

## Lake Merritt Boathouse

In 1905, with the support of Republicans, Democrats, and the Municipal League, Oakland City Council member Frank Mott was persuaded to run for mayor, and came into office with full backing for his endorsement of the progressive attitude in city government. The enormous increase in Oakland's population following the 1906 earthquake, from 67,000 in 1900 to 150,000 in 1910, coupled with the nationwide enthusiasm for the progressive City Beautiful movement, resulted in enormous changes to the city. During Mott's administration, voters approved eight million dollars in bonds for the construction

of a new City Hall, and a wide variety of civic improvements, among them the development of Lakeside Park and construction of the Municipal Boathouse.

Lake Merritt, acquired by the city in 1891, had been used for recreational boating since its creation in 1869. Besides the private boat houses for homes on the shores of the lake, canoes and flatboats were available for rental by the public at the 12th Street dam. The new boathouse was designed to increase public access to recreation on the lake, while also serving as an emergency source of water for the Fire Department.

Located near the Camron-Stanford House, which the city acquired for a public museum, the boathouse was constructed in two stages.

Second Annual Regatta at the new Lake Merritt Boathouse, April 21, 1917. Boathouse offered balconies for spectators, and boat storage in the arches below. (Oakland History Room)





Lake Merritt Boathouse was part of Mayor Mott's program of civic improvements in the early 1910s, along with City Hall and the boulevard around the lake. Private developers caught the City Beautiful spirit too, as in the twin-towered Hotel Oakland. This photo dates from 1913, before addition of the boathouse wings. (Oakland History Room)

The pumping station portion was built in 1909, and was designed by John Galen Howard. Constructed of reinforced concrete, a material which had performed well in the 1906 earthquake, the pumping station was designed as part of an auxiliary fire fighting system to protect the downtown area. The completed system could provide water at high pressure directly to special hydrants installed in manholes at the center of street intersections. The system hooked into the regular water supply, but in the event of failure salt water from the lake could be pumped in.

The station was designed to complement its setting in Lakeside Park. A wide veranda on the lakefront provided pleasant views for the public, and the low-slung Mediterranean style of the building sensitively integrated into the surrounding park environment. A second Mediterranean-style boathouse, known as the Canoe House, was built about the same time on the Adams Point side of the lake. It was totally remodeled into the present Sailboat House in 1954.

In 1914 the boathouse wings were added. Originally, open verandas wrapped around the two wings, and the arches on the basement level were open to the boat storage. A public tearoom was located in one of the wings, with views across the lake to a new boat landing at East 18th Street and Lakeshore Avenue. This section of the boathouse was designed by architect Walter Reed, who was also responsible for other improvements around the lake at this time. Later, Reed and his partner William Corlett designed many important Oakland buildings including the 1922-23 Oakland Bank of Savings (now Bank of America) tower at 12th and Broadway.

The new Municipal Boathouse offered a wide variety of recreational activities to the public. In addition to rowboats, sailboats, canoes and large whale boats for crew rowing, an excursion launch offered trips around the lake. Owners of private boats could avail themselves of mooring privileges and lockers. The boathouse became the headquarters for the Lake Merritt Model Yacht Club, and the scene for sailboat regattas.

The pumping station ceased operation around 1955, about the same time that sailing moved to the new sailboat house. The main floors of the boathouse were converted to Parks and Recreation offices as was the north boat storage wing. The Red Cross canoe house was located in the old pump room until 1988 when Parks and Recreation also converted that space to offices. The last remaining recreational user of the building is the Lake Merritt Rowing Club, housed in the lower south wing since 1961.

The boathouse is an unusual and successful example of a structure designed to accommodate two highly specialized and contrasting functions. In style it is among the earliest municipal buildings in the Mediterranean mode, and set the tone for much of the development which followed around the lake. The Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey states, "The building's long history as a center for major recreational events, its very fine design and...careful setting, all make this building an especially familiar element in the context of the city, and an important contributor to Lakeside Park."

Although public use of the building for recreation on the lake has been increasingly limited, the recent "Lake Merritt Park: Recommendations for a Lake Merritt Park Master Plan," sponsored by the Environmental Design



The dual-purpose boathouse and pumping station, seen from the east shortly after completion. (Oakland History Room)

Foundation of Northern California and prepared by a Community Assistance Team of the American Society of Landscape Architects, Northern California Chapter, recommends that the city study the feasibility of re-establishing the boathouse as a focus of recreational boating on the lake.

--Carolyn Douthat, Alan Dreyfuss

THE LAKE MERRITT ROWING CLUB:  
A BRIEF, UNOFFICIAL HISTORY

The 1960 Olympic Games in Rome were a catastrophe for the American rowing establishment. For the first time since the beginning of the modern games, the United States did not win the gold medal in the premier Olympic rowing event, the men's eight-oared crew. The West German crew won the gold medal, leaving the Americans to return home asking: how did it happen? How did they do it?

The Americans began copying everything the West Germans did, from the shape of their oar blades to the new style of brief, high-intensity training. On the organizational level, the Americans noted that the West Germans began rowing as children, in hundreds of rowing clubs. Thus, unlike the Americans, who generally were ignorant of rowing until they saw a crew shell during their freshman year in college, West Germans had many years of experience before they reached their prime competition years.

And so, in 1961, the Lake Merritt Rowing Club was founded, one of many "grass-roots" rowing clubs founded in the wake of the Americans' defeat at Rome. The founding incorporators included World War II hero

Rowing was a popular women's sport early in this century; the Tribune reported in 1915 that over 400 Oakland High girls regularly rowed on the lake. This is the Adams Point Canoe House, now totally remodeled. (Oakland History Room)





Admiral Clyde King, and the legendary University of California crew coach Ky Ebright. The express purpose of the new nonprofit corporation: to provide rowing recreation and competition opportunities for the youth and the citizens of Oakland and the East Bay, and to nourish potential Olympic oarsmen and -women.

In a narrow sense, the Lake Merritt Rowing Club's purpose was fulfilled when, in 1980 and 1984, Valerie McClain was named the coxswain for the American women's Olympic crews. Valerie began her rowing career on Lake Merritt as a high school student. Other Olympians have rowed at the LMRC, including 1964 silver medalist Don Sperling, 1980 and 1984 rower Patricia Spratlin, and 1984 and 1988 coxswain Mark Zembsch.

In a broader sense, the Lake Merritt Rowing Club has vindicated its founders' hopes by providing rowing and single-sculling opportunities to thousands of its members over the past twenty-nine years. Frequently, the Lake Merritt Rowing Club has been in the forefront of the sport. In 1962, at a time when few women had the opportunity to row, the Lake Merritt Rowing Club was one of the six founding members of the National Women's Rowing Association. The Club hosted the NWRA National Championship regattas in 1964, 1967 and 1974, and women's rowing continues to be one of the strengths of the Club.

In 1979, when women were barred from major regattas, the Club founded the Bay Area Rowing Festival to provide the highest quality of competition opportunities for collegiate

women. During the years that have passed, women have become an accepted part of the rowing scene, due in part to the efforts of the Lake Merritt Rowing Club.

During the 1960s and into the 1970s the Club hosted school-age crews from most of the Oakland public high schools. These programs went into eclipse as the Oakland Athletic League withdrew its sanction, and school-age youth programs are only now beginning to flourish again. In 1979, the Club began its Summer Youth Rowing program, designed to introduce junior high school Oakland youths to rowing.

In addition to juniors, the Club's focus today is on "masters" rowing. This trend is nationwide, as more former rowers--and others who have never rowed before--discover they can get their aerobic exercise in the form of rowing.

The Club currently sponsors two major annual regattas. Each April brings hundreds of regional junior and masters crews and single-scullers to the Lake Merritt Sprints. Each autumn brings hundreds of junior, collegiate, masters and recreational crews and scullers to the three-mile Head of the Estuary Regatta at Jack London Waterfront on the Oakland Estuary. In 1989, the Club hosted the United States Rowing Association's Masters National Championship Regatta. The event featured over 800 competitors, ranging in age from 27 to 85, and in the words of American Rowing magazine, the regatta was "a gold medal for Oakland."

--Robert Kidd



The  
The Second  
Annual  
Regatta of  
April 21,  
1917, seen  
from the  
shore  
(compare  
page 1):  
rowing  
attracts  
participants  
and  
spectators  
alike.  
(Oakland  
History  
Room)



## Creeks of Emeryville

### STUDYING HISTORY ON A BICYCLE

Emeryville might seem an unlikely place to study history or follow a creek, but there they are, inextricably bound together, and they can easily be found and studied from a bicyclist's perspective.

Temescal Creek flows from the Montclair and Berkeley hills onto an alluvial fan made by heavy rains in the late Pleistocene age. These rains produced stream erosion and, as the bedrock moved upward, steeply sloping hills. Heavy gravel, sandy, silty clay and a sand-silt-clay mixture then washed downhill to produce the Temescal formation. At its end, the creek now flows through quite recent artificial fill made of garbage and mud, and forms a sandy channel at the outfall.

For thousands of years, Temescal Creek was a source of fresh water for the Ohlone Indians. Because of it, they had ample water for drinking, leaching acorns and cooking acorn meal. Fresh game was readily available as deer and rabbits came to the creek banks to drink. Shellfish were plentiful in the bay--the historic shellmounds were the Ohlone's kitchen middens. Shellmound Street, site of the Sherwin-Williams paint company (now Pfizer), gets its name from two such mounds once located there. The word "Temescal," Aztec in origin, refers to the Ohlone sweat-

Left, bridge over Temescal Creek near the Dietz home at 54th and San Pablo, 19th century (OHR); right, reconstituted creek behind the DMV on Claremont Avenue (Nancy Smith)

house (or sauna) once near the intersection of 51st Street and Telegraph.

The Europeans came in the 18th century. The mission period lasted from 1770 to 1834. In 60 years, the native culture was destroyed. Four thousand Ohlones are buried at Mission San Jose. The Europeans also oriented their ranchos around creeks, as they too needed fresh water for drinking, bathing, agriculture, and waste disposal. Vicente Peralta's home was behind the present location of Stauder's Chevron, 5500 Telegraph. Vicente's slaughterhouse was around 5300 Claremont Avenue.

Anthony Chabot (1814-88), a former sailmaker, was an entrepreneur who in 1853 constructed a canvas hose for hydraulic mining in the gold country. In 1869 he built Temescal Creek dam, then sold the impounded water. Ambitious developers built a park on the old shellmound. Several steel mills were located in this area, and railway tracks were laid. The creek served to carry wastewater from manufacturing into the bay.

The 5900 block of Thornhill Drive is a good place to begin a bicyclist's tour of creek history. As it flows between the redwoods, Temescal Creek heads downhill, popping in and out of view, emerging at the east end of Lake Temescal park. Hidden underground, it leaves the park at the west



Creek makes a brief appearance on Horton St. (Nancy Smith)

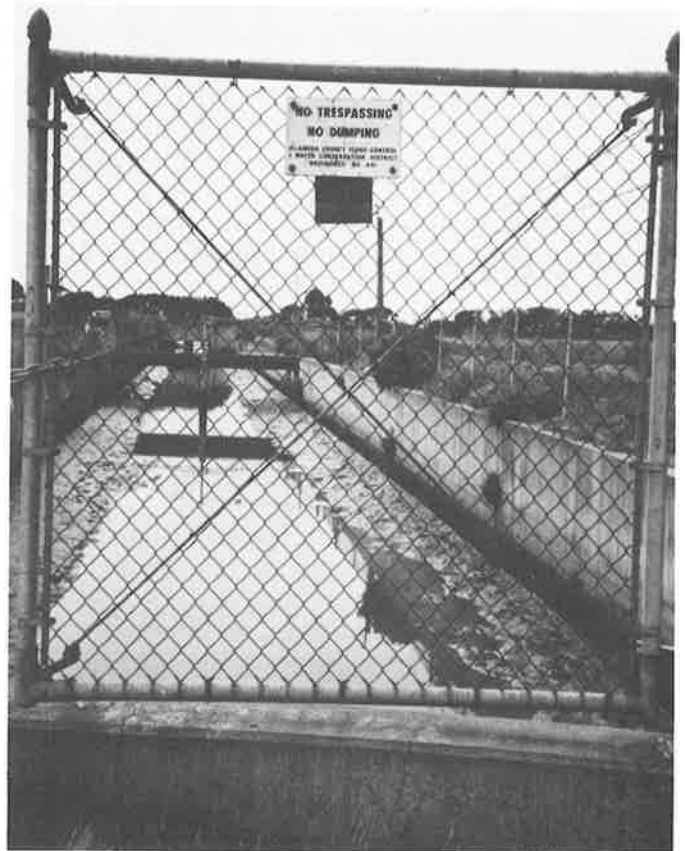
end, coming out at the rear of the grounds of St. Albert's College in the 6100 block of Miles Avenue. Visible in the park behind the DMV at Cavour and Redondo, it vanishes again into culverts. The swales at 53rd Street between Adeline and San Pablo mark the Oakland-Emeryville boundary.

Because of mid-twentieth century attitudes about erosion, subsidence, and waste management, as well as the small size of the lots abutting it, the creek is almost entirely culverted in Emeryville. The culverted sections are topped by swales, fenced off and marked by the Flood Control District. At 4561A Horton the creek makes a brief appearance, and again as it emerges in a railroad culvert between the Southern Pacific tracks. Temescal Creek flows out to the bay in an open culvert north of the glowing furnaces of Judson Steel, 4200 Eastshore Highway at the end of Shellmound Street.

One way to enhance awareness of the historic significance of Temescal Creek could involve making use of its existing traces.

There are now plans for a park between 53rd, 47th, Adeline, and 48th Streets. It will offer controlled open space, fenced and landscaped for the use of the neighborhood. Fifty-third Street between Hollis and Horton would make a good site for a business commons with a visual link between the buildings and the creek. A path through the Pfizer property could lead to Shellmound Street, site of the old shellmounds. Near the new Powell Street Plaza, this area could have a public picnic site and Ohlone museum. And a bicycle path could tie the three areas together.

--Nancy Smith,  
Emeryville Historical Society



Temescal Creek meets the bay behind Pfizer Chemical Co. on Shellmound Street, north of Judson Steel. (Nancy Smith)



Where Temescal Creek flows into the bay (Nancy Smith)

In 1988 a dedicated group of historians and librarians founded the EMERYVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY because they saw that the history of Emeryville had been neglected. The purpose of the EHS is to collect, preserve, and disseminate information on the history of Emeryville and adjacent neighborhoods. EHS is collecting documents, photographs, newspapers, books, articles, maps, and ephemera. EHS publishes a quarterly newsletter, and presents quarterly exhibits. The first two, on display at the Oakland History Room this past winter and spring, were on the slaughterhouses of Butchertown and the railroad history of Lowell Street. On June 17, EHS conducted a walking tour of old Emeryville, featuring the architectural and railroad heritage of Adeline, San Pablo, and Park Avenues, and their hotels, card rooms, factories, and residences. The EHS can be reached at 6389 Racine St., Oakland 94609.

## Oakland Briefing . . .

The "Oakland Briefing" column is prepared by the OHA Preservation Action Committee. If you would like to help monitor preservation issues in Oakland, please call Carolyn Douthat, 763-5370.

### ■ MADISON PARK APARTMENTS ?

The Madison Park Apartments, a 98 unit Craftsman apartment building at 100 9th Street, was purchased by BART at a foreclosure sale in mid-March for \$3.8 million. The 1908 building, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and was a Tax Act project in the early 1980s, is located across 9th Street from BART headquarters and was vacated after the earthquake in October. Residents were given only a few hours notice to evacuate, moving their belongings with the assistance of volunteers who responded to pleas on the radio.

The building had been in foreclosure prior to the earthquake. It was built during the East Bay residential building boom which followed the 1906 earthquake, by well-known East Bay contractor C.M. MacGregor. Blending elements of Colonial Revival and Craftsman styles, it is notable for its clinker brick and cast plaster decoration on the exterior, and its well-planned interior spaces.

According to Robin Hill, real estate manager for BART, the agency has not yet decided what to do with the site, although a Contra Costa Times article quoted deputy general manager John Haley as saying that it would make an ideal place to expand BART's administrative offices. BART has outgrown its headquarters building on Madison Square, and currently spends \$1.2 million a year renting additional office space, according to Haley.

Hill said that BART had been aware of the foreclosure before the quake, and bought the building because of its location. The final decision on what to do with the site will not be made for several years, during which time BART will complete the environmental review process required under CEQA. The cost to repair the earthquake damage to the building, including reinforcing the foundation, is estimated at about \$175,000. BART staff is studying interim uses for the building, but there are no immediate plans to repair and rent the apartments.

As a state agency, BART maintains it is exempt from city approvals for any new uses on the site, which is zoned S-2, Civic Center Zone. However, because the earthquake damaged building is on the National Register, any demolition or significant alteration would need the approval of the State Office of Historic Preservation, under Senate Bill 3X (OHA News, Winter-Spring 1990).

The loss of 98 units of housing, nearly 10% of the total units vacated after the earthquake, has raised concern in both the housing and preservation communities. Given the housing needs in Oakland, there is some question whether it is appropriate for a public agency to permanently remove units from the market, especially BART which has recently been considering mixed use developments around its stations. Members of Oakland Housing Organizations, the Chinatown-Central District Community Development Board, and Oakland Heritage Alliance will be attending the BART Board of Directors meeting in June to raise their concerns. Councilmember Wilson Riles, Jr., and Assemblyman Elihu Harris have also expressed concern about the loss of housing units, and a letter has been sent by the Mayor's office to BART's board opposing plans for offices on the site. City staff will present a report on the issue to the Council, at the request of Councilmember Mary Moore.

--Carolyn Douthat



Madison Park Apartments (Charles M. MacGregor, 1908), with 98 low-cost apartments, is on the National Register, but BART appears to consider it a building site. (Phil Bellman)



## ■ CITY HALL REPORT

The City Hall Advisory Committee has been meeting since April with city staff and consultants to review progress on the study of the repair and retrofit of City Hall. The committee, made up of representatives from OHA, the AIA, the California Preservation Foundation, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and Oakland Design Advocates, was created at the request of the City Manager's office to provide assistance and input from the preservation community.

VBN Architects, in association with Michael Willis and Associates, has prepared a preliminary report on the earthquake damage and repairs to City Hall. The report includes a section on repair parameters and an example repair plan for cost evaluation. The sample plan is one of six currently being considered by the team of engineering consultants who are working with the city to develop the final plan for restoration.

In addition to damage evaluation, criteria governing future repairs are included in the report. Retention of the clock tower, the rotunda, and the Council Chambers have been identified as preservation goals. Architect Alice Carey, preservation consultant to VBN, will be preparing a complete historic structures report which will identify other historically important features to be given priority in the restoration guidelines.

The report will initially be presented to FEMA as part of the city's reimbursement negotiations. The city has made clear to FEMA that replacing City Hall is not an option, given local, state and national preservation protections and public sentiment for saving the building. In the next few months, the Advisory Committee will be involved in selection of an architect to design the restoration. Although the final repair plan has not been chosen, the city is overlapping the processes to keep the project moving as quickly as possible.

While the RFP and RFQ process is underway, the engineers, consultants, and city will continue studying the alternatives for repair of the building. The recommendations coming out of the evaluation process will then be used to select the preferred repair solution. Architect selection and the study of alternatives is planned for completion in September. --Carolyn Douthat

## ■ EARTHQUAKE REPAIR ORDINANCE

In May, the City Council approved a new ordinance covering repair of earthquake damaged buildings. The ordinance replaces an emergency measure passed last November, and provides standards for repair of any building damaged in an earthquake.

The draft ordinance was reviewed by a special committee of the AIA, Oakland Preservation Assistance Team, and representatives from the Chamber of Commerce, Oakland Heritage Alliance, California Preservation Foundation, SRO hotel owners, the Board of Realtors, and several other organizations. These groups met with staff from the city's Public Works Department and City Planning Department to discuss both technical and policy aspects of the document. As a result of these meetings, several changes were incorporated into the draft which was presented to the Council.

Under the ordinance, certain historic structures can use the State Historic Building Code, which offers more flexibility in repair methods and can result in lower costs for compliance with safety standards. Oakland Heritage Alliance has advocated a broad definition for "historic" buildings, to offer the benefits to as many owners as possible. The Chamber of Commerce opposes inclusion of any buildings other than designated City Landmarks and those listed on the



16th Street Southern Pacific Station, as a city landmark, could receive special treatment under the new earthquake repair ordinance. (Phil Bellman)



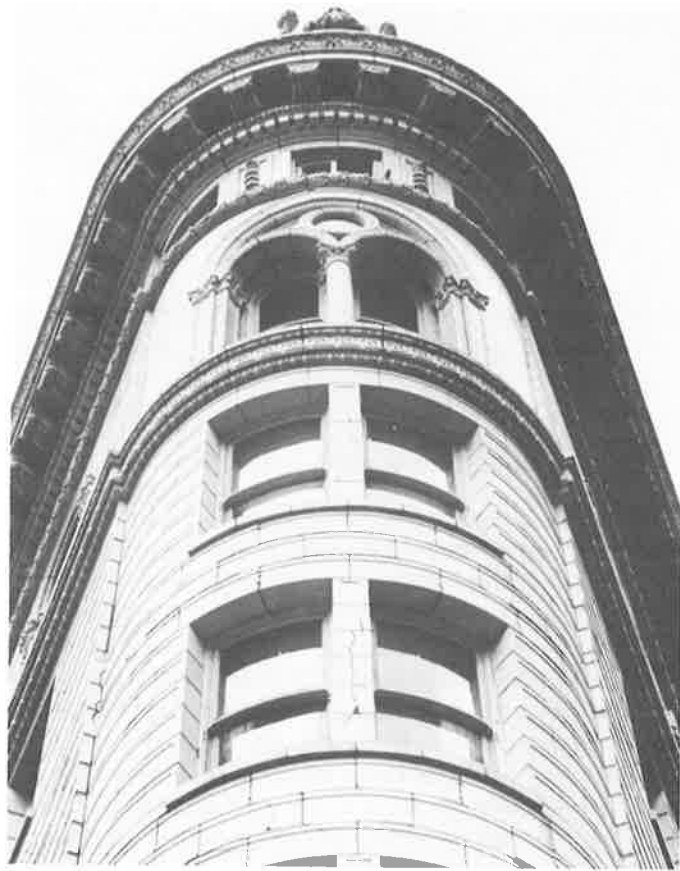
## ■ EARTHQUAKE ASSISTANCE GRANTS

It is fortunate for Oakland that the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Western Regional Office is located close by. In the months since the earthquake, staff from the Trust office have directed considerable attention to Oakland. The Trust has awarded some \$18,500 in post-earthquake grants assistance to Oakland properties. The individual grants range from \$500 to private homes located in historic districts, to \$5000 to the owners of the Broadway Building. Recipients to date are:

Broadway Building, \$5000 (owner, Taldan Corporation); Dalziel Apartments, \$2000 (owner, Peter Kelsen); residence, 2000 10th Avenue, \$500 (owner, Marina Carlson); Clay Building, \$2500 (owner, Mui Ung); Haley Law Offices, \$1000; Regillus Homeowners Association, \$1000; residence, 1806 10th Avenue, \$500; Oaks Hotel, \$2000 (owner, Oakland Community Housing, Inc.); Mills Hall, Mills College, \$2000.

--Annalee Allen

The Broadway Building, 1401 Broadway (left), and Dalziel Apartments, 526-38 15th Street (below) are among the recipients of National Trust earthquake aid. (Phil Bellman)



National Register of Historic Places, primarily because design review requirements would be triggered. However, the Council passed a version of the ordinance which includes, in addition to City Landmarks and those on the National Register, buildings on the Landmarks Board's Study List which have received an A or B rating from the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey.

Other features of the ordinance include a special section which applies to single family homes, and an appeals board for design review and historic structures, with members from the Planning Commission, the Building Permit Appeals Board, and Landmarks Board.

Throughout the state, new ordinances are being drafted which address the level of safety which will be required for earthquake repairs. Especially in the case of older buildings, a balance must be struck between the level of repairs required and the cost to the owner. The Oakland ordinance, said by some to have one of the strictest standards for repair, does contain provisions for variance on the basis of economic hardship. An assessment of its success in application will take place in six months' time.

--Carolyn Douthat



## ■ MERRITT CAMPUS LANDMARK STATUS?

Letters have been coming in from alumni in support of saving the old University High School/Merritt College building on Martin Luther King Jr. Way in North Oakland. A reunion of Uni High graduates took place May 12 at another renowned building designed by C.W. Dickey - the Claremont Hotel. Members of NOVA (North Oakland Voters Alliance), a neighborhood group dedicated to saving the building, passed out flyers urging alumni to let city officials know they want the building saved. Here are excerpts:

"It's a wonderful old building. I have ridden by it on BART and heard people exclaim 'What's that great old building? It's so impressive!'"

"For years we have been among the many who gave waited and hoped for the Merritt College/Uni High building to be restored and to be a community asset."

"The neighborhood needs a center and boost. This fine old building can be it!"

"The neighborhood deserves retention of its only large and distinguished building and to enjoy the community benefit that careful planning by Children's Hospital can bring. The city must assert leadership to work out this very practical solution."

"One more vote urging you to take action to secure and weather-proof the old Merritt College, my Uni High alma mater."

"The proposal by Children's Hospital sounds like the ideal solution... hopefully this will be taken into consideration for the future of this grand old building."

"The University High School song was 'The Builder.' The song of Oakland politics should be 'The Wrecker.' I hope something can be done to save some of what remains. They can't bulldoze it out of our memories."

In other actions involving the school, NOVA has submitted to the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board a request that the building be landmarked. At the May meeting, representatives from OEDE asked the Landmarks Board to delay their decision.

The Office of Community Development's Graffiti Abatement Program, coordinated by Daphne Markham, held a cleanup session on the campus on April 28. Over 60 people participated and over 600 square feet of graffiti was painted over. The project was the latest in a series of cooperative efforts by the City of Oakland and the East Bay Con-



Graffiti cleanup at Uni High, April 28. Controversy continues over landmark status and NORA contract. (Bill Uber, OCD)

servation Corps. Students from several area schools participated. Paint was donated by Golden Gate Paint Association, and OEDE provided supplies and refreshments.

As we went to press, a Redevelopment Committee recommendation to enter into another exclusive negotiation with the supermarket developer (NORA) was headed for full Council approval. The committee vote was unanimous (Ogawa, Riles, Bazile, and chair Cannon). If Council ratifies this recommendation, the extension will be in effect for six months, during which time staff will be expected to start Section 106 historical review. One thing is clear - the outcome for this North Oakland site will not be settled for years to come.

--Annalee Allen

## ■ ELECTION ISSUES

It is too soon to tell if the June election will result in changes favorable to preservation in Oakland. Interested OHA members monitored candidates and provided input wherever possible as candidates staked out positions on issues. A questionnaire was distributed to all candidates, and their comments were most revealing. Following are excerpts from the cover letter which the candidates received with the questionnaire:

Pride of place and a sense of continuity are signs of a healthy city. Historic preservation, in emphasizing the value of the rich urban fabric of Oakland, contributes to efforts to improve and enhance our city. The benefits of preservation can be measured in a positive community self-image and high ratings for livability in cities with a

strong historic preservation program. Tangible economic benefits which go along with a preservation program include conservation and creation of affordable housing, "new" office space in rehabbed buildings, and an increase in property values and tax revenue. In Oakland, preservation is already working in a number of different ways.

Improved Housing: Much of Oakland's housing stock consists of older buildings and districts in the flatlands. Preservation can work in concert with city programs and neighborhood efforts to strengthen and maintain these important resources. One example is the designation of the 10th Avenue Historic District. Recognition of the historic significance of this flatland neighborhood has enabled property owners to apply for grants and loans for earthquake damage repair. Another example of preservation at work in the housing area is the rehabilitation of the California Hotel on San Pablo Avenue. By use of the tax credits available to National Register properties, in combination with low income housing credits, OCHI was able to put together the rehabilitation of this long vacant building, providing 149 units of affordable housing for the city.

Economic Development: Preservation makes economic sense in older downtowns and neighborhoods. In Oakland, as in other urban areas, many of the city's assets lie in its building stock, providing affordable housing and commercial space for the small businesses so vital to our downtown and neighborhood economies. Investment in existing resources provides jobs now and leads to an enhanced tax base and greater public revenues. A good example of the economic benefits of preservation is the restoration of the Grand Lake Theater. Not only is the theater itself a successful business, its restoration has acted as a catalyst for new businesses which serve both residents and visitors. The proposal to use the Fox Oakland as a performing arts center has the potential, along with the Paramount, to attract more people downtown and provide a customer base for small shops and restaurants.

Community Pride: Oakland has a rich history, reflecting the contributions of the diverse peoples of the city. Awareness of our built environment connects us to that history, and is a source of community and neighborhood pride. As Jubilee West's

Liberty Hall project in West Oakland has demonstrated, there is a strong connection between preservation of buildings and reinforcement of community values and traditions. --Carolyn Douthat, Annalee Allen

#### ■ OFFICE CONVERSION THREATENS BOATHOUSE

The Lake Merritt Rowing Club, which has occupied the boathouse on Lake Merritt since 1962 (see lead article), has received an eviction notice from the Office of Parks and Recreation. Along with the Lake Merritt Sailing Club, they have also been directed to remove all boats currently stored in the Sailboat House on Bellevue. The eviction from the Boathouse, if carried out, will end all sculling and crew activities on the lake and would, according to an LMRC spokesperson, signal the end of the club.

The stated purpose of this action is the conversion of the area now used for boat storage into additional office space for the Office of Parks and Recreation. This is in keeping with the policy that saw the eviction of the Red Cross rowing program from space in the Boathouse two years ago, thus ending an instructional program that had existed on the lake for 30 years.

This series of actions by the Office of Parks and Recreation raises questions about the appropriate use of public facilities in Lakeside Park, as well as City policy toward use of the lake for recreational boating activities. OHA members who are concerned about this should write their city council member, and send a copy to the OHA office.

--Alan Dreyfuss



Offices threaten to crowd out rowing at Lake Merritt boathouse. (compare early views on pages 1-4) (Survey photo)



The Fox Oakland Theater at 18th and Telegraph (1927-28) is one of several major Oakland buildings in the area affected by the East Bay Galleria proposal. (Phil Bellman)

#### ■ RETAIL CENTER

The Retail Center long under consideration for the blocks in the vicinity of the Fox and Capwell's, and now known as the East Bay Galleria, will soon be the subject of a draft environmental impact report. In the coming months the first stage of the EIR, which will evaluate the effects of land acquisition and relocation and identify the historic resources in the project area, will be prepared by Environmental Science Associates, consultants for the city. Completion of the first phase of the EIR is scheduled for late fall.

At this point in the process, the design of the center is still in the conceptual stages. Review is being initiated at the request of the Office of Economic Development and Employment, which cannot begin the acquisition process until an EIR is completed. Although funding for acquisition has not been identified, OEDE is in the process of prioritizing various redevelopment projects which are in the planning stages.

The second stage of the EIR will consider the impact of a more clearly defined project on the historic resources in the project area. Oakland Heritage Alliance has requested that the EIR thoroughly evaluate the impact of the project on historic resources,

both in the project area and in the adjacent Downtown District and San Pablo Corridor, as well as consider project alternatives which retain significant historic structures.

--Carolyn Douthat

#### ■ MILLS HALL ON HOLD

The restoration of Mills Hall on the Mills College campus has been put on hold for five years due to the new demands on the college to increase its endowment and general income in order to remain a women's college. Closed since the earthquake, the 1870-71 Second Empire Victorian was the original college building when Mills relocated to Oakland from Benicia. The Board of Trustees is expected to approve temporary measures to prevent further deterioration of the building by using donations designated for this purpose. --Helen Lore

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College's financial need delays repair of Mills Hall (1870-71), centerpiece of the campus. (Phil Bellman)




 ■ SUMMER WALKING TOURS

## OHA Update

## ■ PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our tenth year continues with a wealth of activities, projects, and concerns.

The Haddon Hill house tour on May 20 showed a fascinating, little known Oakland neighborhood. The tour committee chaired by Marlene Wilson with staff support from Helen Lore did a superb job.

Post-earthquake concerns continue to involve us. OPAT meets weekly to monitor the status of damaged and closed buildings such as City Hall and the 16th Street Station. A complex and potentially costly repair ordinance (see Briefing) was introduced to City Council in May by the Public Works Department after intense scrutiny and comment from concerned organizations including OHA.

For the June 5 election, the Preservation Action Committee posed questions to the candidates. Their responses were published in a Bulletin sent to Oakland OHA members. (Many thanks to Don Kinkead for technical assistance.) The answers revealed quite interesting sentiments concerning preservation issues. If you did not receive the Bulletin and would like to read the responses, contact the office for a copy.

Interest in the fate of the Fox and Floral Depot will no doubt intensify in the coming months in light of the Retail Center negotiations. We will continue to monitor closely.

The California Council for the Humanities showcased the city of Oakland in a day-long symposium June 9. OHA assisted the Council in arranging a lecture by Leslie Flint on the role of Lake Merritt as a city amenity.

This summer's walking tours will be a good way to get to know Oakland's neighborhoods. If you are interested in volunteering for this activity, give us a call. The Annual Meeting committee is making plans for a memorable tenth anniversary event this fall.

There has never been a more exciting time to be involved in preservation in Oakland. Help us spread the word about the heritage of the city. Tell neighbors and friends about OHA and bring them to a tour or a program. We welcome active participation from you, our members, and above all we need your ongoing support. --Annalee Allen

Oakland Heritage Alliance embarks on its tenth annual Summer Walking Tours series July 21 with a new look at an old friend - Preservation Park. A "walking workshop" with Jane Spangler, of Ask Jane building inspection service, will concentrate on retrofit materials for older buildings, and discuss adaptive reuse as a preservation tool.

The series continues for six weekends, from July 21 to August 26, exploring a variety of Oakland's distinctive neighborhoods and their architectural and social history. Members interested in the city's maritime and industrial past will want to join Gary Knecht's tour of the Oakland Produce Market and the "SoNi" (south of the Nimitz) district on August 12. Gary will point out a fine collection of utilitarian buildings from the early 20th century.

A new addition for August 18 is "Old Oakland Ethnic History," a look at the fascinating story of immigrant contributions to downtown Oakland. Dean Yabuki, co-chair of the tour series, will spotlight the history of Italians, Chinese, Japanese, Jews, Mexicans, and Germans.

"Follow an Oakland Creek," scheduled for August 19, will trace Glen Echo Creek (historically known as Cemetery Creek) from Mountain View Cemetery to Lake Merritt. Marlene Wilson, chair of OHA's recent house tour, will point out the places where the creek is still open and relatively natural.

Speaking of Mountain View Cemetery, OHA offers the very popular tour of the cemetery on two dates, July 28 and August 25. Barbara Smith and Michael Crowe take you through the cemetery established in 1865 and designed by Frederick Law Olmsted, America's foremost landscape architect. You'll also learn about the symbolism in the treasure trove of antique monument designs.

You can discover the history of, and the impact of the recent earthquake on, two of Oakland's most visible districts, Lakeside Drive and Uptown Art Deco. Leslie Flint leads a tour along Lake Merritt's west side to recall the exclusive Victorian neighborhood and view an array of architecturally distinctive 20th century apartment houses. A visit to the private Schilling Gardens is a special feature of this July 22 walk.

Dean Yabuki returns to Uptown Art Deco on August 5 to view one of the finest collec-

tions of Art Deco and terra cotta buildings on the West Coast. He will tell the story of the Fox Oakland Theater, Oakland Floral Depot, Paramount Theater, and I. Magnin's, and review what is being done to cope with the earthquake's aftermath.

If you are more curious about Oakland's residential neighborhoods, you can join Phil Bellman on July 29 as he walks through the remnants of Arbor Villa, Francis Marion "Borax" Smith's lavish estate at 8th Avenue, or accompany Ed Phillips on August 4 for a foray into Crocker Highlands, noted for its eclectic 1920s and 1930s architecture.

Sharon Moore goes to the Temescal neighborhood on August 11 to explore a past that stretches from Native American times to today's still present Italian community. On August 26, she wanders over to College Avenue to investigate the turn of the century Craftsman and Period Revival houses.

The summer walking tours take place on Saturdays and Sundays at 1:30. Requested donation is \$3 OHA members, \$5 general public. All OHA members will receive a detailed schedule in the mail. For further information, call Helen Lore at 763-9218. Mark your calendars! --Lynn Fonfa

#### ■ HOUSE TOUR BOUQUETS

The early rains tapered off and the skies cleared just in time for OHA's spring house tour on Haddon Hill on May 20. Several hundred people explored (many for the first time) this lovely neighborhood, where residents of nine houses and two apartments graciously opened their homes.

OHA extends sincere thanks for their hospitality to all of the following, for allowing the public to view their charming Period Revival homes: Dennis Argue, Gary Encinas, Kenton Hensley, Charles Horton, Walter and Ginny Menezes, Bill Moore, Walter Poeth, Nerissa and David Skillman, Kenn and Victoria Smiser, Rosalind Smith, Jim Sohn, and Page Yarwood.

Marlene Wilson, chair of the house tour, is to be congratulated for a well-organized and beautifully choreographed event. Special praise goes to Ed Phillips and Betty Marvin for the text of the booklet which gave excellent background on the area and the houses, and to graphic artist Valerie Wine-miller for designing and producing the booklet, flyer, and media ads.

Thanks to Eric Klatt for the photographs used in publicity, and to Jim Ploss for computer assistance. OHA especially appreciates the help of Haddon Hill residents Anne Lawrence, Gary Encinas, Bill Moore, and Page Yarwood, who acted as liaisons with the neighborhood. Thanks also to the 70 people who acted as docents in the houses. Their help was crucial to the success of the tour.

Donations from Les and Linda Hausrath; Wendel, Rosen, Black, Dean & Levitan, Attorneys at Law; and Sharon Kidder of Sunshine and Flowers helped underwrite the floral arrangements, and Grubb & Ellis, Realtors, underwrote printing the booklet and flyer.

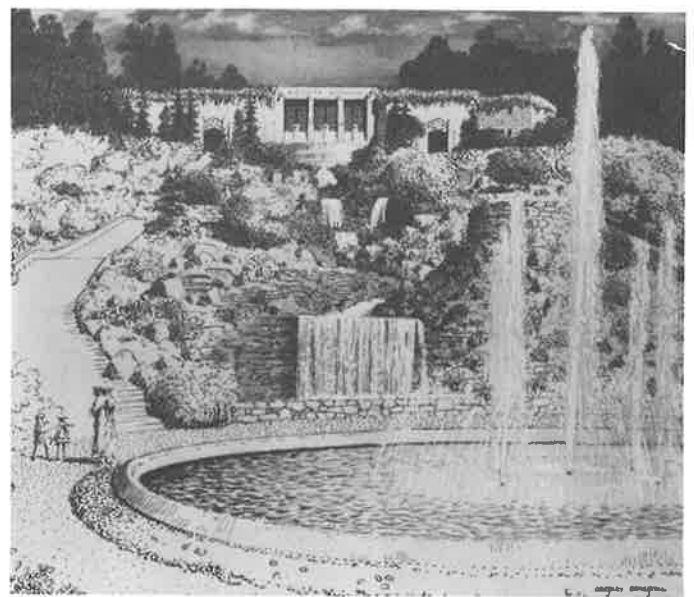
OHA committee members due special thanks are Barbara Sutherland for the wonderful refreshments, Lynn Fonfa and Helen Lore as co-chairs of the docents, and Annalee Allen, president, for all-around assistance.

--Helen Lore

#### ■ WOODMINSTER CASCADES RESTORATION

The Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation is spearheading an effort to restore the historic Cascades at Woodminster in Joaquin Miller Park. The Cascades and fountain project began in 1936 and was dedicated in 1941. The famous electric fountain was moved from Treasure Island to the park at the conclusion of the World's Fair.

An awe-inspiring spectacle of cascading



Drawing by Chesley Bonestell shows the Art Deco character of the Woodminster Cascades, subject of a restoration drive. (Office of Parks and Recreation)



water until 1974, the Cascades was among many projects cut due to budget restrictions in Oakland. The water, which came dashing down through seven pools to the fountain at 1000 gallons a minute, was turned off and forgotten. The recycling water system, designed to return the water to its source with minimal loss to evaporation, will soon be turned on again to the enjoyment of all who visit the park and attend shows at Woodminster Amphitheatre.

In addition to the help of many construction donors and dedicated volunteers, the Friends seek to raise \$250,000 to restore this masterpiece. Contributions are tax deductible, and may be sent to Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation, 1520 Lakeside Drive, Oakland 94612. A special "Evening at Woodminster" on Sunday, July 15, at 5:30 pm, benefits the restoration, with a reception, awards presentation, and performance of "Hello Dolly." Tickets are \$20, from the Friends; for information call 273-2290.

#### ■ CAMRON-STANFORD DOCENT TRAINING

As a prelude to the 8 to 10 week program of docent training starting in the fall, a new docent-intern program is being announced by the Camron-Stanford House. Docent-interns will work with graduate docents, showing the 114 year old restored mansion during regular tours Sundays 1-5 pm and Wednesdays 11-4, and helping with special tours and events which require docents in the period rooms.

Docents interpret the lavishly decorated period rooms to visitors, telling them the history of the five families who lived in the house before it was purchased as the Oakland Public Museum in 1907. Downstairs, the house still retains the mullioned windows and heavy beams of the museum's "Colonial house," as well as a display on the meticulous restoration of the house.

Applicants are welcomed now for a mini-training which will begin the intern period. Internship is desirable, but not required, for the full-length docent training class in the fall. You can sign up at the Camron-Stanford House, 1418 Lakeside Drive, or by calling Liz Way at the House office, 836-1976. Docent coordinator Ilene Herman can be reached at 352-2521. Funding for the class is supplied by a grant from Chevron U.S.A. --Camron-Stanford House Preservation Assn.

## City Landmarks Board Actions

The Oakland Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board meets on the second Monday of each month. Meetings are open to the public. Designation of landmarks is recommended by the Board to the Planning Commission and City Council. Landmarks are subject to a 240-day delay in issuance of demolition permits. Exterior alterations require approval by City Planning staff, at the recommendation of the Board. 108 landmarks have been designated in the 15 years since the Board was created. Meetings are at the Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue, second Mondays, 4 pm.

### MARCH

Board voted to delay final decision on Gestalt Development Corporation's design for a new office building at 12th Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Way, on the site of the demolished Herrick House. The new three-story Mansard-style building, to be occupied by the Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame, would be the largest building in the Preservation Park area; it was proposed that the Merriam House, moved to the site from Pill Hill along with the Herrick House, would be moved to another site. The effect of the proposal on the neighboring Pardee House and on Preservation Park was to be considered, after public notification.



Design proposal for the new Black Filmmakers Hall of Fame building in Preservation Park (Henry Chang Jr., via LPAB)

Board approved Kirk Peterson's proposal to replace an existing porch with a larger porch at the landmark Cohen House, 1440 29th Avenue, and reviewed designs submitted by Storek & Storek for signs in the Old Oakland project area. Signs were to be no larger than 4 by 3 feet; the next two signs are to be presented to the Board for design review, and subsequent ones reviewed by staff.

Board voted to proceed with the landmark designation process for the old University High School/Merritt College building at 5714

Martin Luther King Jr. Way, on the application by Robert Brokl, Ad Hoc Committee to Save the Old Merritt College Building, North Oakland Voters' Alliance. (Barbara Armstrong abstained, citing a conflict of interest.)

Board reviewed the status of earthquake damaged buildings including 1100 Broadway (the Key System/Bank of America building, on the National Register and part of the Hotel II site) and the Clay Building (see May). The possibility that these buildings would have to be brought up to 1988 code, rather than the less restrictive Historic Building Code, created a problem for owners.

A special meeting on March 26 discussed procedures for initiation of landmark or historic district (S-7 zone) designation, and prioritizing Study List properties for landmark designation or other action.

#### APRIL

Board conducted a forum on Preservation Park, reviewing the history of the project and the present status of the Unitarian Church, Greene Library, and Pardee House.

Board discussed amending their procedures to require notification of owners when Board is considering a Notice of Intent to Submit an Oakland Landmark or S-7 Zone Application. This came up in connection with the Board's plan to consider five Study List properties for landmark status in May. Board varied its normal procedures to have chair Anthony Pegram, rather than secretary Chris Buckley, sign the letter notifying the City of Oakland, as owner, of the landmark nomination for old University High School, since a staff person's signature might appear to be a conflict of interest.

Board received copies of the report of the Historic Preservation Task Force, created in 1988 and interrupted by the earthquake, which attempted to consolidate various preservation and development interests including OHA, the California Preservation Foundation, the Board of Realtors, the Office of Economic Development and Employment, apartment owners, the Planning Commission, and the Landmarks Board. Proposals in the report included greater protection from demolition for historic properties, better provisions for exploring alternatives to demolition and determining the historic value of a property, and changing the name of the Study List to Heritage Properties list. The question of elevating the Landmarks Preservation Advis-

ory Board to a commission was discussed.

Boardmembers were encouraged to attend a meeting of Alameda County preservation and historical organizations called by the San Leandro Library-Historical Commission and the Alameda County Parks, Recreation and Historical Commission, and to attend the State Historic Preservation Conference.

Special meetings on April 30 (without a quorum) and May 4 discussed the earthquake repair ordinance, including use of Historic Building Code, inclusion of a Landmarks Board member on the Joint Appeals Board, and the definition of historic properties (landmarks only, or landmarks plus Study List).

#### MAY

Board resumed design review of Gestalt Development's office and museum building (see March) in view of comments received during the public review period. Issues concerned overall size of the new building, placement of the main entrance (MLK or 11th St.), a new site for the Merriam House (possibly in Oak Center), and the effect on the neighboring Pardee House. These were to be resolved before construction.

After hearing from the public, the Ad Hoc Committee to Save the Old Merritt College Building/NOVA, and the Office of Economic Development and Employment, Board voted to delay action on landmark designation of the building until the July meeting, in order to hear from other neighborhood residents.

Board voted to ask the owner of the Clay Building (1001-11 Clay Street, listed on the National Register) to submit complete plans for earthquake repairs to see whether signi-



University High School/Merritt College: landmark designation process moves cautiously along. (Phil Bellman)



ficant alterations are involved.

A special meeting on May 21 reviewed proposals for landmark designation of five top priority properties on the Preservation Study List: the Posey Tube (415 Harrison), St. Germain Building (301-05 Broadway), First Church of Christ, Scientist (1701 Franklin), Scottish Rite Temple (1543-47 Lakeside Drive), and Dalziel Block (1917-21 San Pablo Av.). Owners had been notified. A representative from CalTrans objected to design review over the interior of the Posey Tube, but had no objection to designation of the tower. A speaker from the Scottish Rite Temple asked about the effect of designation on property value if the building is sold.

#### JUNE

Board approved Kate Johnson's design for the front porch and steps and a wheelchair ramp at the Ginn House/Nile Club, an Oakland landmark in Preservation Park, on condition that she work with city staff to redesign a guardrail which was considered unsuitable.

Board considered possibility of landmark designation for five class 1A properties from the Study List (see May), and moved to submit landmark nominations for all five. The First Church of Christ, Scientist opposes the nomination, the Scottish Rite Temple must be discussed by their board, and CalTrans opposes design review over the interior of the Posey Tube but does not object otherwise. Secretary Buckley suggested that properties whose owners refused designation should be kept on the Study List to retain the protection it gives. (Both landmarks and Study List buildings are considered to have historic value under the earthquake repair ordinance, for example.)

It was decided that owners of property being considered for landmark or historic district status should be notified as soon as evaluation of eligibility takes place. (Previously, notification did not occur until after eligibility was considered.)

Board learned that the National Trust had extended a \$5000 grant to Taldan Investment Company, owner of the Broadway Building, for engineering and economic feasibility studies on earthquake repairs. A City Planning Commission hearing on landmark designation was scheduled for June 13; Taldan was expected to ask for continuance until August.

Board discussed the West Oakland Emergency Redevelopment Plan, which replaces an ear-



West Oakland Emergency Redevelopment Plan could affect hundreds of historic homes and buildings like these rare Stick style flats (1887-88) at 5th and Peralta Streets in the South Prescott neighborhood. (Phil Bellman)

lier plan in process before the earthquake. Board members were concerned about their authority to review repairs or demolitions.

Estelle Mannis reported on the meeting organized by the San Leandro and Alameda County historical commissions (see April); she agreed to serve on a committee to unite the various preservation-oriented organizations in Alameda County and to identify historic houses.

Board discussed design and funding of plaques for city landmarks. A graphic artist from the City Planning Department could assist. A plaque for a special site (such as the Pardee House) was discussed.

Chair Anthony Pegram reported on a visit to the First Unitarian Church in Preservation Park, and plans for earthquake repair. He also attended a meeting of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Oakland, learning that damage to Sacred Heart and St. Francis de Sales would require around \$6,000,000 to repair, which the Diocese does not believe its membership can afford, in view of other local needs.

Beginning with the July meeting, Helaine Prentice will replace Chris Buckley as the Board's secretary. Buckley will be working on the draft of the Preservation Element for the city's General Plan. --Kathy Olson

# OHA Calendar

The OHA Calendar lists events, activities, and meetings related to history and preservation that may be of interest to OHA members. To submit items for listings, contact Oakland Heritage Alliance.

## Upcoming Activities

through September. "Threads of Strength: People, Groups, and Organizations of the Black Community," Northern California Center for Afro-American History & Life, 5606 San Pablo Av., Oakland, 658-3158.

starting now and fall, Camron-Stanford House docent training/ internship; see OHA Update item, call 836-1976, 352-2521

June to Sept., Saturdays, tours of San Francisco Chinatown & Presidio, S.F. Heritage: call 441-3004 for time and place

NEW: 24-hour Arts and Entertainment Hotline sponsored by Oakland Arts Council: weekly listings of events in Oakland, 835-ARTS

Sat. 15 July, 5:30, "An Evening at Woodminster," reception, awards, and "Hello Dolly," benefit Cascades restoration, \$20 to Friends of Oakland Parks and Recreation, 1520 Lakeside Dr., 94612, reservations by July 6; 273-2290

July 28, Sat., 10 am, "Presidio Interiors," Golden Gate National Recreation Area, S.F.: tour of Army Museum and other interiors. Meet at flagpole, Main Parade Ground. \$25 Heritage/\$35 general, incl. box lunch. SF Heritage, 441-3004

Sats & Suns 21 July-26 August, 1:30-4:30, "Annual Neighborhood Walking Tours," Oakland Heritage Alliance, \$3 OHA/\$5 general, 763-9218



July 21, Sat., Preservation Park, led by Jane Spangler meet at gate, 13th St. & MLK Way

July 22, Sun., Lakeside, led by Leslie Flint meet at Camron-Stanford House

July 28, Sat., Mountain View Cemetery, led by Michael Crowe and Barbara Smith; meet at Chapel of the Chimes, 4499 Piedmont Avenue

July 29, Sun., Borax Smith Estate, led by Phil Bellman meet at corner 8th Ave. & East 24th St.

Aug. 4, Sat., Crocker Highlands, led by Ed Phillips meet at schoolyard, Longridge & Hubert

Aug. 5, Sun., Uptown Art Deco, led by Dean Yabuki Mary Bowles Bldg., 1718 Telegraph Av.

Aug. 11, Sat., Temescal, led by Sharon Moore Genova Deli, 50th St. & Telegraph Av.

Aug. 12, Sun., Produce Market, led by Gary Knecht Oakland Grill, 3rd St. & Franklin

Aug. 18, Sat., Old Oakland Ethnic History, Dean Yabuki meet at corner 9th St. & Broadway

Aug. 19, Sun., Glen Echo Creek, led by Marlene Wilson meet at Mountain View Cemetery entrance

Aug. 25, Sat., Mountain View Cemetery, led by Michael Crowe and Barbara Smith; meet at Chapel of the Chimes, 4499 Piedmont Avenue

Aug. 26, Sun., College Avenue, led by Sharon Moore Rockridge BART, College & Keith

Sat 14-Sun 15 July, 10-6, Postcard Sale, Sheraton Airport Hotel, Burlingame, Hwy. 100, Broadway exit, admission \$3.50

Sun 26 Aug., 10 am, "South of Market on Wheels," bicycle tour, San Francisco warehouse district; meet at E end of South Park. \$10 SF Heritage/\$15 general; SF Heritage, 441-3004

Sun 9 Sept., "Day In The Park," Franklin Park, Alameda, preservation-related booths and events, Alameda Victorian Preservation Soc.; to reserve a booth or help, 865-1958

Sun 16 Sept., 10 am, "Inside the Richmond," slide lecture, tour of interiors, refreshments; begin at Temple Emanu-El. \$25 SF Heritage/\$35 general; SF Heritage, 441-3004

Sat in September, TBA, Trip to Modesto to McHenry Mansion and traveling Smithsonian exhibit "Victorian Gardens, A Horticultural Extravaganza," sponsored by Camron-Stanford House; information, 836-1976

Sat 22 Sept., Berkeley Historical Society picnic and museum tour, John Muir house and Martinez museum; info. 524-9880

Sun 7 Oct., 11-3, "Redwood Forest Festival," Redwood Regional Park. Exhibits and programs on redwoods & forest ecology, music, food, etc. East Bay Regional Park District

Wed 17-Sun 21 Oct, "National Trust Historic Preservation Conference," Charleston, S.C., cost & details TBA

## Regularly Scheduled Tours

Dunsmuir House. Tours of Colonial Revival mansion every Sunday, spring through fall; 2960 Peralta Oaks Court, Oakland; \$3; 562-7588.

Camron-Stanford House. 1876 Italianate on Lake Merritt. Tours every Wed. 11-4 & Sun. 1-5; \$2/\$1, free first Sun.; 1418 Lakeside Dr., 836-1976.

Paramount Theatre. Art Deco movie palace, 2025 Broadway. Tours 1st & 3rd Sat., 10 am, \$1, 893-2300.

Oakland Tours Program. Old Oakland, City Center, Uptown, Chinatown, Pres. Park, Port; April-Oct., 273-3234.

Black Diamond Mines. Somersville Rd., Antioch; Sat. & Sun. 10, 11, 1:30, 2:30; reservations required for mine tour, 757-2620; \$2 + \$2 parking.

Ardenwood Historic Farm. Park open April-Nov., Thurs.-Sun. 10-4; house tours hourly Sat. & Sun./variable Thurs.-Fri., \$4-\$1.50 dep. on age & day, tour extra; Ardenwood Blvd. or Lake Blvd., Newark; 796-0663.

McConaghy House. 102 year old farmhouse at 18701 Hesperian Blvd., Hayward. Tours Thurs.-Sun., 1-4, \$2/adult. Closed January. Info. 581-0223.

San Francisco Heritage weekly tours; \$3, info.441-3004. Victorian & Edwardian Pacific Heights, Sundays 12:30-2, Haas-Lilienthal House, 2007 Franklin; Haas-Lilienthal house tours, Sun. 11-4:30, Wed. 12-4

## Regularly Scheduled Meetings

Oakland Heritage Alliance. OHA Board of Directors meets on the first Monday of the month, 7:30 pm; for agenda and location, contact Annalee Allen, 654-6791. Preservation Action Committee: contact Carolyn Douthat, 763-5370, for time, place, and agenda.

Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, 2nd Monday, 4 pm; City Planning Commission, alternate Wednesdays, 1:30 pm; City Council, Tuesdays, 7:30 pm; all at Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue. Contact City Planning Dept., 273-3911, for Landmarks Board & Planning Commission agendas



# Oakland Heritage Alliance

P.O.Box 12425, Oakland, CA 94604 763-9218

Oakland Heritage Alliance, a California nonprofit corporation since 1980, 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. Membership dues and contributions are tax deductible.

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# Oakland Heritage Alliance News

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Annalee Allen, Carolyn Douthat, Dean Yabuki

### EDITOR/PRODUCTION

Betty Marvin

OHA NEWS welcomes contributions--research projects large or small, historic photos, reports on preservation issues or events, etc. Contact Betty Marvin, 849-1959, Dean Yabuki, 832-5355, or OHA, 763-9218.

Back issues are available for \$2 from OHA.

## New OHA Members

The officers and Board of Directors of Oakland Heritage Alliance wish to welcome and thank all those concerned citizens who have shown their interest in Oakland's history and preservation by joining OHA. OHA's new members (January 1 to May 31) are as follows:

Ace Architects, Einer Applegate/Linda Pankonin, Tom & Carolyn Armour, Robert Bernhardt, Yvonne Bernklau, Ruth Carlisle, Mai Coggin, Jack Dahlgren, Alfred Damianakes, Charles Depner/Mitch Chyette, Warren Dolby, Joan Edelstein, Dannie Galloway, Lydia Gans, Merrill Goodell, Lyn Harlan, James Hudkins, Herbert Kennedy, Cecilia Kilmartin, Carrie Kingman, Lois Kline, Elizabeth Krase/CalTrans, Diane Leavitt, David/Joni/Ann/Joanie Lorber, Matthew Macy, Peter Mangarella/Amy Snyder, Armanda Mason, Susan McCue, Jean McIntyre, Elizabeth Morton, Janet Noble, Denis Owen, Dennis Owens, Linda & Tim Perry, Richard Pettler, James Thompson Potts, Quentin, Barbara Schaaf, Alexis Soule, Wyn Stephens, Christ Surunis, Audrey Thoreson, Y. Narcisse von Rohse, Mike Voorhies.

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**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.

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Address \_\_\_\_\_  Change of Address only  
City, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  \$10 Limited income (1 vote)  
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I would like to serve on the following committee(s): Membership  Programs   \$30 Family (2 votes)  
OHA News  Publicity  Landmark Nominations  Landmark Assistance   \$50 Organization (1 vote)  
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## Oakland History Notes: The Metropole Hotel

On the construction site of the new Federal General Services building, soon to loom massive upon the city's landscape, once stood the Metropole Hotel, stately, proud, and quite elegant. Opening in 1892 on the northwest corner of 13th and Jefferson Streets, the 90-room hostelry boasted such sundry amenities as a gentlemen's reading room, a ladies' reception area, a billiard room, and a large main dining hall adorned with a delicately frescoed ceiling. The proprietors assured prospective patrons that "...private dining rooms are at the disposal of guests, where banquets or little family gatherings may be arranged, and every detail of the reception will be carried out by the management."

Built by local contractor and builder Robert Smilie, the Metropole primmed itself upon its reputation as a "family hotel," in contradistinction to the "commercial" hotels, catering to the traveling businessman, which were found in the city's noisier regions. "It is not built in the business center," intoned the management, "but on one of the prettiest streets in the city, and yet it is comparatively but a step from Broadway. It is convenient to the electric street railroads and to one cable road."

The accommodations were the especial pride of the hotel. "The rooms are large, well lighted, cheerfully carpeted and beautifully appointed. Hot and cold water in



(Oakland History Room)

every room, private baths in many suites, and not a room in the hotel that is not a sunny one." Modern conveniences abounded. Hydraulic elevators provided guests ascensions to their rooms; electric bells in the suites summoned the maids. Rooms were finished in polished oak and redwood and furnished with sets of maple, mahogany, cherry, birch, and oak. The finial upon all this grace was Mr. M. Clark: "the polite manager, spares no expense to suit his guests."

Long esteemed as one of Oakland's finest hotels, the Metropole succumbed to a gargantuan blaze on October 16, 1918, and the city lost one of its regal charms.

--William W. Sturm

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