land the year the street was built. The owners purchased the home from Harold Eilers, who lived in the house for 58 years. Renovation began in February 2005 and was finished in July 2007.

The owners had to contend with a bathroom ceiling open to the attic, drafty doors and windows, broken floor furnace, and a

Medusa-like fuse box. They removed numerous features to improve the property, such as aluminum siding and wall-to-wall shag carpet. They retained and incorporated the clinker-brick fireplace and an outbuilding that may have dated to 1907, among with many other charming original facets.

The biggest challenge of this project was creating an aesthetic that allowed the small house to feel like one large, integrated whole. To achieve that, they used one plane of flooring throughout the house, with no thresholds between any rooms. The honey-colored oak floors gently harmonize with the darker stained "fruitwood" picture rails and window and door frames. Additionally, they turned the old, narrow living-room-to-kitchen doorway into a pass-through which "quieted" the energy of the living room; it was no longer a thoroughfare. They did this by moving two walls a few feet.

The embarrassingly stark contrast between this gem-of-a-house and the 1960s "Soviet block" stucco five-plex apartment building next door is an architectural history lesson at-a-glance.

STEWARDSHIP

Seismic Upgrade and Renovation of St. Leo the Great Catholic Church: The Parish of St. Leo the Great has been a Piedmont Avenue landmark for 100 years. On Jan. 1, 1911, it began serving the needs of the Catholic population in the newly-incorporated city of Piedmont and the area of northern Oakland adjacent to it.

Since then, its parishioners built an impressive array of buildings on the campus. The 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, however, shook them into a greater awareness of how fragile those buildings were. The decision to

See **PIP** on page 4



LEIGHTON STREET BUNGALOW, before its renovation at left, and afterwards at right.



PIP

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tear down damaged churches in two neighboring parishes (St. Francis de Sales and Sacred Heart) led them to develop a master plan for addressing repairs. They completed seismic retrofitting of the school, wood frame structures, rectory/office and parish hall/gym.

In 2001, the church was the last building to be renovated. That building, erected in 1926, is a beautiful, spacious, Mission-style structure with Romanesque features, a prominent bell tower, soaring vaulted worship space and peaceful adjoining garden.

EDUCATION

Walking Tour Leaders: These veterans of our walking tours program have yearly donated their time and expertise to help Oaklanders learn more about their neighborhoods. Incredible amounts of research fuel their tours, and each year they renew their excitement to walk the same paths. Many thanks to these volunteers who provide the backbone of our summer walking tours program.

Award Recipients: Annalee Allen, Phil Bellman, Bill Coburn, Michael Crowe, Dennis Evanosky, Gary Knecht, Betty Marvin, Pamela Magnuson-Peddle, Barbara Smith, and Dean Yabuki.

ADVOCACY & LEADERSHIP

Protection of the Public Interest and Defense of Landmarks: Arthur Levy has played a critical role in two major Oakland development and OHA preservation projects in recent years. He is a longtime consumer affairs and class action attorney, Oakland resident, and OHA member. Beginning in 2004, he helped lead a major effort to preserve the 16th Street Southern Pacific Station. With a longstanding

interest in the history of transit in the East Bay, he collected information and photographs to help produce a clear picture of that force in our history. Working with OHA and a coalition of housing, community, labor, and rail preservation groups, he helped persuade City Council and property owners to agree to preserve all parts of the historic structure, a 1912 landmark in West Oakland.

A second major effort involved the historic Ninth Avenue Terminal, and more broadly, appropriate development of the Oak to Ninth project along the waterfront. Levy started work on this project in 2005 and has followed it tenaciously ever since. His persistence and legal acumen put OHA on a much more solid footing than would have been possible otherwise, and allowed us to keep the issue of the potential demolition of this important historic resource in the public eye. Enabling an underfunded nonprofit to stand up to a bevy of highly-compensated development attorneys has required an enormous contribution of his time and resources.

Levy's son Daniel, now a graduating college senior, received a PIP award in 2010 for his signage project on the old rail trail near Lake Temescal, marking a rare son/father PIP dynasty.

ADVOCACY & LEADERSHIP

City Zoning Updates: Christopher Buckley, an urban planner and preservation expert who retired from the city of Oakland after a 25-year career in the planning department, assisted OHA in participating in the CBD and citywide zoning update. The project started in 2008 and as of March 2011 is at the City Council for final approval on the citywide update. The update passed in 2009.

Buckley wrote iteration after iteration of detailed comments on zoning text, prepared



GORDON LAVERTY accepts his award while OHA's Dea Bacchetti watches.

KATHLEEN DIGIOVANNI

block-by-block and in some cases parcel-by-parcel draft maps, took photographs, helped the city update its map of Areas of Secondary Importance, attended countless meetings of city committees and neighborhood groups, and met with city staff, city councilmembers and planning commissioners to go over details and ideas. He proposed a fresh look at lot setback guidelines, advocated for reduced heights in areas with sensitive historic resources, and helped OHA achieve a level of specificity in its comments that would otherwise have been impossible. Whew!

SPECIAL AWARD

Award recipient: Known informally as "Mr. Leona Heights," Gordon Laverty in recent years has been a familiar co-leader on Dennis Evanosky's Leona Heights walking tours. What is less known is that he was among the early walking tour leaders who broadened the scope of the program, developing the original tour of Leona Heights that he then passed on to Evanosky. Although at nearly 90 Laverty no longer hikes the Heights, he continues to speak for the neighborhood in articles he pens for the *MacArthur Metro*.

A World War II veteran who served at General Douglas MacArthur's headquarters in Japan, he graduated from UC Berkeley in 1950 as a sanitary engineer. "That's a civil engineer who specializes in water treatment," Laverty explained. He worked for EBMUD for 39 years. He and his wife Marge raised two sons and a daughter and still live in the Leona Heights home they built together more than 50 years ago.

For photographs of some of our other award winners, please see our website at www.oaklandheritage.org. ■



3328 STUART ST., before (left) and after (right) Mint Condition Homes worked on it.



Adrian Ebell's travels in Minnesota, and his early Oakland years

By Dennis Evanovsky

This is a continuation of the biography begun in our last issue.

When we last left Adrian Ebell, he had decided to travel to Minnesota to photograph the Dakota tribe for use in a magic lantern show. He went with his friend Edward Lawton in August 1862.

The pair arrived in time to witness the outbreak of the 1862 Dakota War, and photographed events as they unfolded.

Their photographs included a famous one (shown in our last edition) of white settlers resting during their flight from the Dakota on August 21, 1862. The party reached Henderson, Minnesota, two days later. Ebell and Lawton reached St. Paul, where they processed their glass plates.

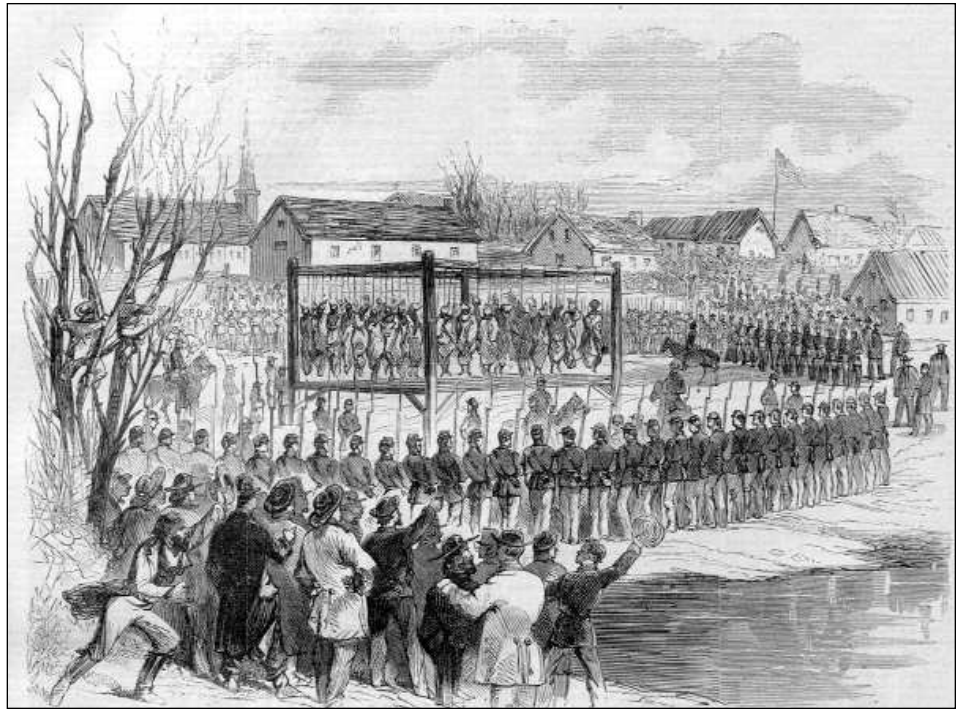
In *Adrian J. Ebell, Photographer and Journalist of the Dakota War of 1862*, Alan R. Woolworth writes that while Ebell was in St. Paul he interviewed Frederick Patiole and wrote an account of Patiole's flight from the settlement at Yellow Medicine. Ebell's story was published in the *St. Paul Daily Press* on Aug. 30, 1862.

The newspaper's editor, William R. Marshall, hired Ebell as a correspondent and the photographer-turned-journalist filed seven more stories that Marshall published in his newspaper.

Marshall formed a regiment of soldiers that became part of the Seventh Minnesota Infantry. When Ebell arrived at Fort Ridgely on Sept. 1, 1862, Marshall was there and likely stood behind Ebell's appointment as a first lieutenant with the role of assistant commissary. (The commissary purchased, stored and supplied food to the army.) Woolworth writes that Ebell became ill in November 1862 and returned to New Haven, Connecticut.

After he left Minnesota, Ebell put his photographic experience on paper, writing about the collodion dry process. His articles appeared in several photographic journals in 1863 and 1864.

Ebell also penned a 24-page account of the Dakota War for the June 1863 *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*. It included several of Ebell's photographs that Albert Colegrave helped turn into sketches for the story. (An



HARPER'S NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE

WITNESS TO TRAGEDY: The Dakota War of 1862 culminated in the execution of 38 Dakotas at Mankato. Adrian Ebell wrote, "At the signal the one rope that held the platform was severed and the doomed thirty eight were launched into eternity"

artist in his own right, Colegrave died of typhoid fever in 1863 while serving with the Sixth Minnesota Infantry Regiment.)

After leaving Minnesota, Ebell went back to school, this time studying medicine. In 1869, he earned his medical degree from Albany Medical College.

Two years later, he founded the International Academy of Natural Science and Art at No. 18 Cooper Union in New York, as well as a sister institution on Augusta Street in Berlin, the Ebell International Academy. Rev. Leonard Woolsey Bacon opened shop for Ebell in Geneva, Switzerland.



PRIVATE COLLECTION

COOPER UNION

The Cooper Institute in New York was founded in 1859 on the idea that education of the highest quality should be "free as air and water." Even today the school admits students based on merit alone and provides full-tuition scholarships.

On Sept. 22, 1874, Ebell married 22-year-old Oriana Louise Steele, a native of Connecticut and a daughter of Dr. Alfred J. Steele of the Electro-Medical College at St. Mark's Place and Second Avenue in New York City.

Oriana applied for a passport on April 10, 1875. She stated that she had plans to travel to "the British Islands and the continent of Europe." Adrian signed the application as a witness.

Ebell's academy sponsored trips to Europe. "A lady of culture and some literary attainments, having joined the select class that will go abroad in April on his annual tour with Prof. A. J. Ebell, Director of the International Academy of New York and Berlin, solicits correspondence with those who would desire to accompany her," read a January 1875

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Landmarks Board welcomes new members

By Naomi Schiff

Mayor Quan has appointed two new members to the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, and they have been confirmed by City Council. Mary MacDonald, Rockridge resident, activist, and attorney for UC Office of the President, is a former board member and president of OHA. Christopher Andrews, an Oakland architect and town planner, has taught design at USF. LPAB bid farewell to Rosemary Muller and outgoing chair Kirk Peterson, long and diligently-serving members whose terms had expired.

At several recent meetings, neighbors and Children's Hospital representatives reported on progress in securing the Gym building of the former University High School/Merritt College, now part of the hospital campus. Neighbors had sounded an alarm and requested assistance from LPAB and the city when they realized that the roof was no longer intact, resulting in major water damage. The hospital is now repairing the roof and studying the building's potential reuse.

The LPAB selected officers at the May meeting: Anna Naruta is the new chairperson, and Valerie Garry is vice-chairperson.

At LPAB's April meeting, neighborhood residents and a building owner discussed the eclectic 1921 Swiss Chalet/Tudor Revival building at 3007 Telegraph. Neighbors fear that intrusion and vandalism to the building is accelerating. The building is just north of the late, lamented Courthouse Athletic Club, now an empty lot. Neighbors requested that the owner repair and secure the building, and hoped to see it rehabilitated and back in service. The owner stated he was trying to fix the property, and would like to sell it. As one of the historic funeral homes and related structures scattered around the north Oakland area, many on or near Telegraph Avenue, it was used most recently for medical offices.

Other projects recently before the LPAB included reviewing a replacement fence around the perimeter of the Altheim, a Dimond neighborhood landmark now providing senior housing.

St. Joseph's on International Boulevard is also being turned into senior housing, with new affordable units going up on the west and south edges of the property, and with replacement of the long-gone grand stairway

on the main facade. LPAB reviewed a revision which entails retention of brick sheds at the 12th Street edge, originally proposed for demolition. The project moves forward, reusing most of the historic fabric on the site, including some significant trees.

At the March 4 meeting, LPAB discussed rehabilitation plans for the California Hotel. A nonprofit running it got into financial trouble and abandoned it, causing some tenants

Ebell

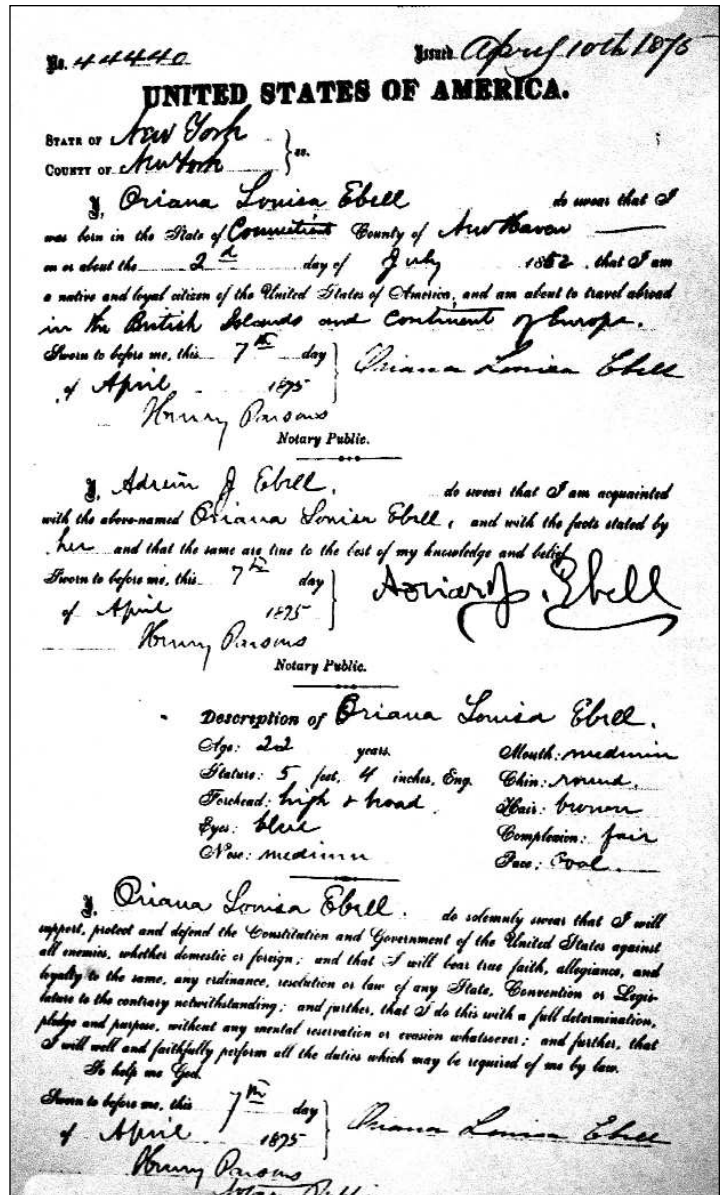
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advertisement in Arthur's Illustrated Home Magazine.

The advertisement went on to promise "unsurpassed advantages for culture and enjoyment are offered at less than one-half what their cost would be to parties not possessing the facilities perfected by the International Academy." The cost? A mere \$800 in gold.

The year following the placement of this advertisement, Ebell was in Oakland, where he formed a branch of his academy. He persuaded the family of a Mills College student to allow her to accompany him on his April 1877 trip to Europe. Her experiences on that fateful voyage and the story of the formation of Oakland's Ebell Club will appear in the next installment. ■

to move out and others to endure difficult conditions. East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation is now remedying blighted conditions for the building, which is eligible for historic preservation tax credits.

On Feb. 7, LPAB held a joint meeting with the design review subcommittee of the Planning Commission, for a presentation by local housing and city planning architect Mike Pyatok, about how best to approach mixed-use development along transit corridors. ■



ORIANA'S PASSPORT APPLICATION, signed by Adrian Ebell.

ANCESTRY.COM



Man gets credit for his son's founding of Fruitvale

By Dennis Evanosky

Research often opens gates to long-forgotten paths. This was the case with me recently. I'm in the midst of researching the fourth book in my "History Is All Around Us" series; this one's about Oakland's Dimond and Fruitvale districts. I decided to take a very close look at the way the property in the area was transferred from one owner to the next in the 1850s.

I wanted to see the chain of title on properties that later became these two Oakland districts. I knew that this would confirm what conventional wisdom preached: Henderson Luelling, father of California's fruit industry, came from Oregon to establish "Fruitvale."

I was in for a surprise.

European presence in the East Bay began with the 1820 Luis Maria Peralta land grant. In 1842, Luis divided his holdings among his four sons. Antonio received his share, parts of which later became Dimond and Fruitvale. Along came Henderson Luelling with all those fruit trees and established Fruitvale.

I long ago took the story of Luelling's founding of Fruitvale to heart and made it part of my repertoire. I told the story to unwitting audiences in dozens of history talks, walks and articles over the past 10 years or so; it almost made the book.

Yet, I decided to visit the Alameda County Clerk-Recorders office and, with the patient help of some wonderful staff members, found the deed that recorded the sale of the land that became Fruitvale. Luelling's name was nowhere to be found. The April 2, 1855, deed, recorded in Spanish, describes the transfer from Antonio Marie Peralta to Laurence Huerstel.

"Wait a minute," I said out loud. "Who in the world is Laurence Huerstel? And where's Henderson Luelling?"

My resulting search for Huerstel has turned up little so far. I know he arrived in California before the Gold Rush, possibly as early as 1844. I learned that he's a charter member of the Society of California Pioneers, but still don't know how he came to buy property from Antonio Peralta.

Further digging into the files uncovered more on Luelling, and the possible reason why he didn't (or couldn't) buy the property

from Huerstel. It turns out that when Luelling arrived in today's East Bay, he settled first in Alameda on 25 acres of land along the shores of San Francisco Bay between today's Broadway and Versailles Avenue.

He never recorded the \$20,000 purchase with the county. He later sold the land for the same price, not only recording this sale but backdating his purchase of the land. This likely raised more than a few eyebrows at the courthouse. His name never again appears on a deed recorded in Alameda County.

OK, I thought, this was when Huerstel sold the property to Luelling. Wrong again. I discovered a deed that described Huerstel's sale of his property not to Luelling, but to his son Alfred and his wife Mary. And this sale happened in 1856, before Luelling sold his land in Alameda. It wasn't Luelling who purchased Fruitvale after all, but his son Alfred.

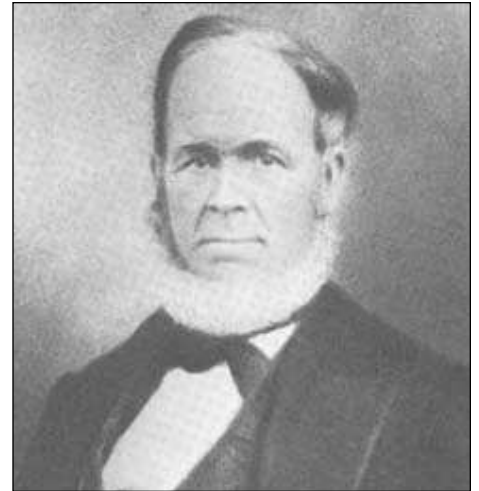
This Huerstel-Alfred Luelling deed opened the gate to another long-forgotten path trodden by Alexander White and O.C. Pratt. "Also that other certain piece or parcel of land part of the Rancho San Antonio; said land lying on the northern slope of the mountain," the same deed went on to say.

The deed lists Alexander White and O.C. Pratt as owners of this land. Alexander White may have been Alexander White Baldwin, a Nevada judge killed in a Nov. 14, 1869, train accident near today's Melrose District in Oakland. Baldwin was buried at Mountain View Cemetery in Oakland after the accident under the name "Alexander White."

An Orville C. Pratt served as a judge in Oregon in the mid-19th century. He moved to San Francisco in 1856. Were these judges investing their money in property that later became the Luelling homestead? Intriguing.

This second property lies at the site of today's Dimond Park. Alfred built a home here and, I assume, invited his father to move in; no written invitation, if there ever was one, survives. So the credit for founding and naming Fruitvale, goes not to Henderson Luelling, but to his son Alfred.

And what happened to Henderson? On Oct. 7, 1859, *The State Telegraph Line* in San Francisco told its readers that, "An association of Free Lovers, known as the Harmonical Brotherhood, sailed for (El Salvador's capital



OAKLAND HISTORY ROOM

HENDERSON LUELLING is not the founder of Fruitvale, it turns out.

city) San Salvador this afternoon, in the schooner *San Diego*. They number about twenty-five persons, male and female and are under the guidance of Dr. Tyler. They propose to settle in the interior of Honduras."

Among these free lovers was none other than Henderson Luelling.

The *Sacramento Daily Union* told the rest of the story. "(As the venture's largest investor, Luelling) sold out his homestead to raise money for the purpose, and left his wife (Mary Lee) in such a destitute condition that her friends and relatives have in charity built her a small house near the former residence. This is all she has left of her former property."

On the way to San Salvador, the *San Diego* wrecked off the coast of Baja, California. Luelling survived and returned to California. He lived for a while with his sons in Oakland. He died Dec. 28, 1878, while clearing land on property he had leased in San Jose. He rests in Mountain View Cemetery. ■

See Evanosky's talk on early Fruitvale, as part of our ongoing lecture series. He'll be doing a slideshow presentation 7:30 p.m. Thursday, June 9, at the Chapel of the Chimes, 4499 Piedmont Ave. \$10 members, \$15 non.



Shine up your sneakers: walking tour season starts soon!

By Alison Finlay

OHA's walking tours explore the city from east to west, from coast to hills, and from well-known landmarks to hidden jewels. Here are some highlights of the upcoming season, which starts in July. It's a great way to be outside, experience Oakland in a new way, and meet lively people wise enough to be curious about this amazing place.

We lead off with Phil Bellman's great tour on July 9 about Borax Smith, the legendary risk-taking industrialist, 20-mule team miner, founder of the Key System, and leading citizen. That same weekend, join Michael Crowe and Barbara Smith for a fascinating tour of Mountain View Cemetery, with its terrific riches of regional history, remarkable funerary architecture, fine buildings, and historic landscape.

On July 16, historian Celia McCarthy takes us to the industrial waterfront at Middle Harbor, with a unique close-up of the giant skywalker cranes, and an exploration of our fascinating maritime past and present.

On July 24, venture with Kathleen DiGiovanni to Fairyland and Lakeside Park (you won't even need to bring a child with you!), the garden center—complete with century-old bonsai—and the 1903 Lawn Bowling Club.

On Aug. 13, Ben Glickstein presents a hands-on tour of Peralta Hacienda Historical Park in Fruitvale, perfect for children 6-12 and great for adults too. Experience the East Bay's old rancho!



MIDDLE HARBOR PARK is the site of a July 16 tour with Celia McCarthy.



BORAX SMITH on the still-extant steps to the now-vanished Home Club off Park Boulevard, above. Borax and son at his now-destroyed home Arbor Villa in 1916, below. Arbor Villa was across the street from the Home Club.

Among our other tours, discover the Clawson neighborhood with Betty Marvin; learn about women in Oakland history with Annalee Allen and Kathleen DiGiovanni; and go up in the hills with Dennis Evanosky to see the oldest redwood in Oakland and hear about the mines that operated there. Evanosky will also lead a tour of the Dimond District, revealing its history as a country resort, its German community, and Sausal Creek. Ray Raineri will investigate Temescal's neighbor to the west, the Alden Tract. Don Holmgren has updated and revised his tour of Oakland's cable railway system.

The nationally-famous mid-century roof garden at Kaiser Center will be featured in a tour of the Grand/Harrison area led by Annalee Allen; Shepherd Canyon is spotlighted by Mike Petouhoff; and the ever-popular uptown tour, with Art Deco author and expert Michael Crowe, returns this year.



For full information, look for our flyer in your mail in June. You may also visit www.oaklandheritage.org or contact the OHA office at 763-9218.

If you volunteer to assist with the tours, your tour is free of charge! Contact our office for details. ■



Fascinating gift to History Room includes aerial images

By Deborah Cooper

The Oakland Public Library's Oakland History Room is full of unexpected treasures. Consider the story behind a recent gift to the Oakland History Room of documents and photographs relating to the life of Jacob B. Struble. Struble was born in Pennsylvania and graduated from the Pennsylvania State College with a degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1889 and later went to work for the Union Switch and Signal Co. He invented and patented new technologies for using alternating electrical current to activate signaling systems for trains. Railroads across the country began using his inventions, and he became a wealthy man.

What does this have to do with Oakland? In 1901, Union Switch and Signal sent Struble to San Francisco to work with Westinghouse Brake Traction Co., selling signaling equipment for railroads. He settled in Oakland where he moved into luxurious quarters at the Hotel Oakland. According to a Feb. 22, 1914, *San Francisco Chronicle* article, he soundproofed his apartment so that he could install a huge organ with 1,690 pipes and play it without disturbing his neighbors.

He also displayed interest in aviation. Because he saw the bay and estuary as great

landing sites, he invented new landing equipment that allowed a single pilot to launch, land and berth a hydro-plane. He had a hydro-plane built for himself and trained as a pilot. He kept his "flying boat" in a hangar on the shore of the Oakland Estuary.

In October 1917, *Sunset* magazine ran an article about his breath-taking flight out to the Farallones and his landing back in the Oakland Estuary. Struble loved taking photographs during his flights. Some of these aerial photos are part of the gift of Struble documents donated by his descendants to the Oakland History Room.

If you are interested in learning more about the Oakland History Room or becoming



1922 STRUBLE AERIAL of the Southern Pacific Mole. The Alber's Mill warehouse can be seen in the background.

involved in ensuring its protection during these challenging economic times for Oakland's city government, consider becoming a charter member of Friends of the Oakland History Room. For more info and to download a membership form, visit www.branch-friends.org/index.php/historyroom. ■

AIA sounds alarm for historic places

By Betsy Yost and Naomi Schiff

On May 25, the American Institute of Architects East Bay held its inaugural Endangered Historic Places Program. The group invited nominations to publicize the plight of neglected buildings, spaces and places. Here's the 2011 list:

NAPA COUNTY: Cayetano Juarez Adobe, Aetna Springs Resort (Pope Valley), Merrill's Building, Center Building

SOLANO COUNTY: Glen Cove Shell-mound (Vallejo), Bachelor Officer Quarters Bldg. 45 (Benicia)

CONTRA COSTA COUNTY: Point Molate/Winehaven, Quinan Hall & Hercules Powder Co., Contra Costa Florist Building

ALAMEDA COUNTY: Oaks Theater, Old City Hall (Berkeley); Linda Avenue Substation (Piedmont), Alameda Naval Air Station

Control Tower; 16th Street Station, General Electric Mazda Lampworks, Historic Mortuaries of Pill Hill, Chapel of the Oaks, Fruitvale Hotel, Cohen/Bray House, Ninth Avenue Terminal, Holy Redeemer Center, Biff's Diner, Club Knoll, Montclair Firehouse, Joaquin Miller Park Cathedral in the Woods Sign & CA Writers Memorial Grove, Schilling Garden (Oakland). Old City Hall

MULTI-COUNTY: Neighborhood Grocery Stores. The presentations will be posted around July 1 at www.aiaeb.org. ■

Welcome to our new members!

OHA is pleased to welcome these newest members to our roster:

Dana Hughes, Kent Lewandowski, Tim Lundgren, Bill Mastin, Sandie Smario-Alison, William Togno

OHA wishes to acknowledge our hard-working volunteers. Thanks!

Peter Birkholtz, Chris Buckley, Dan Jepson, Jennifer Lehane, Kirk Peterson, Michael Stangl, Valerie Winemiller

OHA thanks the family of long-time member, Paul McCarthy, and those who made donations in his memory:

Pat McCarthy, Jennifer McCarthy & Joyce Kelly, Janis & Darrell Emery, Patrick Fleming, Italo & Alice Grossi, Dwight & Fran McCarroll, Patricia Parson, Shannon Ripoli, Richard & Patricia Russo, Doris Rygh, Nancy Smith, Peggy Spence

OAKLAND HISTORY ROOM



TIMMM-BERRRR on 14th Ave? Highland Hospital EIR revisited

By Naomi Schiff

Here are some of the issues OHA's Preservation Committee has been working on and watching recently.

HIGHLAND HOSPITAL: A just-released supplemental DEIR for the Highland Hospital Acute Tower Replacement project reveals a plan to remove large mature trees along 14th Avenue, causing concern among neighbors. The public can comment at a hearing at 7 p.m. Wed. June 15 at Highland's eighth floor cafeteria, 1411 East 31st St. The comment period remains open until June 27. You can see a copy of the document and how to respond in writing at www.HighlandATR.org/News.

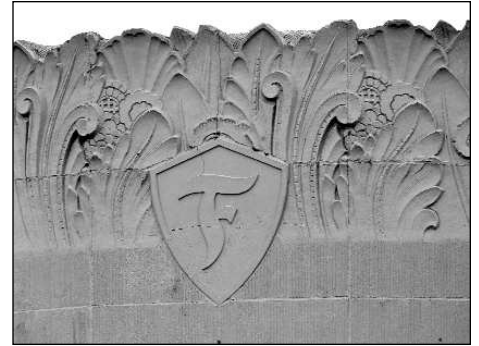
BROADWAY VALDEZ: It's back! The planning phase for the Broadway-Valdez area has started up again, after a hiatus. On May 25, OHA was among the groups presenting ideas to the community. The long-time "auto row" stretch once seemed destined for lucrative condo development moving north up Broadway, but by the time the Broadway/Grand first phase and Packard Lofts were completed, the economy deteriorated and they were offered as rentals. Then the city set its eyes on planning for retail development, despite a dreary history of dashed department store dreams ranging from Jack London Square, to City Center, to Uptown. Recently, environmental, housing, local business, neighborhood, and preservation advocates have stepped in to present an alternative vision to what looks like yet another futile attempt at suburban-style commercial development. For information, see www.oaklandnet.com/bvdsp, or contact our office at 763-9218.

ZONING UPDATE COMPLETE: New zoning regulations and maps are now in effect, as of April 14. Many of OHA's recommendations were incorporated during the effort to bring Oakland's general plan and its zoning into agreement. Before you undertake a project on your property, or comment on something planned for your neighborhood, take a look at the updated rules and standards. In conjunction with the city's new guidelines for demolition of historic proper-

ties, preservationists hope for fewer last-minute demolition emergencies, greater interest in reuse of historic properties, and in preserving neighborhoods. The development community has long advocated for greater specificity and certainty about what rules apply to each parcel. To see the new information, go to www2.oaklandnet.com/Government/o/CEDA/o/PlanningZoning/s/codes/index.htm or call the zoning office at 238-3912.

12TH STREET IN HIGH GEAR: The reconfiguration of the 12th Street area around Lake Merritt has reached the concrete-pouring stage, with the road bridges well underway, as well as ever-changing detours for patient motorists. The project includes a pedestrian bridge to create a continuous path around the lake, and a path under the new 12th street bridges continuing along the channel that connects the lake to the estuary. Neighboring artist-photographer Erik Niemann keeps a daily photo record at <http://oakland12thstreetproject.blogspot.com>. His May 13, 2010, and May 13, 2011, images below show a year's big progress, despite the rainy winter.

KEY SYSTEM BUILDING RETURN? The Metropolitan Transportation Commission, the Association of Bay Area Governments and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District seek to co-locate in new offices, considering several sites in Oakland and San Francisco. SKS Investments has proposed a 20-plus-story office tower on Broadway, adjoining the 12th Street BART station. SKS also plans to rehabilitate the adjoining 1100 Broadway building, originally "Security Bank of Trust," but later called the



NAOMI SCHIFF

F FOR FIRESTONE: one of the fantastic design elements on Broadway Auto Row.

"Key System Building," a seismically fragile, but great-looking Beaux Arts landmark now standing empty. The EIR and completed building approvals show an energy-efficient office tower providing support to buttress the National Register building and restoration of its historic exterior. Its transit-related history seems appropriate for MTC.

Members may recall that OHA co-sponsored Rocky Baird's mural on temporary panels securing the ground floor, showing streetcars and passengers. Real estate negotiations are scheduled for June. To see the SKS plan, visit <http://sksinvestments.com/properties/1100-broadway/>.

To support the project incorporating preservation of 1100 Broadway, email the agencies' presiding officers: MTC: Adrienne J. Tissier, Chair (Supervisor, San Mateo County), atissier@co.sanmateo.ca.us. BAAQMD: Tom Bates, Chair (Mayor, City of Berkeley), mayor@ci.berkeley.ca.us. ABAG: Mark Green, President (Mayor, Union City), markg@unioncity.org.

See **PRESERVATION** on page 11



12TH STREET INTERCHANGE on May 13, 2010 (left) and the new bridge under construction on May 13, 2011 (right).



ERIK NIEMANN



OHA welcomes new admin director and new board member

By Dea Bacchetti

Great things are happening at OHA! Let me begin by giving a hearty welcome to our new administrative director, January Ruck. She has a background in historic preservation and most recently worked for the American Battlefield Protection Program, part of the National Park Service. She administered grants to historical battlefield sites and helped write the Update to the Civil War Sites Advisory Commission Report on the Nation's Civil War Battlefields, commissioned by Congress. Her great interest in history will serve us all well!

She recently relocated to the west coast, and we are very excited to have her. She replaces Rachel Force, our interim administrative director and past board member who left OHA to embark on a new and exciting journey: motherhood. Rachel and her husband Bret Weigl welcomed their first son on April 12! We are all thrilled at the arrival of OHA's littlest member.

We're also delighted to announce a new board member, D. Mills Martin. He is an architectural designer in a firm which specializes in preservation, adaptive reuse, and classical inspired new design. He is particu-

larly interested in learning about and educating others on our city's architectural heritage. He will be a wonderful addition to our board, and probably will become involved in the walking and home tour committees. He's also expressed interest in helping OHA forge an even stronger connection with the Landmarks Board and the city of Oakland to influence preservation of our heritage.

As I wrote about last time, the California Preservation Foundation selected Oakland to host its 2012 Conference. OHA and a wonderful group of supporting organizations will be working to plan the conference. It will be headquartered at the recently renovated Oakland Marriott City Center from May 3 to 6 next year. We selected the theme of the conference, "Old Roots, New Growth: Cultivating Community," by drawing on Oakland's iconic tree symbol for inspiration.

People from all over California will attend this conference. We can show Oakland in a positive light, make use of our many historic venues, and tap into the greater preservation community as we find solutions to issues that Oakland shares with other communities. I will be reporting on more conference details as they become available. ■

Get in on the ground floor!

Be in the know and discover which intriguing neighborhood will be the site of our 2011 house tour.

OHA's house tour committee is off and running, with planning well underway for our October 9 event. Would you like to volunteer? Help publicize? Do some research? We need your expertise, your enthusiasm, your exquisite taste, and your assistance! Call the OHA office at 763-9218 to join in the fun.

Preservation

Continued from page 10

G.E. BUILDING: General Electric plans to demolish its industrial building at 5441 International Boulevard in East Oakland, because of findings concerning contaminants at the site. There is no word of a new project at this location. For more information, contact Pete Vollman of the Oakland Planning Department at pvollman@oaklandnet.com. ■

CONTRIBUTORS: Dea Bacchetti, Deborah Cooper, Kathleen DiGiovanni, Dennis Evanosky, Alison Finlay, January Ruck, Naomi Schiff, Betsy Yost
 PRODUCTION: Erika Mailman

OHA News welcomes article submissions. 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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OHA membership keeps you informed, helps make our city more livable, and puts you in touch with our many events. It makes a wonderful gift, too!

- \$45 Cornerstone** (individual): newsletter, advance notice and discounted pricing on programs, events and tours.
- \$65 Pilaster** (household): same as above, for two.
- \$110 Pediment** (organization/corporate): same as above for four (for corporate or organization, transferable).
- \$250-\$499 Doric** same as above plus two tickets to a walking tour
- \$500-\$999 Ionic**: same as above plus four tickets to a walking tour.
- \$1,000-\$2,500 Corinthian**: all access pass for two (transferable).

Some limited income memberships are available. Call for information

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

Date _____
 Name _____
 Address _____
 City, Zip _____
 Phone (h) _____ (w) _____
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Send your check to:
 Oakland Heritage Alliance,
 446 17th St., Suite 301
 Oakland, CA 94612
 or go to
www.oaklandheritage.org
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Damn the torpedoes, full theft ahead!

By Kathleen Leles DiGiovanni

Lakeside Park's Battleship *Maine* torpedo port scored its 15 minutes of fame in May when it was stolen by scrap metal thieves and recovered five days later. Spotted by an alert employee at Schnitzer Steel in Oakland, just a few miles from the park, the torpedo port was recovered and the thieves arrested.

But what was a torpedo port doing there in the first place?

The U.S.S. *Maine* exploded in Havana harbor on Feb. 15, 1898. Blamed at the time on mines set by Spain, the explosion was the catalyzing event leading to American entry into the war with Spain a few months later. Placed in the park to much fanfare on Feb. 16, 1913, it's among the oldest permanent installations in Lakeside Park: older than Fairyland and the Edoff Bandstand. Only the McElroy fountain (1911) and the pumping station at the old boathouse (1909) have been around longer.

The *Maine* was raised in 1911 and parts of the destroyed ship were distributed by the War Department. U.S. Senator George C. Perkins; State Senator John W. Stetson, formerly Oakland's city attorney; and Park Commissioner J. P. Edoff petitioned the War Department for a piece. According to contemporary reports, Oakland was the only city on the Pacific Coast to be awarded a relic. The imminent delivery of the massive doughnut hole in June of 1912 posed a problem for Henry Vogt, secretary of the board of park directors: it would cost an unbudgeted \$33 in freight charges to have it deliv-

ered. Vogt was quoted in the *Oakland Tribune* as saying, "I guess I'll go and sting Stetson or Park Commissioner J. P. Edoff for the 33 bucks."

Vogt found the money somewhere because the torpedo port was delivered the next month—green with verdigris and crusted with barnacles—and plans were formed to place it on a pedestal in Lakeside Park. The E.H. Liscum Camp no. 7, a Spanish-American War veterans group, designed and built the concrete base. The bronze plaque for the monument's base was the only thing not made by the veterans themselves.

The torpedo port was unveiled and dedicated on Feb. 16, 1913 on the 15th anniversary of the ship's sinking, in another of the grand parades and dedicatory events that Oakland excelled at in those years. Festivities began with a parade from 14th and Franklin streets, proceeding to the park where a crowd of thousands waited. Members of the E.H. Liscum Camp led the way, accompanied by a 60-piece naval band from Yerba Buena Island and the Sixth Infantry band from the Presidio.

At the park the reviewing stands were packed with Spanish-American War veterans, joined by a few ancients from the Mexican War and many from the Civil War. Mayor Frank K. Mott received the torpedo port on the city's behalf. Lengthy speechifying included an invocation by Rev. Fr. Joseph P. McQuaide of San Francisco, himself a veteran chaplain of that war. Concern about possi-



OAKLAND HISTORY ROOM

THIS TORPEDO PORT was stolen from Lakeside Park and quickly recovered.

ble U.S. intervention in the Mexican Revolution added a somber note to the day.

With the location of its reinstallation uncertain at press time we note that, though it was stolen for the scrap value of its brass, at the time of its placement the *Tribune* reported that "The hoary torpedo port facing is of practically no intrinsic value" and had value only as a memento to the sacrifices of the war.

How times have changed. ■