

## Trestle Glen Transformed Lakeshore Highlands Marks 75 Years



"A City's Opportunity Lost! Your Opportunity Created." Seventy-five years ago, in a scenario that is not unfamiliar, Oakland passed up the chance to buy parkland in the beautiful district of Trestle Glen. The result was Lakeshore Highlands, now one of Oakland's admired neighborhoods.

This laurel-lined glen along one of the creeks tributary to Lake Merritt was popularly known as Indian Gulch in Victorian times. From the 1880s it belonged to banker Peder Sather and his wife Jane (of University of California fame), who allowed it to be used as a park. The name Trestle Glen dates back to 1893, when Borax Smith's Oakland

Trestle Glen Road c.1925. Curbs, streets, and gates are in place, homes and power lines being completed, in the former Sather Park. (Hal Marcus, Lakeshore Properties)

Traction Company ran an electric streetcar line from downtown Oakland, up Park Boulevard, to what is now Grosvenor Place just above Holman Road, where a high wooden trestle carried the double-deck cars across Indian Gulch and into Sather Park. The glen held a pavilion, rustic food stands, and other structures, and hosted picnics, dances, even Salvation Army camp meetings.

But Borax Smith had more than picnics in mind. Streetcar service to an outlying recreational attraction--Shellmound Park,

## House Tour April 26 — see p. 5



The trestle (above) crossed into the glen from about Holman Road and Grosvenor Place to Underhills. It lasted only a few years (1893-1906) but was a beloved part of the de facto park for urban Oaklanders, below. (Oakland History Room)

Piedmont Springs, Trestle Glen--was a common first step in marketing and developing suburban land. Smith dreamed of combining all the East Bay's rail systems into a single Key System linked to San Francisco by ferry. Land development would make this scheme profitable. Smith lacked substantial land holdings but his rail system was a natural match for someone who did: Frank C. Havens. Havens was a land speculator who by 1895 controlled 13,000 acres of East Bay hilltop land. The merger of Havens' land and Smith's rail system created the Realty Syndicate. Between 1895 and 1910, its land holdings expanded, including the Sather Estate in 1904. By 1906 the Trestle Glen crossing was gone; by 1909 lands along Lakeshore and Mandana were subdivided by Frank Havens' son Wickham Havens.

Not everyone was resigned to loss of Trestle Glen as a public park. In 1909 the first Park Commission annual report mentioned Trestle Glen, and it figured in New York landscape architect Charles Mulford Robinson's commissioned report on a plan for Oakland civic improvements. Robinson was a

prominent exponent of a design philosophy known as the "City Beautiful Movement," based on the notion that an aesthetic, comprehensively planned environment would produce a better society. His study noted that while Oakland was park poor, it had abundant physical assets.

Robinson made three major proposals. The first--already being acted upon at the time of his report--was that more public squares should be acquired. The only remaining parcels available in the built-up parts of the city were the remnants of large estates. This explains why parks acquired during this period--DeFremery, Mosswood--have large old houses on them. The second proposal was to acquire the privately owned land on the shores of Lake Merritt. The result, Lakeside Park, remains the largest lake park entirely within any American city. The third proposal was a greenbelt created from the remaining nature areas of the lower hills and tied to the Lake Merritt parkland. It was to run along Trestle Glen, up Park Boulevard (including Dimond Canyon), behind the city of Piedmont, around Mountain View Cemetery, down Pleasant Valley Road and Grand Avenue to the Lake. This could have been the grandest greenbelt in any American city.

In 1914, under progressive mayor Frank Mott, the Park Commission actually had an option to buy Trestle Glen, but financing stalled the project. In 1915 fiscal conservative John L. Davie became mayor, and quashed a plan to purchase the park on an installment basis.

In 1917 Wickham Havens and Walter H. Leimert formed the Lakeshore Highlands Company and filed a subdivision map for a "residence park" above both sides of Trestle Glen Creek from Lakeshore Avenue to Park Boulevard. Initially only the hills were tracted, leaving a strip of wooded creekland. Havens and Leimert retained the Olmsted brothers of



Horses were used for grading well into the 1920s. This is the foot of Longridge Road, with portals by Bakewell & Brown (OHR)



Wickham Havens



Wickham Havens co-founded Lakeshore Highlands, shown in 1918 tract map. Upper boundary of map is Mandana, lower is Excelsior (MacArthur). Wooded area was later developed as Lakeshore Oaks: Trestle Glen and adjoining roads. (OHR; Lakeshore Homes Assn.)

Brookline, Massachusetts (sons of Frederick Law Olmsted who designed Mountain View Cemetery and New York's Central Park) to lay out the tract. They held to their father's philosophy: design with nature and explore the specific assets of each site. Lakeshore Highlands reflected both the Olmsted philosophy and the 1910s-20s phenomenon of exclusive, restricted, upper income residential developments, of which Oakland's Rockridge and San Francisco's St. Francis Woods are other examples. The Olmsteds laid out winding streets following natural contours, leaving natural areas along the creek and small pocket parks scattered through the tract. The monumental entrance portals to the tract were designed by Bakewell and Brown, Beaux Arts architects of San Francisco and Berkeley City Halls.

In 1918 Wickham Havens detached himself from Lakeshore Highlands, and thereafter it was promoted by the Walter Leimert Company. The reasons for Wickham Havens' exit are unclear, but there had been a protracted breakup between Frank Havens and Borax Smith since 1910. Financial overextension, including building the Claremont Hotel, led to Smith's bankruptcy in 1913. In 1918 Frank Havens died. All these events may have led to Wickham Havens extracting himself from some of his real estate holdings.

By now park proponents could only focus on the glen's last stand of historic oaks. Leimert withheld subdividing it, but Mayor Davie remained opposed to any park acquisitions. Lots sold fast and pressure mounted to expand beyond the tract's original units. Exclaiming "I can no longer wait for the City of Oakland," Leimert sent in a crew to cut down the last of the oaks.

In advertising the Lakeshore Highlands, Lakeshore Manor, and Lakeshore Oaks tracts, Leimert targeted the upwardly mobile business and professional class. A 1922 promotion for Lakeshore Oaks claimed that "Eighty per cent of the finest residences in this and surrounding property are homes of well known San Francisco business men." The tract was 36 minutes (some said 20) from San Francisco by Key System. A 1921 brochure for the Trestle Glen unit promised, "Trestle Glen will become a part of Lakeshore Highlands-- permanently restricted and permanently supervised." Lakeshore Highlands claimed to be the "only permanently restricted residence park in the East Bay Region."

Earlier so-called restricted developments had no real means to control their physical or social environment. By creating an enforcing organization (Lakeshore Homes Association) in 1917 and making all homeowners mandatory members, legal standing ensued. Association dues supported an administrative staff, and a small army of gardeners to maintain the commonly owned areas. The Association's extensive covenants addressed many topics that are now conventional city planning and building controls: land use, building design, setbacks, upkeep. Multiple dwellings and commercial uses were prohibited. They also imposed social and class restrictions--strong selling points at the time--by means of minimum building cost requirements and explicit ownership and residence limitations: "No person of African, Japanese, Chinese, or of any Mongolian descent, shall be allowed to purchase, own, or lease said property or any part thereof or to live upon said property or any part thereof except in the capacity of domestic servants of the occupant thereof."

These racial covenants had the force of law, and followed a series of California racial restrictions on agricultural land

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And their beauty is not their sole attraction; the high quality of their construction, convenience of their design and charm of their surroundings are all distinctly out of the ordinary.

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Oakland, and a map in the 1920 Tribune Year Book shows that most of the two-story houses built the previous year were in this area. Though primarily a selling agent for home-sites (lots), the Leimert Co. itself built many houses during the tract's first years. Later it was more common for the homeowner to buy a lot (for between \$900 and \$3000) and commission his own house. The tract's building restrictions required that each house cost at least \$3000--more on large or prominent lots--and some owners spent ten times that, at a time when a flatlands bungalow might cost \$1200 to build.

Ten fully decorated, company-built model homes on Trestle Glen Road were shown as the California Complete Homes Exposition in October 1922 and then sold--priced from \$8750 to \$14,500--to launch the Lakeshore Oaks unit. Model homes on real sites were a new selling approach. Until World War I, "model homes" were shown inside exhibition halls. Homes were selected from pattern books of floor plans and exterior renderings. Here in Trestle Glen, tens of thousands of visitors motored in, and strolled the "broad paved streets" from house to house, as hostesses demonstrated the convenience of an "electricified kitchen," and an East Bay Water Company exhibit taught "economical and efficient use of water on lawns and shrubbery."

Leimert was not the only speculative home builder in Lakeshore Highlands. C.W. Boden Co., the Lapham Co., Charles Short, and Samuel Moe put up numerous houses. Individuals also bought multiple lots and developed them. The Boden Co. promoted its "Famous Caldwell Floor Plan" (F.R. Caldwell was the sales manager) and had hundreds of homes in Oakland to its credit. J.B. Peppin, a builder headquartered on Trestle Glen, produced an Oakland Bungalow Book which reportedly spawned some 400 homes by 1922.

WALTER H. LEIMERT COMPANY

Main Office: 711 Syndicate Building  
Lakeland 4410  
Oakland

Tract Office: 601 Trestle Glen Road  
Lakeland 994  
Oakland

## LAKESHORE HIGHLANDS

After the Complete Homes Exposition, Leimert Co. offered the model homes for sale. Typical of the early '20s, houses are stucco clad, with European references. (Tribune, Nov. 12, 1922)

ownership and leases starting in 1913. They remained in force until a cluster of court decisions beginning in 1948. The California Supreme Court in Cumings v. Hokr and the U.S. Supreme Court in Shelley v. Kraemer (a Missouri case) established that racial restrictions were subject to challenge and were unconstitutional under the 14th Amendment guarantees of equal protection and due process. Correspondence between Oakland neighborhood associations discussed what to do in light of these decisions. Racial restrictions were continued by private agreements and de facto discrimination. Additional court decisions in the 1950s built a stronger case against racial covenants and deed restrictions. In 1979, Lakeshore Homes Association (1200 homes strong) had to re-establish its charter, and at that time the members formally updated their bylaws and removed the racial restrictions.

Lakeshore Highlands developed during a boom period for residential building in



Period revival styling in the late '20s and '30s became more literal, detailed, and flamboyant, as these examples show. (BM)





Most of the tract was built up during the late teens and 20s, but building continued into the 1930s, and a few lots remained even after World War II. Later, as inflation ate away at homeowners' dues, the Association raised money by selling some of its property for development. In addition the old Key System easement on Longridge was developed in 1960 with eight ranch style houses. Design review by the Association kept them low to the ground, with shake roofs.

Most of Oakland's best known architects worked in the neighborhood in the interwar years: Julia Morgan, Maybeck & White, A.W. Smith, Charles McCall, William Schirmer, Kent & Hass, William Wurster, Irwin Johnson, and many others. Lakeshore Highlands home styles reflect early 20th century historical eclecticism (Mediterranean, Tudor, Spanish, and French Renaissance revivals) and indigenous American styles (bungalow, Prairie). Styles fashionable at the turn of the century (Colonial, Craftsman) are rare. Stucco was the popular surface material, a striking visual contrast to the clapboard and shingles of neighborhoods only slightly older.

Oakmore, a neighborhood of mostly Mediterranean homes off Park Boulevard, was the next Leimert project. Walter Leimert shared

View from Lakeshore Highlands toward downtown Oakland c.1919 shows the tract's desirable close-in location. The wooded glen is at the left, and grading has begun on the crest. East Piedmont Heights is already developed across Mandana at the right. Lakeview School, City Hall, Hotel Oakland, the Rotunda, and Cathedral Building are all completed and recognizable. (OHR)

his vision for fine residence parks with his brothers Harry and William, sales manager and salesman for the firm. In 1927 the brothers opened a residence park in southwest Los Angeles, Leimert Park. Today streets in both Oakland and Los Angeles bear the name Leimert.

In an odd footnote to Lakeshore history, when the MacArthur Freeway was constructed about 1960, the neighborhood lost considerable area and almost 150 houses. Sixteen homes on MacArthur are now isolated on the other side of the freeway, but are still members of the Association.

If Walter Leimert were to see the Lakeshore Highlands-Trestle Glen neighborhood today, he would surely be first to point out that the area remains, after 75 years, still one of substantial architectural interest, natural beauty, and a fine place to live in the heart of Oakland. --Dean M. Yabuki

Acknowledgments to Deborah Shefler, whose article on this neighborhood appeared in the Spring 1988 OHA News.

## OHA Annual Spring House Tour: Trestle Glen - Sunnyhills/Larkspur

Sunday, April 26, 1 to 5 pm  
OHA members \$20, General \$25

Join us on a tour of an area which has kept its 1920s period character and charm up to the present day. The open houses will be a sampling of the many romantic and picturesque styles which abound in the neighborhood, including Tudor, Spanish, and

Norman Revivals. A garden reception will be held at one of the homes.

Purchase of tickets in advance is recommended: enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope and mail to OHA Annual House Tour, P.O. Box 12425, Oakland CA 94604.

Docents and other helpers receive complimentary admission to the tour: call the OHA office, 763-9218, to volunteer.

## 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 Susan McCue, 763-1687 or Carolyn Douthat 763-5370.

### ■ NOVA FILES SUIT OVER UNIVERSITY HIGH

On November 13th, North Oakland Voters Alliance (NOVA) attorney Susan Brandt-Hawley filed suit in federal court for injunctive relief against the City of Oakland after a fruitless month-long period of negotiations with the city over the maintenance of the old University High School on Martin Luther King Jr. Way. The suit alleges that the ongoing deterioration and vulnerability to arson of the National Register-eligible complex violates the National Historic Preservation Act. Sections 110 and 106 of the statute protect historic structures from neglect while under federally assisted ownership by imposing an affirmative duty to prevent significant deterioration, and requiring Section 106 review when such deterioration occurs. NOVA has alleged that the City of Oakland's "malign neglect" of the structure constitutes "anticipatory demolition" and precludes options for renovation and adaptive reuse. The case has been assigned to Judge Marilyn Patel, with a hearing date set for May.

During negotiations involving representatives of the Mayor's office, City Attorney, Office of Economic Development, OHA, and California Preservation Foundation, Brandt-Hawley presented NOVA's list of "eight immediate steps to secure and weatherproof the Old Merritt College buildings." City officials, in response to NOVA and the Fire Marshall's Jan. 10 report calling for "immediate" measures to secure the site, have generated a flurry of reports and evaluations, which have been discussed at several City Council committee meetings but thus far resulted in no action.

A March 28, 1991 recommendation from the Beat Health Unit of the Oakland Police Department advises boarding openings with 5/8" plywood and strongbacking (2x4 members secured with bolts), in the manner of crack-house closures. The Beat Health report--previously unavailable to the public and not acted upon by the officials who received it--included a contractor's estimate of less than \$27,000 for new reinforced plywood on all openings. A Jan. 28, 1992 report by the Office of General Services suggests spending \$60,000 to patch the roof and \$65,000 to

install an inner chain link fence with an alarm system and exterior floodlights.

OEDE has come out in support of transferring management of the building to the Office of General Services, one of NOVA's suggestions. In addition, OEDE is recommending 24-hour guards on motor scooters to patrol the site. As of March 4, none of this has been implemented or referred to the full City Council for discussion. The Council also has yet to discuss the pending lawsuit in executive session.

More likely to proceed is the start-up on environmental review, at an estimated cost of \$210,000. This is in character with the history of the project, with the bulk of funds spent on staff and consultants. The City must wade through an extensive review process, including Section 106 review, an Environmental Impact Statement under the federal National Environmental Policy Act, and an Environmental Impact Report under the California Environmental Quality Act.

While the City appears to feel it is saddled with an expensive white elephant, proposals are coming in from developers and other interested parties, despite severe



The hallowed halls of Old University High have been devastated by years of vandalism, water damage, and neglect. (Bob Brokl)

limitations imposed by the Office of Economic Development and Employment on access to the property. Jim Ishimaru of IDG Architects has submitted a proposal for condominiums with local real estate developer John Guillory; Berkeley developer Martin Ross is interested in a neighborhood-serving retail-housing mix on the site; and the East Bay Conservation Corps and Ed Ross, president of Stepping Stones Growth Center, have proposed a job-training center in combination with other nonprofits. The California National Guard may also be interested in the building and site as an armory.

NOVA welcomes donations of any size to defray legal and newsletter costs. Write to Box 20486, Oakland 94620, or call Bob Brokl or Al Crofts at 655-3841, or Ceci Kilmartin at 653-2321. Deterioration of historic structures in Oakland at the hands of unsympathetic owners is not simply an Old Merritt College problem. The Broadway Building and the 16th Street station are others which may yet go the way of the Herrick House (sawed in half and moved to Preservation Park only to be lost to fire), casualties of demolition by neglect.

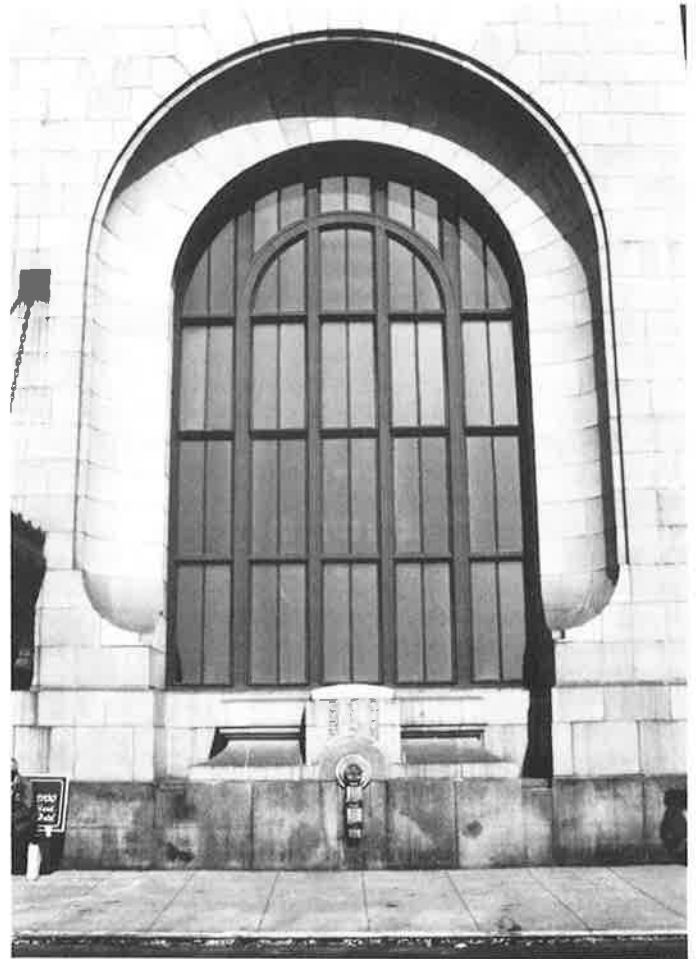
--Bob Brokl

#### ■ SOUTHERN PACIFIC TRAIN STATION

The OHA Preservation Action Committee will be meeting shortly to consider reuse strategies for the Southern Pacific Station at 16th and Wood Streets in West Oakland. Constructed in 1910-12, the Beaux Arts station is an architectural gem which, despite its current state of disrepair, remains a magnificent symbol of the role played by the railroads in the development of Oakland and the West, and of the role played by the working men and women of West Oakland.

The station building has been vacant since it was damaged in the 1989 earthquake and is deteriorating daily, despite its designation as a City Landmark and a recent city ordinance requiring owners to secure earthquake damaged historic buildings in order to prevent further deterioration. Caltrans' proposed Cypress freeway replacement would further impact the building. The proposed alignment calls for removal of the main tracks which serve the station, replacing them with a frontage road between the new freeway structure and the building.

In addition, Amtrak has announced plans to relocate its Oakland passenger operations from 16th and Wood to a new station located on land belonging to the Port of Oakland near the struggling Jack London Square development. Like the freeway replacement, this project would be funded by Caltrans.



Rich terra cotta and granite distinguish the Southern Pacific Station at 16th and Wood, an outstanding monument of the City Beautiful era. (Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey)

While the hope of seeing this landmark building reused as a railroad station has dwindled due to the Caltrans, Amtrak, and Port of Oakland proposals, OHA believes that the building can be rehabilitated and reused to once again serve the Oakland community in some way. Meetings and brainstorming sessions with members of the community, government officials, and other preservation groups over the next few months will help to focus the quest for a viable reuse strategy for one of Oakland's finest historic resources. Anyone interested in working on this issue should contact the OHA office.

--Hillary Gitelman

#### ■ MADISON PARK APARTMENTS UPDATE

The East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation has entered into a contract with BART to buy the Madison Park Apartments in order to restore the 98 unit building to use as low and moderate income housing. As reported in our last issue, in October BART granted EBALDC an exclusive right to nego-

tiated after 18 months of pressure from a coalition of housing and preservation groups including OHA. With the support of this coalition, the Oakland Housing Authority has granted Section 8 certification for the units and EBALDC is now working on completing the financial package which may include use of the historic rehabilitation tax credit.

--Carolyn Douthat

■ **A POLICY ON PRESERVATION:  
DRAFT HISTORIC PRESERVATION ELEMENT**

The Historic Preservation Task Force is scheduled to review the complete draft Preservation Element in April. Convened in 1988 at the joint request of the Planning Commission and the Landmarks Advisory Board, the group represents a broad range of community interests, including the Brooklyn Neighborhood Preservation Association, Rockridge Community Planning Council, North Oakland District Council, the Association of Realtors, Alameda County Taxpayers Association, as well as Oakland Heritage Alliance and the California Preservation Foundation.

Prior to the 1989 earthquake, the Task Force had completed detailed review of existing preservation regulations and identified issues and actions directed at developing a clear preservation policy for Oakland. The 1989 earthquake delayed preparation of the draft element, but in November of 1990 the Task Force reconvened and has met over the past year to review chapters of the document.

Many communities date their landmarks laws to the Bicentennial when focus on the past was fueled by patriotic celebration. In Oakland, however, a landmarks ordinance was passed in 1973 just on the heels of demolition of the Maybeck designed Earle C. Anthony Packard showroom at Harrison and 21st Street, the site of which is now a parking lot for the Ordway Building. In 1974 the City Council designated the Western Pacific Depot at 3rd and Washington Landmark Number One and since that time 108 landmarks and 4 historic districts have been designated.

Over the years there have been controversies over landmark designation and the lack of clear policy has resulted in some nominations being tabled for long periods. Perhaps the oldest nomination in this limbo is that for the Floral Depot at 19th and Telegraph which has been on hold since 1982. Impetus for formation of the task force, however, came not from controversy over a landmark nomination but from a 1986 proposal to build a new Lake Merritt United Methodist Church on Lake Merritt on the site of the former Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist. Public



Demolition of Maybeck's Packard showroom (1929-1973) spurred landmarks legislation in Oakland. (Oakland History Room)

debate over the proposal to demolish the existing church, ending in Council approval of the project in 1988, pointed up the lack of policy guidance for deciding how the public interest in historic resources was to be factored into land use decisions.

As has been evident in the Task Force discussions, identifying what the community considers worth protecting, and balancing those interests against legitimate concerns of property owners, is not a simple task. Education, regulation, and incentives all play a part in the document which the Task Force has developed.

After being reviewed by the Task Force and put in final draft form, the Preservation Element will be available for public review and comment. It will then go to the Planning Commission and then to the City Council. If adopted, the element will provide the basic framework for historic preservation in Oakland for some time to come. OHA readers who are interested in reviewing and commenting on the element should contact the OHA office at 763-9218 or Carolyn Douthat at 763-5370.

--Carolyn Douthat

■ **CALIFORNIA PRESERVATION FOUNDATION**

In 1988 Oakland preservationists and OHA members were pleased to learn that the California Preservation Foundation had chosen to locate its statewide headquarters in Oakland, on the seventh floor of the Cathedral Building at Broadway and Telegraph. Since that time we have grown accustomed to seeing John Merritt and Elizabeth Morton, the staff of CPF, at many meetings and hearings in Oakland, working with OHA on task forces and





study groups on a wide range of preservation issues. OHA members may be less aware of CPF's other work across the state, especially in Sacramento, which contributes to our own ability to advance the cause in Oakland.

The Foundation is a private, not for profit organization and, like OHA, gets its main support from member donations. CPF derives some additional income from workshops it conducts on preservation issues, and it may be these workshops that have most benefitted OHA members over the years. John Merritt, CPF's first and only staff person until Elizabeth Morton arrived two years ago, remembers that the first workshop he planned was in Oakland in 1983, a fundraising seminar at the Camron-Stanford House cosponsored by OHA.

The work of CPF began in 1975 when individuals from various California towns and cities met to share ideas and concerns about the rapid, continuing loss of important historic resources to growth and development pressures, especially redevelopment clearance and freeway construction. CPF built its reputation with its annual conference and workshops, and built great credibility in Sacramento. In 1982 CPF convinced Senator Milton Marks and Assemblyman Sam Farr to establish a California Heritage Task Force, and since the Task Force issued its Heritage Task Force Report in 1984, preservation's visibility in the state capital has been much higher. Over the years CPF has contributed to the creation of the State Historical Building Code and the Mills Act property tax incentive for historic buildings, by supporting the original legislation and urging the amendment of both programs to make them more useful and accessible. Legislation requiring local building departments to use the State Historical Building Code was a significant accomplishment.

CPF has concentrated on improving environmental protection for local resources through legislative initiatives and in the courts, helped develop the post-earthquake legislation which discourages "pretext" demolitions, and is currently working with key Wilson administration officials on legislation which will create a "State Register" which will give local community surveys official status and some CEQA protection.

While the original organizers of CPF clearly meant to direct efforts toward improving state law and policy on historic resources, and while CPF has had significant successes in Sacramento, the Foundation retains its grassroots base and consistently provides direct assistance to local preservation groups and individuals. Projects in

the past year include legal advice and technical assistance aimed at preserving the Spreckels Sugar Factory in Salinas, historic fraternity houses at Stanford University, and the Green Dragon Colony beach cottages in La Jolla; challenging an EIR on demolition of the Cohen Hotel in Fremont; organizing a workshop in Santa Barbara focusing on interpretation of a locally significant adobe structure; ensuring that preservation goals were addressed in the Bay Vision 20/20 Growth Management Plan; and helping organize a local preservation group in Fresno.

The Foundation began publishing its newsletter, California Preservation, in 1976 and has added to the base of technical knowledge with a steady stream of useful books on CEQA, earthquake preparedness, preservation tax incentives (co-authored by OHA member Carolyn Douthat), affordable housing, preservation degree programs, and a new booklet on preservation and real estate. The Foundation is probably best known as the sponsor of the annual State Preservation Conference which has grown to a four day event mixing good technical information with good times. The conference is probably the biggest and oldest statewide conference in the country.

In Oakland, CPF made its first major impact in 1981 by convincing OHA, then a fledgling organization, to co-sponsor the State Conference here. In the year spent planning and carrying out the highly successful conference held in spring 1982, a new awareness of Oakland's wealth of historic resources grew and was revealed to some 500 preservationists from throughout California who attended. An often heard comment was, "I never knew Oakland had such fabulous buildings." For OHA, co-sponsoring the conference called on the skills and resources of the organization, strengthening it as an effective and dynamic preservation advocate.

CPF workshops held in Oakland since then, usually co-sponsored by OHA, have covered seismic safety, landmarks ordinances, tax incentives, and housing and preservation. CPF even held a "preservation ball" here, returning the empty ballroom of the Hotel Oakland to its former elegance for a night.

Since the Loma Prieta earthquake, CPF's involvement in Oakland issues has increased substantially. CPF has served with OHA on the City Hall Preservation Advisory Committee and has participated in the coalitions dealing with earthquake repair measures and the URM ordinance, Madison Park Apartments, old Merritt College, and the draft Historic Preservation Element. CPF is a great resource to have right down the street.

--Alan Dreyfuss

## OHA Update

### ■ PRESIDENT'S COLUMN: THE PARAMOUNT THEATER CONTROVERSY

As we go to press, the proposal by Allen Michaan to use the Paramount Theater for movies and build an additional multi-screen complex next door is being debated by various City bodies and in the newspapers. I want to clarify the position taken by the OHA board of directors.

At our February board meeting, Allen Michaan presented a proposal to show movies on the theater's dark nights, increase revenue, and make no changes to the building except for installing double doors in one blank wall. We expressed to him that we felt it was a proposal worth pursuing and that we agreed with it "in concept."

We held a lengthy question and answer session about our primary concerns: the upkeep and replacement costs, the impact any additions might have on the integrity of the structure, and that the Paramount's value as a center for the performing arts not be compromised. We also discussed our organizational concern that city-owned and privately-owned historic landmarks play a significant role in the revitalization of downtown Oakland.

Peter Botto, current manager of the Paramount, and four guests, spoke at our March board meeting. He addressed what he felt were critical problems with the Michaan proposal, including whether it would meet the needs of the Oakland performing arts community, and whether the stellar condition of the theater could be maintained.

Clearly there are many questions which need answers. City staff has come forward with an initial report calling for a marketing study to determine the economic viability of the proposal, as well as an updated, detailed plan of any additions to the theater. The report also suggests a closer look at how the ongoing needs of all of Oakland's cultural organizations would be affected by the proposal.

After hearing both Allen Michaan and Peter Botto, the OHA board arrived at a position similar to the city staff recommendation for a study of the entire concept, in order to determine if there is a workable balance. As Oakland's historic preservation organization, we look to the plan that will best maintain the cultural and historic value of the Paramount Theater. --Lynn Fonfa



May 6, 1942: An Oakland family waits at 11th & Oak for bus to Tanforan Assembly Center, under Civilian Exclusion Order #28. (Dorothea Lange, War Relocation Authority, National Archives)

### ■ CAPTURED MEMORIES

"Captured Memories" is the title of a 50th anniversary exhibit of Dorothea Lange photographs of the Japanese-American removal and internment in 1942, presented by the Japanese in Oakland History Project, the East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation, and **Oakland Heritage Alliance**. During 1942, East Bay documentary photographer Dorothea Lange worked for the War Relocation Authority documenting the pre-evacuation period, removal, and internment of Japanese-Americans in Northern California. Her very human and poignant record of those trying days is presented in this exhibit of photographs from the National Archives. This exhibit focuses on the East Bay experience, with additional research illuminating the touching stories of these local residents caught in historical forces not of their own making. How people cope under such circumstances is a lesson for the human spirit.

Curated by Dean Yabuki, coordinator of the Japanese in Oakland History Project and OHA board member, the exhibit will be open to the public during May and June, weekdays 8 to 8, at the Asian Resource Center Gallery, 310 8th Street at Harrison in the heart of Oakland's Chinatown. An opening reception will be held Thursday, May 7, 5:30-7:30 pm.

In conjunction with the exhibit, a slide lecture will be presented in June, and docent tours for groups will be available by appointment. Watch for your invitation in the mail. Anyone interested in helping with the exhibit, reception, program, or tours, please contact Dean Yabuki, (510) 832-5355.

--Dean Yabuki

#### ■ CALIFORNIA HOTEL HISTORY PROJECT

The California Hotel History Project, directed by Paris Williams, has received a \$10,000 grant from the California Council for the Humanities to curate an exhibition based on oral histories and historic materials collected on the National Register-listed hotel. The oral histories concentrate on the history of African-Americans in Oakland in the 1940s and 50s. The California Hotel, recently rehabilitated for low income housing by Oakland Community Housing Incorporated, was a major venue for jazz and blues entertainment in those decades. Williams is now fundraising to match a CCH grant which would allow the project to produce a video documenting the California Hotel's important role in musical history.

--Lynn Fonfa

#### ■ CELEBRATE OAKLAND'S 140TH BIRTHDAY

This bucolic view of Broadway, looking north from the waterfront, is thought to be one of the earliest views of Oakland. It first appeared in William Taylor's California Life, a travel account published in 1858. Taylor portentously captions the scene "City of Oakland," but tells little about the fair city except that bear fights were to be seen on--of all things--Sunday. When this view was published, Oakland as a town was a scant six years old. May 4, 1992, marks the 140th anniversary. Watch for announcements of events.

--William Sturm



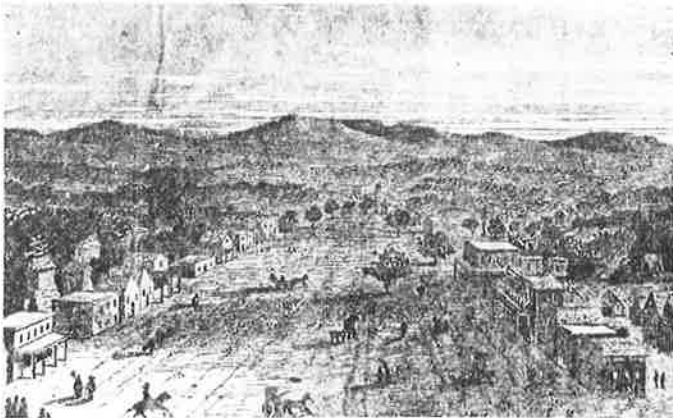
Mills Seminary students and staff c.1873, in front of Mills Hall, focus of current rehab effort. (Oakland History Room)

#### ■ MILLS HALL REPAIRS

The Board of Trustees of Mills College has launched a \$4 million fundraising campaign to save historic Mills Hall, which was closed after suffering severe damage in the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. The cost of renovating the 1871 Second Empire landmark building is \$8.5 million, \$4.5 million of which has already been pledged to the college. The remaining \$4 million must be raised by April 1993 in order to reopen in September 1994.

The original structure for Mills College, Mills Hall was designed by S.C. Bugbee and Sons, architects of the third Oakland City Hall (1867). It is a four story French mansard-style building, described by the college founders, Cyrus and Susan Mills, as built with "the very best quality of their several kinds" and "all the work done in the most thorough and workmanlike manner." A California Registered Historical Landmark, it is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The building survived the 1906 earthquake with only cracked marble fireplaces and a damaged cupola (later removed). Originally housing all college activities, Mills Hall became a residence hall as the campus expanded, and, more recently, administrative offices. When restored, the college foresees its use as an academic center with classrooms, offices, reading room and meeting rooms.

--Helen Lore



Oakland in the 1850s (Oakland History Room)

## City Landmarks Board Actions

The Oakland Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board's monthly meetings are open to the public. Landmark designation 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 and four districts have been designated since the Board was created in 1974. Meetings are at the Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue, second Mondays, 4 pm.

Since our last report, Barbara Armstrong has left the Board for another position. Jean Spees succeeds her as vice-chair, and filling the vacancy on the Board is: Creighton Fong. Creighton was born in Sacramento and lived there through his college years at California State University, Sacramento, and another four years working for Caltrans. His Victorian house in Sacramento gave him his first interest in preservation. Caltrans transferred him to San Francisco, where he later started his own business as an auditor. He moved to Oakland after purchasing a Victorian home in the 10th Avenue Historic District in the Brooklyn neighborhood. He is active in the Brooklyn Neighborhood Preservation Association and serves on OHA's board as treasurer. March was his first Landmarks Board meeting.

### JANUARY

A conceptual design (pre-design review) for repair of Oakland City Hall (1911-14, Palmer & Hornbostel; City Landmark and National Register) was presented to the Board by VBN Architects. A formal design review application under the Earthquake Repair Ordinance will be submitted in the coming months. Changes required by the base isolation work will mostly be at sidewalk level. A section at the rear of the Clay Street garage will be carved out, sidewalks will be removed and replacements will be narrower, street trees will be removed, and the front stairs will be disassembled and reassembled. On 14th and 15th Streets the basement windows will be filled, the basement being entirely dedicated to structural reinforcement. Non-original aluminum doors and vestibule at the front entry might be replaced with materials more in keeping with the building, and a missing spire on the clock tower replaced if funding permits. Clock works will be refurbished and clock dials retained. Air conditioning and

mechanical systems might be placed on the roof above the Council chambers. Stairwells, elevators, and handicapped access require some work. The historic jail in the tower will be preserved, and the original windows in the third-floor mayor's office restored. It is hoped that construction will start in April, with completion in early 1994.

The Southern Pacific 16th Street Station (1910-12, Jarvis Hunt, a City Landmark) was discussed. Secretary Helaine Prentice noted that the Initial Study and Negative Declaration on the proposed Jack London Square Amtrak station did not address the impact on the 16th Street station. Rick Wiederhorn, representing the Port of Oakland, asked to present plans for the Jack London Square station, saying that the new freeway would make it impossible to use the 16th Street station. Board members Annalee Allen and Les Hausrath pointed out that the freeway route which would require track removal is not yet a certainty. Board voted to send a letter to the Port expressing concern.

As reported in our last issue ("Oakland Briefing"), the Planning Commission recommended against the Board's nomination of San Antonio Park for landmark status, after hearing from speakers who had not come to the Landmarks Board. Prentice suggested that notification should be broadened so that interested neighborhood groups as well as the "owner" be notified when a City property is nominated for landmark status.

Prentice reported that she met with George Ong, owner of the Pekin Low Cafe (1924, W.K. Owen) at 700-10 Franklin Street, to explain the effects of landmark status; he reportedly has no plans to demolish the building, but might want to add additional stories. Board voted to write to owners of the California Hotel, listed on the National Register, and the Bellevue-Staten Apartments, about to be listed, on the possibility of landmark designation. Pending landmark nominations of the Lake Merritt Hotel (1800 Madison St., 1927-34, W.H. Weeks), the Ellen Kenna House (1218 East 21st St., 1888), and the Posey Tube Portal (4th and Harrison St., 1925-28, H.H. Meyers) were not yet scheduled for Council hearings.

Bob Brokl, representing North Oakland Voters Alliance, presented a copy of a report from the Fire Marshall describing the danger to the University High School/Old Merritt College buildings. NOVA is concerned about the City's neglect of the campus, and the Board agreed to send a letter of concern to the City Council. The resolution recommending landmark designation of the campus was passed by the Planning Commission, but had not yet been forwarded to Council.

## FEBRUARY

Certificates of appreciation were presented to former Board members Bert Bertolero and Anthony Pegram.

In design review, Allen Michaan of Renaissance Rialto, Inc., presented a conceptual design for a modification and addition to the Paramount Theater (1930-31, Timothy Pflueger; 2025 Broadway), an Oakland landmark, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and a National Historic Landmark. He proposed that the theater would benefit from development into a mixed use complex for both movies and performing arts, and that the added activity would revitalize downtown and increase the likelihood of restoring the Fox Theater. His proposal called for four new auditoriums in an addition on the adjoining parking lot, the addition to be connected by a new doorway to the Paramount's 21st Street lobby. He suggested that the Board create an oversight committee for the project, and Jean Spees, Diana Becton-Brown, and Andrew Carpentier volunteered to serve. The Board moved to prepare a Notice of Intent to designate the interior of the Paramount a landmark (at present only the exterior is subject to Board review) and asked the Secretary to schedule speakers representing other viewpoints on the proposal.

Board approved application by the City Department of Parks and Recreation to install security lighting at the McElroy Fountain in Lakeside Park. The preferred fixture is a reproduction of a historic street light first used on Piedmont Avenue in 1926; it relates to the larger double-headed light standards used on Grand Avenue.

Annalee Allen and Estelle Mannis reported on subcommittee meetings with the Planning Commission. The Board was concerned over Commission delays in acting on certain landmark nominations; the Commission wanted the Board to air controversial issues (such as San Antonio Park) earlier by publishing wider notice, and thought the Study List was too long; both bodies wanted better liaison.

Les Hausrath reported on meetings and correspondence regarding the proposed Earthquake Damage Abatement Ordinance. Of the 17 buildings now subject to the ordinance, it appeared that 13 would be defined as "historic" and subject to Board review.

At the request of the Macy Co.'s attorney, Board agreed to defer further action on proposed designation of the I. Magnin building, 2001 Broadway. Owners of the former Seventh Church of Christ, Scientist at 2333 Harrison had asked for further postponement;

Board asked the Secretary to set a deadline for rescheduling the nomination.

Prentice described the proposed demolition and reconstruction of Wendte Hall and the east wing of First Unitarian Church (685 14th Street at Castro), a city landmark, in a preservation district, and on the National Register. She noted that significant preservation issues are raised, and suggested that the Board investigate further before receiving a design review application.

Prentice showed framed certificates which had been prepared for all city landmark owners; 52 of them had not been claimed. Annalee Allen suggested presenting them as part of the celebration of the 140th anniversary of Oakland in May, which the Mayor's office will be organizing.

Board asked the Secretary to prepare Notices of Intent to nominate the next five buildings on the Study List.

## MARCH

Blair Egli, president of the Paramount Theater board of directors, responded to Allen Michaan's proposal, citing financial risks, threats to the building's integrity, and problems created by food and drink. Michael Crowe, of the National Park Service and San Francisco Landmarks Board, urged the Board to do everything possible to protect the building; he noted that the San Francisco board designates interiors of public buildings. Board voted to send a second Notice of Intent to amend the Paramount designation to include the interior.

On proposed new nominations, Prentice reported that the owners of Lake Merritt Lodge (1925, McCall & Davis; 2332 Harrison St.) and of St. Paul's Episcopal Church (1912, B.G. McDougall; 110 Montecito) had requested delays. There had been no reply from owners of the PG&E building (1922, C.W. Dickey; 1625 Clay St.) and Safeway tower (1927-27, Reed & Corlett; 5701-59 East 14th St.); both these nominations will be considered in April. There had also been no response from owners of the California Hotel or Bellevue-Staten (see January).

Further discussions on the Earthquake Damage Abatement Ordinance and on relations with the Planning Commission were reported.

Board received information on recent foreclosure and related actions involving the Broadway Building. Prentice described a novel preservation strategy being used on the Holland-Canning House at 954 16th Street, where the owner is rehabbing one room at a time and renting each as it is completed.

--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. Practical deadline for entries occurs at each solstice and equinox. To submit items for listings, contact Oakland Heritage Alliance or Donald Wardlaw, 2214 Thirteenth Ave., Oakland, 94606. (261-7236)

## Upcoming Activities

ongoing, M-F. 9-5, "The History of West Oakland: Its Origins and People," photographic exhibit, 1860's to present, Liberty Hall, 1485 Eighth St., free, 839-6776.

through April 26, (M-F. 7-7, Sat. 8-4, Sun. 10-4), "John de Marchi", Bay Area Sculptor, Oakland Museum Sculpture Court at City Center, 1111 Broadway.

through May 6, Wed. 6-8pm, "Oakland History", Lakeview Library in conjunction with Laney College, Tom Wolf instructor, 238-3234 (Arnita Fermin).

through May 24, (W-Sat. 10-5, Sun.12-7), "Images Transformed", five contemporary artists: Pegan Brooke, Mary Campbell, Tina Hulett, Sabina Ott & Lucy Puls, The Oakland Museum, Oak & 10th Streets.

April 4 & 11, Sat. 10am-noon & 1-5pm, Oral History Interviewing: How it Differs from Other Types of Interviewing, "Oral History", Vista Community College, 2020 Milvia, \$18, 841-8431.

April 11, Sat. 10:30am, tour the Palace Hotel, San Francisco, restoration received awards from National Trust for Historic Preservation & San Francisco Chapter AIA, meet in foyer on New Montgomery Street, \$5 donation.

April 15, W. 7:30pm, "In Search of One's Self: Historical Identity & the Quest for Change in the Planning of Italian Cities," Paolo Ceccarelli, Chair, Istituto di Architettura, Venice, Italy, 112 Wurster, UCB, 642-4942.

April 22-May 27, W. 2-5, "Berkeley History", Dr. Charles Wollenberg, Vista Community College, 2020 Milvia Street, \$6, 841-8431.

April 22, W., Workshop on Development for Historic Preservation, Eureka, details-California Preservation Foundation, \$35 763-0972.

April 22-26, W-Sun., California Preservation Conference, Eureka, details-California Preservation Foundation, 1615 Broadway #705, 763-0972.

April 26, Sun. 1-5,



**Oakland Heritage Alliance**  
**House Tour in Trestle Glen**  
 12 Period Revival Homes & Garden Reception  
 \$25/\$20(OHA Members), docents tour free,  
 763-9218.



May 1-June 30, M-F. 8-6, "Captured Memories", 50th anniversary of Japanese removal & internment, Photographs by Dorothea Lange, Reception Thur. May 7, 5:30-7:30, sponsored by Japanese in Oakland History Project, EBALDC & OHA, Asian Resource Center, 310 8th St., Dean Yabuki 832-5355.

May 4, Mon. Oakland's 140th birthday. Watch for announcements of events.

May 2, 9 & 16, Sat., Editing and Processing of Oral History: Occupational Opportunities, "Oral History", Vista Community College, 2020 Milvia, \$18, 841-8431.

May 8, "Soiree," San Francisco Heritage, fundraiser at Don Lee Cadillac Building, 1000 Van Ness, (415) 441-3004.

May 9-September 6, (W-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 12-7), "Panorama of California", 15 photographic panoramas of California from the Gold Rush days to the present, The Oakland Museum, Oak & 10th Streets.

May 14, Thurs. 8pm, "1923 Berkeley Fire", lecture, Berkeley Architectural Heritage Assoc., Hillside School Auditorium, \$(call), 841-2242.

May 17, Sun. 1-5, 1923 Berkeley Fire Area, Berkeley Architectural Heritage Assoc. Annual House Tour, 841-2242.

June 6-September 26, Sat. 10am, Chinatown Walk, San Francisco Heritage, 950 Clay St., \$3, (415) 441-3004.

July-August



**OHA Summer Walking Tours**

Details To Be Announced

## Regularly Scheduled Tours

Alameda Historical Museum, walking tours of historic Alameda, 1st. & 3rd. Sat.; 1pm, 2324 Alameda Ave., \$5/\$3.50 members, 521-1233.

Ardenwood Regional Preserve, April-Nov., Th-Sun. 10-4; tour Patterson House hourly Sat. & Sun./variable Th-F.; \$5/\$3 (Sr.)/\$2.50 (Jr.); Ardenwood Blvd., Fremont, 796-0663.

Camron-Stanford House, 1876 Italianate house museum at Lake Merritt, W. 11-4 & Sun. 1-5; \$2/\$1, free first Sun., 1418 Lakeside Dr., 836-1976.

Dunsmuir House, Colonial Revival mansion, 2960 Peralta Oaks Court, Oakland, 562-0328.

McConaghy House, 104 year old farmhouse at 18701 Hesperian Blvd., Hayward, Th-Sun., 1-4; \$3/\$2 (Sr.)/\$0.50 (children).

Northern California Center for Afro-American History and Life, exhibits and archive, T-F., 12:30-5; 5606 San Pablo (Golden Gate Library), 658-3158.

Oakland Tours Program, M, W & Sat. 10 & 12, Seven walking tours: Old Oakland; City Center; Uptown Lake; Preservation Park and Unitarian Church; Oakland Chinatown; Jack London Waterfront; and, Churches and Temples (St. Augustine Episcopal, First Christian, Temple Sinai & First Congregational, free, 238-3234.

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

Pardee Home Museum, 1868 Italianate Villa, Pardee family residence 1868-1981, tours by reservation, 10/tour maximum, \$4/\$3 (Sr.), 672 11th St., 444-2187.

Presidio, National Park Service walks, every Sat. 11am, meet at main parade grounds, \$3, (415) 556-0865.

San Francisco Heritage, Victorian & Edwardian Pacific Heights, Sun. 12:30-2, Haas-Lilienthal House Tours, Sun. 11-4, W. 12-3:15, 2007 Franklin, \$4/\$2\*; \*Srs./Jrs., (415) 441-3004.



### Regularly Scheduled Meetings

### Oakland Heritage Alliance News



**Oakland Heritage Alliance.** OHA Board of Directors meets on the first Monday of the month, 7:30pm; for agenda and location, contact OHA, 763-9218. **Preservation Action Committee:** contact Susan McCue, 763-1687, for time, place and agenda.

**Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board,** 2nd Mon., 4 pm.  
**City Planning Commission,** alternate Weds., 1:30 pm.  
**City Council,** every Tuesday evening, 7:30pm.  
All city meetings at Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue. Contact City Planning Dept., 273-3941, for Landmarks Board and Planning Commission agendas.

#### CONTRIBUTORS

Bob Brokl, Carolyn Douthat, Alan Dreyfuss, Lynn Fonfa, Hillary Gitelman, Jennifer Katz, Helen Lore, Betty Marvin, Kathy Olson, William Sturm, Donald Wardlaw & Dean Yabuki.

#### EDITORIAL BOARD

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. Contact Betty Marvin, 849-1959, Dean Yabuki, 832-5355, or OHA, 763-9218. Back issues \$2. © 1991 Oakland Heritage Alliance.

### New OHA Members

The Officers and Directors of Oakland Heritage Alliance 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-March 3) are:

Alice Ross Carey, Steven Correia, Narda Hall, Audrey Hulburd, Klaus Kirchbaum, Rod Neves, Kevin O'Rourke, Doris Ransom, David Roumm, Constance Rowell, John Russo/Stephanie Shakofsky, Victoria Santiago, Scott Sizer, Bruce Smyser, E. H. Snell, & Judy Weekman.

### 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.

### Donors

Special thanks to those joining/renewing as:

SPONSOR (\$100): G. Pete Encinas, Suzanne Gold, Myron Zimmerman.  
ORGANIZATION (\$50): Berkeley Builders, Ramon Rodriguez/OCD Rehab Supervisor.

OHA appreciates donations from the following:

(January-March 3): Jorgen Christiansen, Mary O. Davis, Lynn Fonfa, Helen & Warren Tryon.

COHEN HOUSE FUND: Chevron matching gift \$50.

CULTURAL HERITAGE SURVEY: Teresa Kulka \$100.

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Vice President Marlene Wilson  
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Treasurer Creighton Fong

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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 make OHA a more effective organization.

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I would like to serve on the following committee(s):

- Fund Raising  Membership  Programs
- Landmark Assistance  OHA News  Publicity
- Landmark Nomination  Preservation Action  Summer Tours
- Other

**Oakland Heritage Alliance.**  
**P.O.Box 12425, Oakland, CA 94604**

## Oakland History Notes: Holy Names High School

Oakland's first high school began on the shores of Lake Merritt in 1868. Known as the Convent of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, the school was founded by the Sisters of the Holy Names to provide secondary education to young women. The school was located on the site of today's Kaiser Center. It offered a curriculum of religion, mathematics, French, science, history, fine arts, physical education, and domestic science. One of the first students left this description:

"The grounds of the Convent, old and beautiful with their shade trees, were well kept, as was the large school ground along the shore of Lake Merritt. Even a boathouse was there with two large rowboats that older girls rowed... A Sister was always with the

fifteen or twenty on a lake ride, a most enjoyable hour to relax, while passing the many beautiful gardens of homes around the lake, as many had statues on the lawn."

In 1880 the convent school was chartered by the State of California and empowered to grant degrees as the College of Holy Names. The high school, accordingly, began to include more college preparatory studies, such as classical and modern languages and laboratory sciences. In 1911 the college was accredited by the University of California. School facilities expanded, and soon the need was felt for a separate location for the secondary school.

In 1931 construction began on Harbord Drive for a new Holy Names High School. Designed by H.A. Minton, the handsome three-story Spanish-Gothic structure opened on August 17, 1931. The new school combined the four high schools administered by the Sisters of the Holy Names in Oakland at that time: College of Holy Names High School, St. Francis de Sales High School, and Sacred Heart and St. Mary's Commercial High Schools.

Now celebrating its 60th anniversary, Holy Names High School has twice been awarded the coveted Blue Ribbon of the U.S. Department of Education and remains a vital part of the city's educational and cultural life.

--William W. Sturm



Holy Names High School,  
4660 Harbord Drive,  
about 1935.  
(courtesy of Holy  
Names High School)

Oakland Heritage Alliance  
P.O. Box 12425  
Oakland, California 94604

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