

## New Transit Center Planned; Impact Studied

The City of Oakland in cooperation with the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) District is undertaking a feasibility and environmental impact study of an Intermodal Transportation Center. The center would serve as a station for AMTRAK trains and for AC Transit, Greyhound, Trailways, and Peerless buses and is intended to improve the linkage between these transit modes and BART.

The proposed project site is next to the Oakland West BART station on the block bounded by Cypress, 3rd, Center, and 5th Streets and the easterly half of the block bounded by Center, 3rd, Chester, and 5th Streets.

This is on the east edge of the South Prescott neighborhood, an approximately eight-block area bounded by 7th Street, the BART station, Center Street, 3rd, and Peralta Streets. The neighborhood, consisting predominantly of modest working class and "pioneer" cottages dating from the 1870's, provides a tangible link with Oakland's early black community and the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869. The historical associations of the neighborhood, its archeological potential, and the architectural style of some of the buildings may be sufficient to qualify the area as a historic district eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and the City's S-7 Preservation Combining Zone, although further research is needed before the neighborhood's importance can be fully evaluated.

Construction of the center would require removal of all existing improvements from the project site and result in AMTRAK's  
*Continued on page 6*

## Briefing

● The City has released a report containing design and development recommendations for the PRESERVATION PARK project, to be located on the three blocks bounded by 11th, 14th, Grove and Castro Streets. These blocks presently contain the Pardee Mansion, the First Unitarian Church, the Charles S. Greene Library and several Victorian and turn of the century houses. The project will retain these buildings and move in and restore from other locations buildings threatened with demolition. Seven buildings have already been relocated



*Preservation Park, moved-on houses, south side of 13th Street.*

and are presently set on blocks on the south side of 13th Street, awaiting selection of their final sites.

The report's recommendations include:  
1) that the project image be that of Victorian West Oakland, using a reference period of 1868-1902 and consisting predominantly of Victorian houses, although with  
*Continued on page 3*



# OHA CALENDAR

The OHA Calendar lists events related to history and preservation that may be of interest to OHA members. To submit events for listing, contact Dean M. Yabuki, 842 Grosvenor Place, Oakland, California 94610, (415)893-1278. Next deadline: Friday, July 3 (end July—early September).

**Oakland Heritage Alliance was formed to bring together community groups and individuals sharing an interest in the history of Oakland, and in the preservation and conservation of the city's archaeological, architectural, cultural, environmental, and historical resources.**

## OFFICERS 1980-81

President ..... Beth Bagwell  
 V.P. Programs and Education ..... Leslie Flint  
 V.P. Fund Raising ..... Marlene Wilson  
 V.P. Public Relations ..... Beth Bagwell  
 Financial Officer ..... Brad Niebling  
 Recording/Corresponding Secretary Marlene Wilson  
 Membership Secretary ..... Jon Good

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 1980-81

Beth Bagwell ..... 653-5968  
 Leslie Flint ..... 658-4915  
 Melinda Young Frye ..... 763-1642  
 Jon Good ..... 655-7477  
 Bruce Judd ..... 421-1680  
 Gary Knecht ..... 865-6382  
 Brad Niebling ..... 839-1600  
 Laura Pan ..... 254-6819  
 William Sturm ..... 465-1321  
 Michael Swernoff ..... 654-1865  
 Marlene Wilson ..... 832-8700  
 Dean Yabuki ..... 893-1278

OHA was incorporated in 1980 as a California non-profit corporation. Membership dues and contributions are tax deductible.

© 1981 Oakland Heritage Alliance



*CREDITS* Editor: William Sturm; Design: Blair Prentice; Production: Gary Knecht, Diane Judd; Contributors: Beth Bagwell, Leslie Flint, Charles B. Oakland, Dean Yabuki

Sun 24 May 1pm-5pm  
Berkeley Spring Mansion Self-Guided Tour and Lecture. Dimitri Shipounoff. Part of a benefit for the Creative Dance Theatre held at the John Hudson Thomas landmark in Berkeley. Enrollment limited; mail pre-registration required. \$10/person, \$17/couple. Send check and stamped self-addressed envelope to Benefit Tickets, Creative Dance Theatre, 659 Arlington, Berkeley 94707.

Thurs 28 May 7pm  
Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association Annual Dinner. Catered by Narsai's. Shattuck Hotel, 2086 Allston Way, Berkeley. \$15/person. Reservations required. Contact BAHA, P.O. Box 1137, Berkeley 94701. (415)845-6591.

Sun 31 May 1pm  
Building the Greater University. Trish Hawthorne, UC Berkeley history walk. Friends of the Berkeley Public Library. Meet at the Bancroft Library entrance, UC Berkeley. Reservations advised. Free. (415)644-6100.

Sun 31 May 1pm-5pm  
4th Annual Vallejo Architectural Heritage Tour and Wine Tasting. Vallejo Architectural Heritage Foundation. Reservations required. VAHF, P.O. Box 1129, Vallejo 94590. \$5/person. (707)554-4508 or (707)644-9136.

June—September  
A Legacy in Stone: Masonry Building in California. A California Historical Society exhibit. CHS, Whittier Mansion, 2090 Jackson Street, San Francisco. (415)567-1848.

Wed 10 June  
OHA Program Committee meets. Contact Leslie Flint, (415)658-4915, for details.

Fri 12 June—Sat 13 June  
Victorian-Edwardian Architecture Symposium. Judith Lynch/Bill Lambert, Coordinators. Palace Hotel, San Francisco. \$150/general, \$75/student or senior. Contact Mark Feldman, New College of California, 777 Valencia, San Francisco 94110. (415) 777-2344.

Sat 13 June 10am-5pm  
3rd Annual Vallejo Preservation Faire. Vallejo Architectural Heritage Foundation. Old City Park, Vallejo. Free. (707)554-4508 or (707)644-9136.

Sun 14, 21, 29 June  
Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association Neighborhood Walking Tours. Buena Vista (Nut Hill), Piedmont Avenue, and South Campus tours will be given. Space limited, pre-registration required. \$3/tour. Contact BAHA, P.O. Box 1137, Berkeley 94701. (415) 845-6591.

Thurs 18 June 7:30pm  
Friends of Terra Cotta meeting. California Historical Society Library, 2099 Pacific, San Francisco. Margaret Henry, 525-4077.

## Mid-June

The Gardens of Berkeley. William Coburn, Architect. A Berkeley Historical Society free lecture. TBA. Contact Gloria Cooper, (415)524-3892.

Wed 17 June

OHA Community Awareness Committee meets. Contact Leslie Flint, (415)658-4915, for details.

Sun 21 June

Father's Day

Sun 21 June 10am-Noon

Bicycle Tour of Historic Oakland. Oakland Museum. Museum docents lead a two-hour tour through downtown and nearby landmark sites. Departs from the 10th Street entrance of the Museum. Participants must be 12 or older. Enrollment limited, reservations required. (415)273-3514.

Sat 4 July

Independence Day.

Sat 11, 18, 25 July and 1 August 10am-11:30am & 1pm - 2:30pm OHA Neighborhood Walking Tours. Tours of Lake Merritt, Rose Garden, Clinton, Lakeshore, Temescal, Oak Center, Picardy Drive, and Fernwood will be given. Reservations required. \$1/OHA member, \$3/non-members per tour. Contact OHA 5569 Lawton Avenue, Oakland 94618. Leslie Flint (415)658-4915.

## REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETINGS

Oakland Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board. Meets the 3rd Wednesday of the month, 3:30 pm, City Hall, Room 221, Washington & 14th Streets, (415)273-3941.

Oakland City Planning Commission. Meets the 2nd & 4th Wednesday of the month, 1:30 pm, City Hall, Room 115, (415)273-3941.

Oakland City Council. Meets every Tuesday evening, 7:30 pm, City Hall Council Chambers, (415)273-3266.

Oakland Heritage Alliance Board. Meets the 1st Monday of the month, 7:30 pm. For location and agenda, contact Marlene Wilson, (415)832-8700 (days).

Brooklyn Neighborhood Preservation Association. Meets the last Sunday of the month, 7:30 pm. For location and program, contact BNPA, P.O. Box 187, Oakland 94604.

Oakland Design Advocates. Meets the 2nd Wednesday morning of the month, 7:30 am, Tom Lovely's Restaurant, 336 Grand Avenue, (415)893-6834.

## REGULARLY SCHEDULED TOURS AND ACTIVITIES

Camron-Stanford House. Free tours are offered Wednesdays, 11am-4pm, and Sundays 1-4pm. 1418 Lakeside Drive at 14th Street, (415)836-1976.

(During Memorial Day weekend, May 24-25, the Camron-Stanford House will be open for walk-through tours from 1-4pm)

Paramount Theatre Tours. Tours are offered the 1st & 3rd Saturday of the month, 10am. 2025 Broadway at 21st Street. \$1.00. Meet promptly at the box office entrance on 21st Street, (415)465-6400.

Oakland Tours Program. Free tours are offered of Old Oakland, City Center-Downtown, Uptown, Preservation Park, and Chinatown. For a schedule, call (415)273-3234. ■

*BRIEFING, Continued from page 1*

provisions for moving in houses of other styles consistent with the reference period; 2) that a combination of small and medium scale developers be used rather than a single "master" developer; 3) that through traffic within the project site be limited to 12th Street; and 4) that every possible design technique be used to mitigate the design conflict between Preservation Park and the nearby proposed City Center parking garage. The report suggests that the buildings be devoted to a combination of office, cultural, civic and commercial uses, with limited residential uses also permitted. The report also recommends a schematic site plan which provides 17 sites for move-on buildings within a setting of open spaces, Victorian garden structures, pedestrian paths and streetscape elements.

Action on the report's recommendations by the City Council has not yet been scheduled. A copy of the report is available for review at the Oakland History Room of the Oakland Main Library or at the City Planning Department (273-3941).

● In the MADISON SQUARE NEIGHBORHOOD, the Association of Bay Area Governments and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, in cooperation with the Bay Area Rapid Transit District, are proposing to relocate their offices from the Claremont Hotel to a new three-story building to be constructed on the block bounded by Oak, Madison, 7th and 8th Streets. Predominantly Asian in population, the area is characterized by many small-scale, finely-detailed Victorian houses. The proposed site is now used as a landscaped parking lot and the project will therefore not require removal of any buildings. However, without sensitive design, the new building could be visually intrusive and fragment the architectural integrity of the neighborhood.

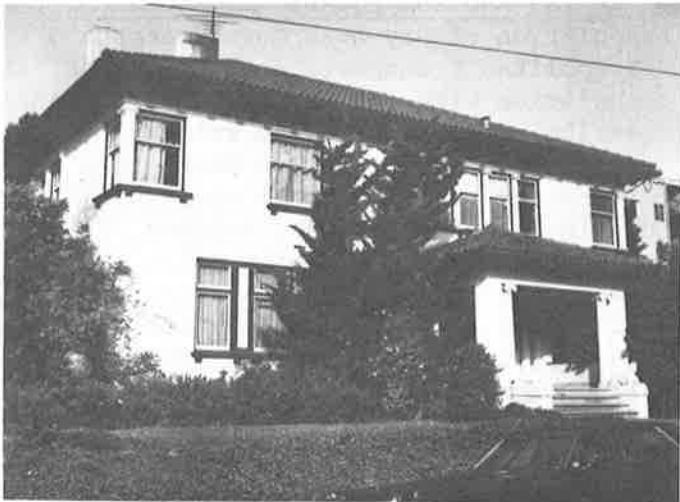
An alternative site, the vacant block bounded by 8th, 9th, Oak and Fallon Streets, has been recommended by the East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation, which is concerned that the proposed site will erode the residential character of the neighborhood.

*Continued on page 4*

*BRIEFING, Continued from page 3*

● PRESERVATION VS. DEVELOPMENT CONTROVERSIES IN THE ADAMS POINT AND RICHMOND BOULEVARD NEIGHBORHOODS. In Adams Point, a 36-unit new condominium is being proposed to replace the Victor H. Metcalf House at 245 Perkins Street. The house, a Mediterranean-style villa, was built in 1909 for Metcalf, who was Theodore Roosevelt's Secretary of the Navy. The architect, Walter J. Matthews, designed many important Oakland buildings.

The condominium was approved March 25 by the City Planning Commission, despite strong opposition at a public hearing from the Adams Point Neighborhood Preservation Association. The approval was somewhat reluctant, occurring only after the Commission was told that state law would prevent denial. The Commission has also refused to deny most other new condominiums, in part for this reason. Although the Commission required as part of its approval that the house be moved, rather than demolished (see housemoving article elsewhere in this issue), this did not satisfy the opponents,



*Metcalf house at 245 Perkins Street.*

who do not want the house moved out of the area. Both the opponents and the developer appealed the Commission's decision to the City Council, which set a hearing for May 12. The developer had wanted clarifications in the moving requirement. On April 22, the opponents persuaded the Landmarks Board to initiate landmark

designation for the house.

In the Richmond Boulevard Neighborhood, a 38-unit condominium is being proposed for a heavily-wooded vacant lot at 3020 Richmond Boulevard. The neighborhood, just south-



*Richmond Boulevard*

east of Piedmont Avenue and MacArthur Boulevard, is centered around Oak Glen Park and Glen Echo Creek and is distinguished by thick groves of redwoods, oaks and other large trees. The woodsy setting is complemented by imaginatively designed craftsman and other rustic houses. Opponents believe the design of the new condominium, a large, boxy structure with unarticulated wall surfaces, is not especially sensitive to the character of the neighborhood. The condominium is still awaiting action by the City Planning Commission. Although the Richmond Boulevard Neighborhood Association strongly opposes the project, Commission approval seems likely for the same reasons the Metcalf House condominium was approved. Both the Adams Point and Richmond Boulevard Neighborhoods are presently zoned for high-density residential development with no design controls. ■

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* ACKNOWLEDGEMENT \*  
\* OHA extends special thanks to \*  
\* Blair Prentice for creating \*  
\* the design of OHA NEWS. \*  
\*\*\*\*\*



## Oakland Landmarks Board Actions

Following is a summary of actions taken by the board at its meetings of February, March and April, 1981.

### Landmark status recommended:

- Southern Pacific Mole site at end of 7th Street.
- J. C. McMullen House at 2748 Grande Vista Avenue.
- McCrea House and Indian Campground on Holy Names College campus.

These recommendations were subsequently approved by the City Planning Commission and the City Council.

### Landmark studies in progress:

- Grand Lake Theater.
- Victor H. Metcalf house at 245 Perkins Street.

### Members:

- Marie Converse and A. Lewis Koue retired upon the expiration of their terms. Both members were instrumental in successfully advocating the Board's formation in the early 1970's and had been among the founding members.
- New members appointed are Chris Pattillo, former president of the Oakland Citizen's Committee for Urban Renewal (OCCUR) and now president of Oakland Design Advocates, and Betsy Steele, active in the Oakland Board of Realtors.
- One vacancy remains on the seven member board. ■

### SUGGESTED READING

Recent books on the architecture of Oakland available at the Oakland Public Library:

- Robert Bernhardt, *The Buildings of Oakland*, 1979
- Judith Waldhorn and Sally Woodbridge, *Victoria's Legacy: Tours of San Francisco Bay Area Architecture*, 1978
- Mark A. Wilson, *East Bay Heritage: A Potpourri of Living History*, 1979

\*\*\*\*\*  
 \* ACKNOWLEDGEMENT \*  
 \* OHA extends special thanks to the \*  
 \* Oakland office of BankCal--The Bank \*  
 \* of California, Mr. P. Schuyler \*  
 \* Bailey, Manager, for a donation to \*  
 \* the OHA News. \*  
 \*\*\*\*\*

## Volunteers Wanted

The OAKLAND NEIGHBORHOOD HISTORY PROJECT is seeking volunteers to conduct oral history interviews of Oakland residents. Focusing on the oldest ethnic settlements of Oakland, the project is currently studying the history of settlement in West Oakland and Fruitvale. We are especially concerned with: the social fabric of the original neighborhoods; the movement of groups from one area to another; and how this mobility affected the development of Oakland as a whole. We are seeking people with experience in oral history interviewing or a strong background in Oakland history. A small honorarium will be paid for each interview. If you would be interested in conducting interviews, or if you can suggest names of people who might remember the original neighborhoods, please contact: Kathryn Hughes, Director, Oakland Neighborhood History Project, Camron-Stanford House, 1418 Lakeside Drive, Oakland, CA 94612. Phone 836-1992 or leave a message at 836-1976.

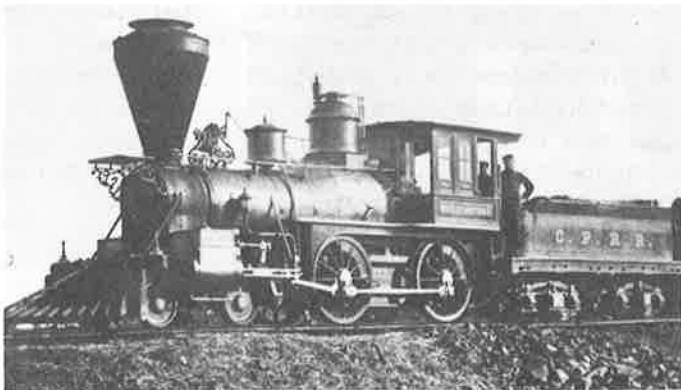
OHA member Annalee Allen is once again the organizer of this year's OAKLAND PRESERVATION FAIR at the Camron-Stanford House, Sunday, September 20. Anyone interested in helping with this annual Oakland event, please call Annalee at 654-6791.

OHA committees also need help. See page 8 for more information. ■

*TRANSIT CENTER, Continued from page 1**Interior of 16th Street depot, built 1912.*

relocation from Southern Pacific's 16th Street station. This relocation would probably render the station economically useless and ripe for demolition. There are indications that Southern Pacific would like to use the station site as a freight facility and might move the AMTRAK station whether or not the proposed center is built.

In addition to requiring clearance of the project site, the proposed center may further adversely affect historic properties by stimulating new development elsewhere in South Prescott as well as in the North Prescott neighborhood, Oakland's largest and most intact concentration of Victorian houses.



*This locomotive, the "Governor Stanford," was in service in California in 1863 under the Central Pacific and may have served Oakland. Photo Courtesy of Oakland History Room, Oakland Public Library.*

Strong opposition to the project has been expressed by neighborhood residents, who have worked hard in recent years to improve the area by installing curbs, gutters, and sidewalks, planting street trees, and obtaining rehabilitation funds from the City. Many of the houses exhibit recent rehabilitation activity. A Citizens' Advisory Committee has been formed for the project, consisting mostly of neighborhood residents. The neighborhood is primarily concerned about displacement of residents from the project site. To mitigate displacement, the project may move some of the houses to vacant lots elsewhere in the neighborhood.

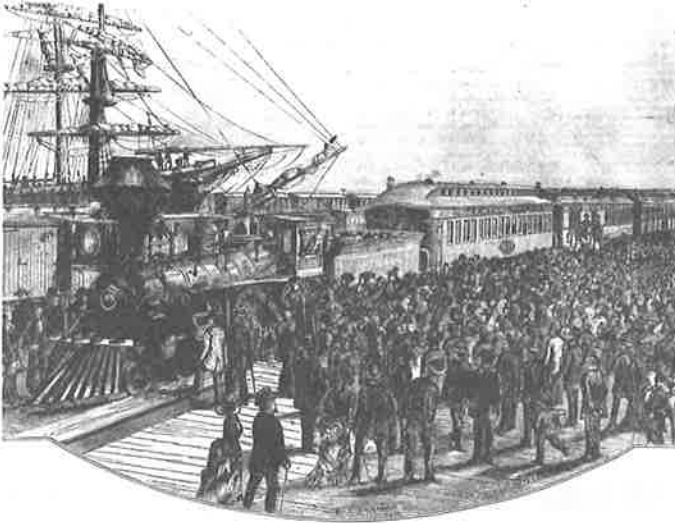
OHA has sent letters expressing concern, especially about the buildings and history of the neighborhood, and also about the fate of the present 16th Street Southern Pacific Station. OHA has requested to be kept informed of the schedule for the project and will continue to monitor its development.



*Houses on Center Street in South Prescott neighborhood.*

The feasibility and environmental impact studies are expected to last several more months. A decision will then be made by the City and BART whether to proceed with the project. The project manager is Frank Erhardt at the Oakland City Planning Department, 273-3941. ■

## Prescott Neighborhood: A History



*Arrival of Jarrett and Palmer's "Lightning Train" at Oakland Wharf, 1876.*

"Today comes thundering into Oakland the great 'Iron Horse' with tireless lungs, speeding along with a hundred tons of steel and living freight, seven days from New York."

Thus did one local scribe describe the arrival of the first transcontinental railroad into Oakland in 1869. Disgoring its hot and dusty passengers at the wharf at the end of Seventh Street, the "Iron Horse" brought much excitement to the sedate community of Oakland Point (now called Prescott). Trains were not new to this area, however. Once a land of marshes, streams and oak groves, the neighborhood first heard the roar of rails in 1863 when a local line opened from Broadway along Seventh Street to the wharf, connecting passengers to the San Francisco bound ferry. A few houses, some hotels and businesses sprang up. The great train from the East, however, spurred growth in the community. Workers for the Central Pacific Railroad—many black and Irish—settled in Oakland Point. In 1874 the Oakland Times reported, "New buildings have been erected on almost every street, and in some locali-

ties entire blocks have been filled in with homes for newcomers, and the merry sounds of the hammer and saw are still heard from morning till night upon new structures rising so closely together among the ever-green oaks..."

In 1879 the Central Pacific began construction of the Oakland Mole, a project filling the Bay 280 feet wide and one quarter of a mile long, encompassing railyards and an elaborate terminal building. Shipbuilding also began in the area.

Oakland Point became a mixture of many people—black, Irish, Italian, Portuguese. One somewhat euphoric writer, speaking of the 1890's, stated, "Everyone at the Point, be he laborer, mechanic, business or professional man were all neighbors. No class lines were drawn. No poverty, no bread lines, and few wealthy people. Wages were not large, hours of work rather long, but everyone was satisfied and happy."

Settlement of many Irish and Italians in the region stimulated the founding of St. Patrick's Church by Father McNally at 10th near Peralta Street. Blacks developed a strong business and cultural life along Seventh Street. During the 1920's and later, jazz music of the Creole Club and Slim Jenkins delighted many.

In 1912 a new station, designed by James Hunt of Chicago, opened at 16th and Wood. Servicing both the mainline and suburban electric trains, this station originally contained an upper level of tracks to receive the local lines of the Southern Pacific (formerly Central Pacific) Railroad. Long the scene of much activity, it was here, during the 1920's, that Oaklanders anxiously awaited the appearance of their favorite theatre stars. And it was here, during World War II, that arriving shipyard workers saw their first view of Oakland.

The history of Prescott is interwoven with the steam, thunder and cinders of the great "Iron Horse" of yesteryear. ■

— William Sturm

## OHA Membership Grows

The Officers and Board of Directors of *OHA* wish to welcome and thank all those concerned citizens who have shown their interest in Oakland's history and preservation by joining *OHA* in its formative first year.

If you are not already a member, you too can become a Charter Member of this growing community group by joining by August 31, 1981. A membership form is provided for your convenience on page 9.

As of May 5, 1981, *OHA's* Charter Members are as follows:

Howard Ah-Tye, Annalee Allen, Barbara B. Anderson, Jeffrey D./Joan L. King-Angell, Beth Bagwell, Ellen Beilock, Dolores Bernak, Peter J. Botto, Barbara Gray Boyd, William/Veronica Boyd, Mrs. H. Bradbury, Mrs. Carroll Brentano, Mr./Mrs. Nicholas Brereton, Douglas S. Brookes, Anthony Bruce, Chris Buckley, Sandra Buehler, Bois Burk, Mr./Mrs. Robert Buxton.

Ken/Mary Cardwell, Marina/Peter Carlson, Margaret Chan, Patricia Chudacoff, Elizabeth Cohen, Michael Damer, Mr./Mrs. J. A. Dickie, Carolyn Douthat, Katherine

Fenton, Leslie Flint, Lyn/Jim Foley, Mr./Mrs. Hilbert Freeman, L. Thomas/Melinda Young Frye, Jon Good, Lili/Larry Good, Howard L. Goode, Nona Hamilton, Marc Herbert

Judith S. Johnson, David W. Jones/Inta Vodopals, Bruce/Diane Judd, Gary Knecht/Squeak Carnwath, Mrs. A. S. Koch, Thaddeus E. Kusmierski, Richard E. Lloyd, Lillian Q. Love, Dr./Mrs. Albert A. Loverde, Bill/Jean Lowe, Elinor/Leon Mandelson, Betty Marvin, Margaret/Tom McAlone, Sheila/Tom McCune, Maryanne McGurn, Dan/Kay Mervin, Mary/Vernon/Alison/Hilary/Adam Moore, Ann Moreira.

Rosalie Nelson, F. Bradford Niebling, Ed Novak, Jody Offer, Laura Pan, Jeffrey/Bev Parrish, Pasadena Heritage, Eugene H. Peck, Blair/Helaine Kaplan Prentice, Grace M. Prescott, Lois Rather, Chris Roberts, Jane Robinson, Josef M. Schmitt, Gabriel T. Sheridan, Carol Van Steenberg/Art Kuhn, Howard Stein, Ruth Steiner, N. Sterricker, William Sturm, Ray Suderman, Michael Swernoff.

Donna Toutjian, Mrs. Warren V. Tryon, Henrietta Vasquez-Marques, Kathleen/Tom Walsh, Roberta A. Waters, Cameron White, Marlene Wilson, Ronald Wogaman/Deborah House, Tom Wolf, Sally B. Woodbridge, Henry/Henrietta Woon, Dean M. Yabuki. ■

## OHA: Who We Are And What We Are Doing

*OHA* is a community-based, city-wide organization concerned with the preservation and conservation of the City's archeological, architectural, cultural and environmental resources. The goals of *OHA* are:

To collect and provide information on preservation, rehabilitation and neighborhood conservation to individuals and neighborhood organizations.

To gather and publish information concerning preservation issues in the *OHA NEWS*.

To sponsor city, state, and national landmark nominations.

To assist efforts to collect, preserve and display records concerning the history and development of the City.

To establish a revolving fund for the preservation and restoration of endangered structures.

To plan activities which will promote interest and concern in the conservation and preservation of Oakland's past.

A recent *OHA* activity was a tour of the Oakland Rose Garden on Oakland Tours Day, May 2. *OHA* gave the tour jointly with the Rose Garden Neighborhood Preservation Association.

*OHA* activities now planned are:

Summer walking tours (see calendar on page 2 for details).

Fall homeowners' restoration workshop—watch for details in future issues of the *NEWS*. ■

## OHA Committees Need You

*Oakland Heritage Alliance* committees are the real action of our organization. To be effective, they need your active participation. Any member is welcome.

Community Awareness monitors developments on selected issues related to *OHA* concerns. Recommends *OHA* actions and policy on these issues. Chair: Leslie Flint, 658-4915.

Programs and Education plans and executes lectures, tours, or other activities sponsored by *OHA*. Chair: Leslie Flint, 658-4915.

Public Information/OHA NEWS plans and manages *OHA News*, press releases, and contacts with other organizations. Chair: Beth Bagwell, 653-5968. *News* Editor: William Sturm, 465-1321.

Membership Development seeks ways to broaden membership; also maintains records of current members. Chair: Jon Good, 655-7477. Fundraising plans and implements methods of raising funds, such as contacts with potential donors, grant applications, etc.

Chair: Marlene Wilson, 832-8700. ■





## Want to Move A House?

Or two? Peter and Marina Carlson did. On Sunday, January 11, 1981, two houses formerly situated at 435-439 Staten Avenue were moved to 1707-1716 16th Avenue—the culmination of one long process and the beginning of another.

The two houses were slated for demolition to make way for yet another new condominium in the Adams Point neighborhood. In Oakland, a tentative map must be filed with the City Planning Commission for all new condominium construction. The Commission usually requires as a condition of approval that the developer make "every reasonable effort" to move any existing buildings. If after 90 days the developer cannot find anyone interested in moving the houses or cannot move them himself, he may request permission to proceed with demolition.

Peter and Marina Carlson, Brooklyn residents and active preservationists in the Brooklyn Neighborhood Preservation Association, began negotiating to move the houses on Staten in spring, 1980. The Carlsons obtained the houses from the developer for \$1.00 each, saving the developer several thousand dollars in demolition costs. The first problem was to find vacant lots suitable for the two houses and in an area where they would not encounter too many obstacles along the moving route. The double lot on 16th Avenue across from San Antonio Park was ideal for their purposes.

The next step was to find the movers—Atlantic House Movers of Fremont. The movers filed for a moving permit and the

Carlsons filed for a building permit to finish the work on the houses once situated on their new lots. A route application was made. It was up to the Carlsons to find their own route. However, the plan had to be approved by the City's Office of Public Works, PG&E, Pacific Telephone, Cable TV, the Flood Control District, and other agencies. Houses cannot be moved over some bridges or over streets where sewer lines are too close to the surface.



*One of the Carlson houses, moving on Grand Avenue. Photo, Bob Doty - Montclarion.*

Also to be avoided are streets with a lot of overhead utility lines, especially for two-story buildings. Each power line drop costs \$50.00 and up to \$1000.00 for high intensity lines (paid for in advance by the Carlsons).

After many false starts, the final route proposed was from Staten along Grand to  
*Continued on page 10*

Oakland Heritage Alliance, 5569 Lawton Avenue, Oakland, California 94618

**JOIN OHA TODAY!** Your annual tax-deductible membership dues include the **OHA News** and announcements of all OHA activities. Additional contributions and your active participation will make OHA a more effective organization.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Numbers (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (W) \_\_\_\_\_

I am willing to participate in the following ways:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- \$ 5 Senior/student/limited income (1 vote)
- \$10 Individual (1 vote)
- \$15 Family (2 votes)
- \$25 Organization (1 vote)
- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Additional contribution
- New  Renewal
- Change of Address only



Harrison, Lakeside and Madison to 10th Street, from there to 5th Avenue then 8th Street, 14th Avenue and Foothill to 16th Avenue. All in all, this process took over seven months and involved large sums of money up front—the lot, the movers, payment to the utilities to drop lines, a bond stating that the Carlsons would complete the work once the houses were on the lot, and many other smaller costs.

But now an even larger project begins—readying the houses for sale. New foundations are being laid, and the interiors of the houses rehabilitated. The stucco house is in relatively good condition with most of its original interior details intact. However, the shingle house had been stripped of its wooden interior stairway banister and other elements while it was sitting vacant on Staten Avenue, and sustained a lot of plaster damage during the move. After the foundations are completed, rehabilitation work will proceed as soon as financing can be secured. (Banks will not

finance a house that is not on its foundation!)

Moving is a time-consuming process, is expensive, and does involve financial risk; however, with well-chosen houses and lots it can be a rewarding one. The Carlsons wanted to show that it could be done and that they might make some money in the end. But more importantly, they wanted to preserve two fine old houses and something of Oakland's past.

— Leslie Flint

**OTHER HOUSES AVAILABLE FOR MOVING**

Because of new condominium construction, the City Planning Commission has required other houses to be moved from the following locations: 468-474-480-484 Perkins St., 330-334-338 Park View Terrace, 3573-3583 Dimond Ave., 121-125-129-133 Moss Ave. and 215-245 Perkins St. The houses might be demolished if movers are not found. ■

**OAKLAND HISTORY NOTES**

Opening in 1903, Idora Park became one of Oakland's favorite amusement areas. Extending from 56th to 58th Streets, between Shattuck and Telegraph Avenues, the park offered the myriad delights of a swimming pool, roller skating rink, roller-coaster, and theater featuring plays and opera. The park closed in 1929; its site is now occupied by houses. *Postcard courtesy Oakland Public Library*



Oakland Heritage Alliance  
5569 Lawton Avenue  
Oakland, California 94618

Non-profit organization  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Oakland, California  
Permit No. 31