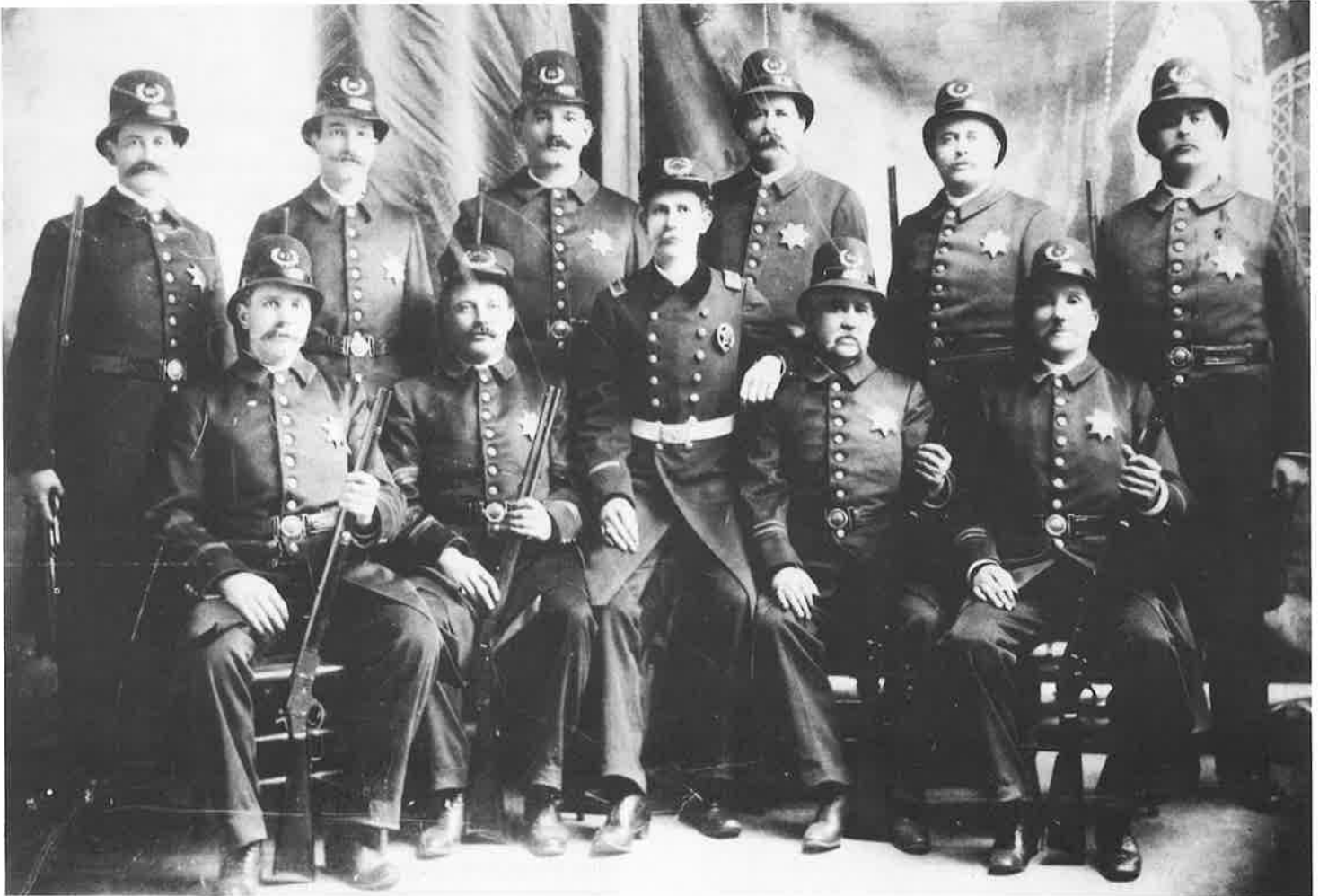


The Early Years of the Oakland Police Department, 1853-1906



The California State Legislature incorporated the Town of Oakland in 1852 and provided for all the necessary functions of government, including the right to establish a police force. Oakland's Town Council exercised that right on September 14, 1853, by creating the position of Town Marshall. A month later, on October 15, 1853, Oakland had its first peace officer, Town Marshall John McCann. His duties were to enforce the ordinances and to collect the taxes.

Oakland Police Department rifle team, 1897. Captain Walter Petersen, center, later became Chief. (Oakland History Room)

When Oakland was incorporated as a city in 1854, the charter made the Marshall's office elective, and the voters chose John Hogan as Marshall, and two policemen, R.W. Kellogg and William McCaw. The City Council paid the officers a salary of \$150 a month, provided a budget of \$75 for badges, and authorized construction of a station house.

Ashmount House Tour, May 22 - see p. 16



Caption on the back of this photo reads "Old City Jail, formerly 4th and Washington." (Oakland History Room)

From 1853 through 1869 nine men served as Marshall of Oakland. As the city grew, the Marshall spent more and more time collecting taxes. He became less directly involved in law enforcement, leaving the patrolmen to oversee their own duties, plan their investigations, and make arrests when necessary.

Oakland was a bedroom suburb of people from San Francisco who enjoyed the East Bay's cool breezes and warm sun. The East Bay prided itself on its neighborliness. Men brought their families to live here. Oakland was quiet and law-abiding, and it was easy for the City Marshall and his men to enforce the law. Throughout this period, newspaper reports on police activity typically read, "No arrests made this week."

As the 1860s drew to a close, however, weekends brought a steadily rising influx of visitors from throughout the region who chose Oakland as the place to drink, gamble, brawl, or visit their favorite madams on their one day off. It became clear that changes were needed. In May 1867, the City Council divided the city into three police districts (Central, Northern, and Eastern) with officers assigned regular beats, and authorized the hiring of special officers to help control the Sunday crowds.

Recognizing Oakland's expanded law enforcement needs, in the fall of 1869 the Council made the Marshall a full-time tax collector and created the new office of

Captain of Police. The first Captain was Fred B. Tarbett. Between 1869 and 1889, ten Captains of Police led the Department. Captain Tarbett commanded ten regular officers, two detectives, and four special officers (similar to today's reserves).

One of the detectives, Dave Rand, succeeded Tarbett as Captain in 1874. In 1876, when unrest resulting from the depression of the 1870s reached Oakland, a so-called "Anti-Coolie Club" held a mass meeting in front of City Hall and threatened to burn down Chinatown. Captain Rand prevented this by flooding the district with patrolmen and newly sworn special officers. When the city jail burned down, Rand rescued the prisoners at the risk of his own life. After his death in 1877, the Council said of him, "Whatever he did was done well... he shirked no duty [and] dared to face danger... in every sense... he was a true citizen and a bold exponent of the right."

From 1852 to 1877 all Oakland police officers wore civilian clothing because it was felt that uniforms would make them too easily recognized by the criminal element. This changed on May 28, 1877, when the Council appropriated money for uniforms. The first uniforms were navy blue and made of wool. The coat was fastened with "gold gilt police buttons" and weighed twenty pounds. The Captain's jacket was double-breasted. The officers were allowed to wear broad-brimmed hats. (Helmets were adopted some years later.) Guns were kept in a holster at the side or carried in a "pistol pocket" inside the uniform coat.

Walking his beat, the early Oakland policeman was an isolated figure. If trouble developed, the only way he could call for help was by blowing his ivory carved police whistle. Three blasts meant an officer needed help, and a single answering blast signalled that a nearby patrolman had heard the alarm and was on the way. In an extreme emergency he could call for help by shooting his gun into the air.

When call boxes were installed on street corners, officers in the field could contact the station directly. Department rules



The Oakland force in 1879, with Mayor Washburne Andrus (seated, right). Front row, far right, is Adelbert Wilson, later Chief. (Oakland History Room)



A later call box, dating from the City Beautiful Movement of the 1910s, at the foot of Jackson Street. The boxes were made obsolete by radio, and removed. (Survey photo, 1982)

required patrolmen to call their divisions from the boxes at least once an hour, at set times called "marks." In a typical exchange the patrolman calling in would say "Officer Jones for a mark." The switchboard officer might simply acknowledge his report or instruct him to "hold for orders." By 1886 (ten years after the invention of the telephone) Oakland had installed 39 "police telegraph boxes."

Late in the 1880s, when Captain William R. Thomas led the Department, Oakland purchased its first police wagon, horse-drawn and manned by two officers. Officers no longer had to escort prisoners to jail on foot, or commandeer buckboards to take them there. The wagon was also used as an ambulance. Like the call box, the police wagon changed the patrolman's life for the better.

Patrolmen were not specialists. They were expected to be alert for crimes and other problems on their beats and, when possible, to resolve them on their own. In July 1894, two officers were summoned by a homeowner to rid his house of a ghost. Policemen were expected to help put out fires, to remove dead animals from the streets (2,514 dogs, horses, goats, cows, and cats in 1900), and to supervise the gang of city prisoners repairing streets and sewers. The Department advertised to find the rightful owners of recovered property: for example, "There are three of the stolen chickens captured with Charles Davis still at the City Prison awaiting the call of their owners."

Enforcement of gambling laws was a priority during the terms of Captains Thomas and Peter Pumyea. Pumyea directed officers

to "note all places, rooms, saloons, cigar stores, lottery agencies, tan games, or any place where gambling is carried on by means of cards, dice, or any device for gambling purposes, and arrest each and every person engaged in gambling,... white men or women same as Chinese, with no exceptions."

In the '90s the City Council established Oakland's first speed limits: nine miles per hour for horses, and eight for bicycles. Control of bicycle traffic by foot patrolmen became a problem. "Violators, when told to stop, usually disregard the command and ride on," a local paper reported. "To prevent this, officers in citizen's clothing are mounted on wheels, and the result is a sprinting match, ending at the city jail."

In 1889 the new City charter changed the title of the head of the Department from Captain to Chief. The first Chief was John W. Tompkins. From 1889 to the present, twenty-two chiefs have led the Department. Chief Tompkins commanded two captains, two sergeants, twenty-three patrolmen, two jailers, and eleven special officers.

Two of Chief Tompkins' officers were assigned as detectives. Reminiscing in 1921, retired detective Dennis Holland told this tale: "I remember in particular a band of horse and rig thieves that caused us a lot of worry... they certainly were slick performers. They used to work on Wednesday and Sunday nights, stealing handsome carriages and good horses from the church folk. They worked in Oakland, San Francisco, Sacramento, Berkeley and Alameda and had their headquarters in San Jose. It took a long time to discover their San Jose headquarters, about two years, in fact, but we finally landed them. They had taken the horses and pastured them out, selling them singly, and had a big plant where they repainted the carriages and fixed them up so their own owners wouldn't know them."



The first patrol wagon, shown on 15th Street between San Pablo and Clay (near today's City Hall). Driver is Officer McKinney; behind is Paul Rand, brother of Captain Dave Rand. (OHR)

Robert Percival's dissertation Municipal Justice in the Melting Pot has a statistical analysis of the Department's performance in the early days: "at the start of the period, the number of arrests made annually in Oakland was minuscule; only 368 arrests, roughly one per day, were made in 1868. During the next decade, however, the number of arrests rose sharply in almost every year, peaking during the civil disorder of 1877 at 2,939." After a dip in the late '70s and early '80s, "an uptrend again took hold until in 1890, 4,180 people were arrested, nearly double the 2,112 in 1884. Despite population growth and increases in police manpower, the number of arrests declined in seven of the ten years of the 1890s."

In the rate of serious crime he found "a long, deep decline": "In 1875, for example, there were 197 arrests for felonies against property... Twenty-five years later at the turn of the century, Oakland's population had tripled, but the number of arrests for property felonies was only 35..." The City Physician reported only two homicides between 1870 and 1875, and the Alameda County Coroner reported four homicides county-wide in 1892. Percival concluded that "During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Oakland appears to have become a less violent and a more orderly community." These statistics record a great success for the community and the Department. It appears that Mayor Andrus had described the reality when he said, in 1879, that "life and property are unusually secure in Oakland."

POLICE OFFICIALS SOON TO OCCUPY NEW QUARTERS IN SMALLER BUILDING



OAKLAND'S NEW POLICE STATION.
(Photo by The Herald Photographer.)

New city administration building: in early 1905, crowding in the jail led to conversion of the offices in the old City Hall basement into cells, and construction of this small office annex. (Oakland Herald, Feb. 7, 1905; Oakland History Room)



Adelbert Wilson had served for 37 years when he became Chief in 1906. He presided over Oakland's emergency response after the 1906 earthquake. (F.C. Merritt, History of Alameda County)

On January 2, 1906, Chief St. Clair Hodgkins was succeeded by Chief Adelbert Wilson. Like Hodgkins, Wilson had started as a special officer, in 1869 under Captain Tarbett. Promoted to sergeant in 1877 and to captain in 1899, according to a newspaper account of the time he "could earlier have obtained the chieftaincy but declined for the reason that the head position was in politics and was a plum which successive administrations plucked for special favorites." It was Wilson's distinguished record and recognized leadership that led to his appointment as Chief, when he was ready to accept it.

Four months after Wilson became Chief the routine of police work was suspended by a catastrophe. In the early morning hours of Wednesday, April 18, 1906, the great earthquake and fire leveled San Francisco. By comparison, Oakland weathered the quake with little damage. But water, telephone, and telegraph services were disrupted. At 12th and Broadway, Kahn's Clothing Store collapsed into the Empire Rooming House next door, killing five people. Many other buildings sustained structural injuries.

Within hours Oakland officials recognized that a major disaster had occurred and began energetic steps to deal with it. Throughout the emergency, Chief Wilson worked closely



with the Mayor and other officials. In the afternoon, as the great fire began to darken the sky over San Francisco, Oakland requested assistance from the National Guard and the regular Army. Mayor Mott admonished the public to stay indoors, and the District Attorney closed bars and liquor stores in Oakland "until further notice."

The most serious problem developed as a tide of refugees poured across the bay. In the three days following the earthquake, 200,000 dazed and homeless people sought shelter in Oakland. Chief Wilson had only 71 officers to meet the crisis. A 6 pm curfew was declared on city streets, and violators were swiftly arrested. Volunteers erected tent cities at Idora Park (a commercial amusement park near 60th and Telegraph) and along the shores of Lake Merritt. As the military units arrived, they were assigned to organize the camps and supervise the distribution of food and clothing.

Until the bars were opened and the curfew lifted on May 1, the crime rate dropped sharply. According to Percival, "fewer arrests were made in Oakland during the two weeks following the earthquake (121) than in the two weeks preceding it (160). Martial law and chaos reigned in San Francisco, but there was no disorder in Oakland, despite a sudden tripling in its population." By preserving public order Chief Wilson's decisive measures limited and eased the sufferings of thousands of people.

In the late summer, due to turmoil caused by the earthquake, a crime wave marked by brutal robberies broke out on both sides of the bay. It reached a climax in Oakland on October 15, when armed robbers held up a streetcar and killed the motorman and a watchman who attempted to prevent their escape. Clergy and other community leaders held meetings to organize a vigilance committee; women were reported to be arming themselves with revolvers. Chief Wilson



"There was no disorder in Oakland, despite a sudden tripling in population": post-earthquake street scene at 13th and Clay conveys the sense of agitation following the disaster. (OHR)

responded by meeting with concerned citizens throughout the city. He said, "We do not need a vigilance committee in this city. We can handle the situation." The Chief was as good as his word, efficient police patrols reduced the level of fear in the city, and no vigilance committee was ever formed.

By year's end, the city appeared to have returned to normal, but it was never to be the same, because so many of the refugees decided to make their homes in Oakland. This permanent, major increase in population marked the transformation of Oakland from a small town into a big city. The Department's performance during the 1906 earthquake could be called the "grand finale" of the 19th century Department, the greatest test of its capacity. In meeting their responsibilities during this emergency, Chief Wilson and his officers achieved a sterling success.

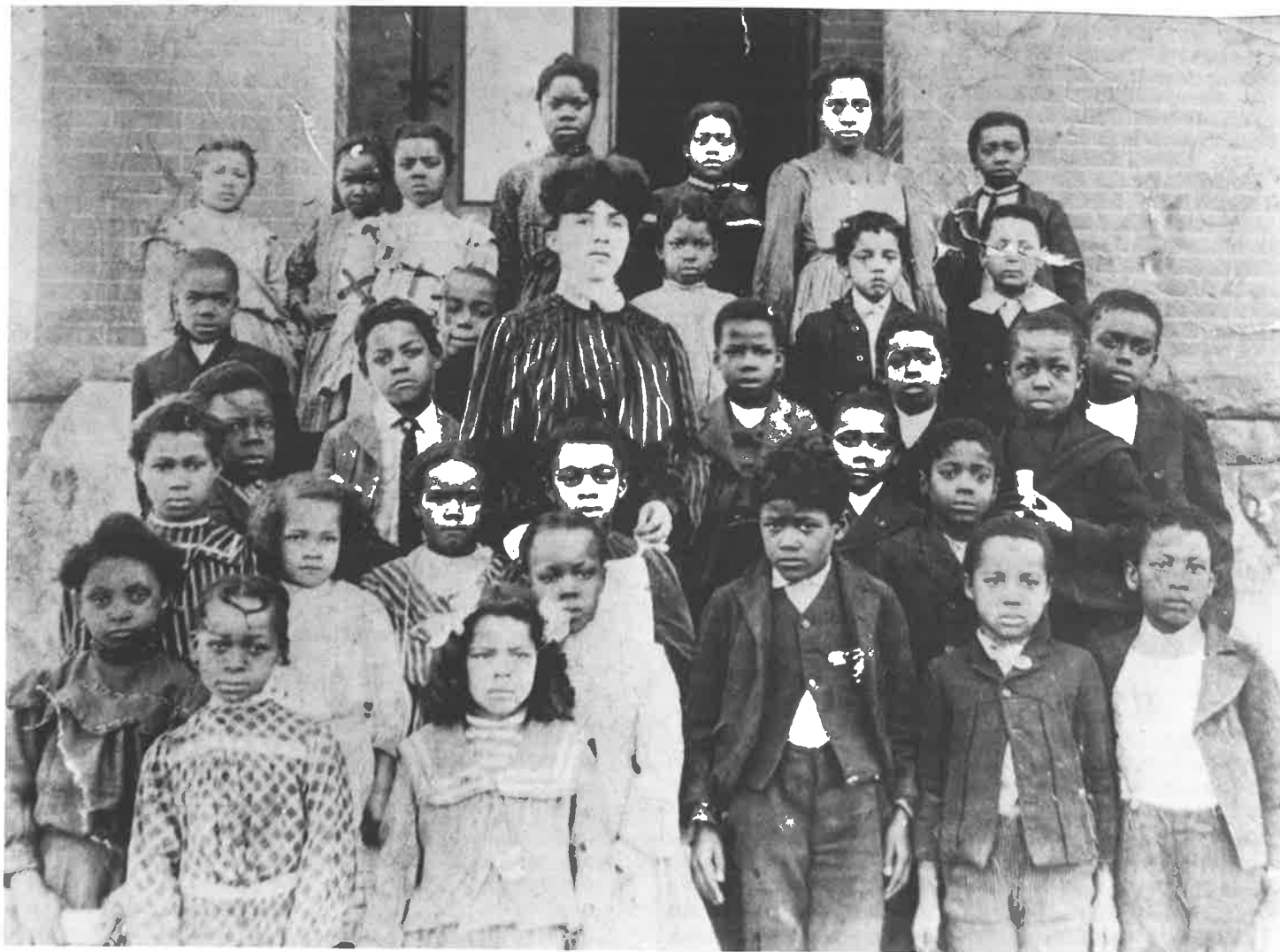
--Phil McArdle

Earthquake refugee camp at Adams Point, May 5, 1906. Many refugees settled in Oakland, and it was after the earthquake that the Adams Point neighborhood developed. (Oakland History Room, collection of Ted Wurm)



Phil McArdle is a writer in the Oakland Police Department's Training section. He is author of a six-part history of the Department, of Fatal Fascination (a study of police work in the East Bay and elsewhere), and other works.

Mary Sanderson and the Brooklyn School



The system of segregated schools that once existed in California originated in the 1850s. In 1854 the San Francisco Board of Education founded a separate public school for African-American children, establishing a precedent followed by other communities. School segregation received the sanction of law. The State School Code of 1860 prohibited African-Americans, Asians, and Native Americans from attending regular (white) public schools. School districts were given the authority to establish separate schools for minority children using public funds. Over a period of 20 years a total of 21 publicly supported black public schools came into existence. One of these was in Brooklyn, the town east of Lake Merritt that later became East Oakland.

The first public schools of Oakland and Brooklyn admitted only white children. The black community assumed responsibility for

Mary Sanderson and her students at the Adams Street school, around 1870-71. These children represent many of Oakland's pioneer African-American families, including the Floods, Sandersons, and Tilghmans. Some belonged to railroad families, and traveled all the way from Oakland Point. (OHR/NCCAAH&L)

the education of their own children, and for a period of ten years (1857-67) supported a private school conducted by Elizabeth Flood. (See Winter 1992-93 OHA News.)

The expense of supporting a private school was a heavy burden on the African-American community, already paying taxes to support public schools. In 1866 parents from Oakland and Brooklyn petitioned the Oakland Board of Education to provide for the education of black children living in the district. After months of delay the Brooklyn Board of Education voted to establish a public school in the town of Brooklyn that would be open to minority children of both districts. The need became imperative when Elizabeth Flood

died in 1867 and her private school closed.

The Brooklyn school opened in January 1867. For the duration of its existence the one-class school was taught by Mary Jane Sanderson, daughter of African-American pioneer Rev. Jeremiah B. Sanderson. Born in Massachusetts in 1821, Rev. Sanderson came to California in 1854 and for the next 21 years was a teacher and pastor in San Francisco, Sacramento, Stockton, and Oakland.

According to historian Delilah Beasley, the school was originally held in "the old Manning house, located in Brooklyn.... This house is now [1919] owned by Mr. Wilds." The 1878-79 City Directory lists John Wilds living at 1066 11th Avenue near East 12th Street, and from the 1890s to the 1910s he lived at 1008 10th Avenue: one of these is probably the house mentioned by Beasley.

By 1870 the school was located in a room of the Adams Street Primary School, a two-story brick building built in 1866. The Brooklyn Independent of December 3, 1870, calls it the "Adams Street Colored School": "This school is held in the same building as the primary, and is conducted by Miss Mary J. Sanderson, a young and accomplished lady, who has charge of it for the past two years. The attendance is not large, and sixteen desks supply the wants of the scholars. We were struck with the cleanly and intelligent appearance of the children, who ranged in age from about fourteen to ten years."

The Adams Street Primary School appears on old Sanborn maps at the northwest corner of Adams Street (East 14th after Oakland annexed Brooklyn) and 10th Avenue. The famous photograph of Mary Sanderson and her class must have been taken at the Adams Street school, and not at the old house, because the building in the background is brick.

Soon after the Brooklyn school opened the Oakland Board of Education voted to send Oakland's African-American children there. The Oakland Daily News of February 6, 1867, reported: "The Board of Education...voted to allow the teacher of the Brooklyn colored school, \$1.50 per month for each pupil that she received from Oakland. This is the cost of each white pupil to the city. The act seems to us to be fair and appropriate." Thus the Oakland board was able to provide for the city's minority children and at the same time avoid the issue of integration.

Mary Jane Sanderson was only 16 when she started teaching at the Brooklyn school, but she had a teaching certificate and contemporary sources agree that she was an excellent teacher. To get a certificate in California, a candidate had to pass a rigorous test that covered grammar, arithmetic, U.S. history, mental arithmetic, geography, physiology, algebra, natural philosophy, penmanship, natural history, reading, vocal music, composition, drawing, and the constitution.

A GRAND EXHIBITION,
For the Benefit of
SHILOH A. M. E. CHURCH,
OAKLAND,
Will be given
ON WEDNESDAY EVENING NEXT,
December 16, 1868,
In Shattuck's Hall,
Broadway, between 7th and 8th Streets
BY THE SCHOLARS OF
Miss Mary Sanderson's School.

Programme.

1. Introduction—Piano Duet...
Messrs. Taylor and Clark.
2. Recitation—"The Works of God"...
Master George Flood
3. Recitation—"The Shepherds and the Angels"... Miss Eleanor Whiting
4. Recitation—"Speak the Truth"...
Master Alexander Johnson
5. Chorus—"Never Forget the Sabbath School"... By the Scholars
6. Recitation—"The Robin's Temperance Song"... Miss Annie Dyer
7. Recitation—"The Moon is very Fair and Bright"... Miss Sarah Sanderson
8. Solo—"I Cannot Sing the Old Songs"... Miss Florence Sanderson
9. Recitation—"I'll never use Tobacco"...
Master Theodore Flood
10. Recitation—"The World is Full of Beauty"... Miss Selina Tilgman
11. Recitation—"The Golden Rule"...
Master James Mason
12. Chorus—"Angel's Song"...
By the Scholars
13. Recitation—"Truthful Boy"...
Master Lewis Whiting
14. Dialogue—"Colloquy in Church"...
Misses A. Fisher and Emma Cooper
15. Recitation—"Parting of Douglas and Marmion"... Mr. Geo. W. Bell

PART II.

1. Chorus—"Over the River"...
By the Scholars
2. Recitation—"The Liberty Flag"...
Miss Estelle Oliver
3. Solo—Piano... Master Wm. Sampson
4. Dialogue—"The Seasons"... Misses Annie Dyer, Estelle Oliver, S. Teighman and S. Sanderson
5. Recitation—"Work and Play"...
Master Theodore Flood
6. Solo—"Chamouni"... Miss Campbell
7. Recitation—"Don't Kill the Birds"...
Miss Selina Teighman
8. Recitation—"The Crust of Bread"...
Miss Lydia Flood
9. Duet—Misses Annie and E. Rogers
10. Recitation—"The Psalm of Life"...
Miss Mary Sanderson
11. Chorus—"Shall we Meet Beyond the River"... By the Scholars
12. Recitation—"The Boy and the Lark"... Master James Mason
13. Dialogue—"Leaving School"...
Misses Flora Sanderson, Alameda Fisher and Virginia Campbell
14. Recitation—"What the Child Has"...
Miss Sarah Sanderson
15. Recitation—"The American Flag"...
Mr. W. N. Sanderson
16. Quartette—Messrs. Taylor, Clark, Jackman and McFee

In December 1868 Miss Sanderson's class presented an exhibition at Shattuck's Hall for the benefit of the Shiloh A.M.E. Church, Oakland's first African-American church. The San Francisco Elevator reported: "This Exhibition for the benefit of the Shiloh A.M.E. Church came off... before a large and appreciative audience. The entire management was under the supervision of Miss Mary J. Sanderson... The pieces selected for the display of the evening, were the recitations of Dialogues and Poems from old and distinguished authors, by the children of Miss Mary Sanderson's school." The Oakland Transcript added that a few white persons attended.

In June 1869 a reporter for the Elevator wrote: "Business calling us to Oakland on Wednesday, we took occasion to visit the colored Public School in Clinton [Brooklyn] conducted by Miss Mary J. Sanderson. There are about a dozen scholars on register, mostly very small children. The school was in good order, and Miss Sanderson has gained the love of her pupils and the confidence of the parents. We heard some of the little ones recite their lessons, and were much pleased with their proficiency, particularly when we understood that a few months ago they did not know a letter."

In 1870 the Brooklyn school held another exhibition at Shattuck's Hall. A program from this event has survived and is now at the Bancroft. It names Mary Sanderson as "Principal" of the "Colored School of Brooklyn." The following pupils partici-

The San Francisco Elevator, December 11, 1868, announced the benefit recital.

pated: Eleanora Whiting, Lewis Whiting, Elizabeth Whiting, Lydia Flood, Theodora Flood, George Flood, Charles Flood, William Sanderson, Florence Sanderson, James Mason, Maggie Fuller, Carrie Smith, Alice Francis, Anne Dyer, Julia Brown, and Alfred Johnson.

The 1870 Directory of the City of Oakland has this short notice: "In the Brooklyn District is a school for colored children, under the charge of Miss Mary J. Sanderson, the only school for colored children in the county, and a very successful one."

Almost 50 years later Delilah Beasley's Negro Trail Blazers of California (1919) honored Mary Sanderson: "Mrs. Mary Sanderson Grasses is one of the daughters of the late Rev. J.B. Sanderson, the pioneer minister of Oakland. She was the first colored public school teacher in Oakland, having taught a school in the part of the city which in pioneer days was known as Brooklyn, and at this writing is called East Oakland. The writer had the privilege of reviewing a program which was rendered by her class at Shattuck Hall, Oakland. It was quite evident that no little one was slighted. This same spirit still lingers with Mrs. Grasses, who is kind to everybody. None knew her but to love her."

Oakland residents had difficulty sending their children to the Brooklyn School because of its remote location. A reporter who visited the school in 1869 wrote: "We are sorry the colored citizens of Oakland do not send their children to Miss Sanderson's school--she is an amiable young lady, and an excellent teacher. The distance is too far for small children to walk, nearly five miles; but we think the railroad company would let them ride to and from school, at a very moderate rate, perhaps free."

The Brooklyn school remained open for less than five years. Delilah Beasley explains why it closed in July 1871. "Miss Mary J. Sanderson taught the colored school in Oakland until the parents of the colored children began to move from the district. They were compelled to go where the heads of the families could make the best living. The distance usually was too far for the children to attend the colored school. The law required that there must be at least ten children attending any colored school to remain open. After the removal out of the district of the families of Lewis Whiting, J.P. Dyer, and Isaac Flood, they practically emptied the district and forced the closing of the colored school."

Contemporary newspapers support Beasley's account. The Oakland Daily News of July 31, 1871, reported the closing of the school. "The colored school, which for some years was conducted here, has been closed on account of the paucity of the Brooklyn pupils, and merged into the Primary School,

which was held in the same building. It opened at the commencement of the present term under the charge of Mrs. Gratus [sic: i.e. Grasses, Mary Sanderson's married name], the accomplished lady who had taught it for two and a half years, but it was found there were only 18 pupils in attendance half of whom belonged to Oakland... we hope the Oakland people, who have more colored children among them than we have here, will immediately organize another colored school and place Mrs. Gratus who has become endeared to both parents and children, in its charge." The Transcript added, "We understand an effort will be made to have a colored school opened here."

Following the closing of the Brooklyn school, the Oakland Board of Education met to consider the plight of the displaced students. Reluctant to consider integration, they suspended action while the problem was studied. While the Oakland board debated, the Brooklyn schools integrated without serious opposition.

On April 23, 1872, a meeting was held at Shiloh A.M.E. Church to organize against segregation in local public schools. A committee of prominent leaders was formed, including John Peterson, R. Wilkinson, and John (Isaac?) Flood. A petition to the Board of Education requested the admission of African-American children into the Oakland schools on an unrestricted basis. The Brooklyn school had now been closed for ten months, and thirteen Oakland children continued to be deprived of an education.

Finally, the board voted 5 to 2 in May 1872 to integrate the schools, with a motion that "children of African descent may apply for admission to any of the public schools in the city of Oakland." Oakland was one of the first cities in California to integrate its public school system. On July 8, 1872, the first African-American children were admitted into the Oakland public schools under the new ruling. Integration was accomplished without demonstration or visible opposition, and the event received little attention in the newspapers.

In 1875 the San Francisco Board of Education abolished separate black schools and integrated the district as an economy measure. Other districts followed, and within a short period most of the separate schools in California disappeared. In 1880 the State Legislature advanced the process of integration by eliminating all references to race in the education code. In 1890 Visalia became the last city in California to integrate its school system.

Mary Sanderson's career as a teacher ended with the closing of the Brooklyn school. After her marriage she became active in the A.M.E. church and other civic affairs, and died in 1933. --Donald Hausler

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.

■ HISTORIC PRESERVATION ELEMENT ADOPTED

At long last, "draft" can be eliminated from descriptions of Oakland's Historic Preservation Element. After a brief hearing on March 8, the City Council unanimously adopted the element which was some six years in the making, and is the first part of Oakland's new General Plan. The 100 page document contains a wide range of policies and actions designed to guide the city in its future programs and regulations affecting historic buildings.

Two people are to be singled out for their contributions to this effort. Bruce Black, a member of the Planning Commission during the controversy over demolition of the Fourth Christian Science Church on Lakeshore in 1987-88, recognized the need for citywide preservation policies, and provided leadership in establishing the Historic Preservation Task Force which began drafting the element in 1988. Chris Buckley, the City Planning staff member responsible for the project, guided the Task Force during sometimes heated debate and translated its recommendations into meaningful form.

Adoption of the element was greatly aided by the cooperative efforts of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and the City Planning Commission. Landmarks Board members Les Hausrath and Annalee Allen, with Planning Commissioners Joe DeLuca, Peter Smith, and Anthony Pegram, met after the Planning Commission public hearing stage to address comments on the element, and supported the element to the City Council.

Hopefully the next steps in implementation will be accomplished in shorter order than the first. Over 60 implementation actions are called for, ranging from completion of the citywide reconnaissance survey to placing markers on historic buildings. Arranged in priority order, the actions involve changes to the existing zoning regulations, adoption of an incentives program, and modification of administrative policies and procedures within the city.

In a report to be presented to the City Council Public Works Committee within the next few months, the Office of Planning and Building is expected to present a preliminary work plan setting out the actions the department is responsible for, and scheduling and staff requirements. The speed of implementation will depend on City Council commitment to adequate staffing, and on coordination between departments to develop

programs and administrative procedures which reflect the policies in the element.

OHA's Preservation Action Committee will continue to monitor the implementation effort. Anyone interested in reviewing a copy of the element should contact Chris Buckley at 238-3941, or Helen Lore at the OHA office, 763-9218. --Carolyn Douthat

■ CHAPEL OF MEMORIES DEMOLITION

Concerned neighbors stood by helplessly on January 28th as the Chapel of Memories, long a landmark on Pleasant Valley Road, was hastily demolished. Ironically, under the Unreinforced Masonry Building Ordinance passed in July, its preliminary survey rating of "A" should have delayed any permit for demolition. But the building owners (Skylawn Land Investment Company, also owners of Chapel of the Chimes on Piedmont Avenue) filed their application just a day before the URM Ordinance took effect.

Despite efforts of neighbors, OHA, Landmarks Board members, and Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood Improvement League (PANIL), and inquiries from District One Councilmember Sheila Jordan, the demolition went forward, raising questions whether sufficient safeguards exist for other at-risk buildings.

Constructed in 1901, the Oakland Cremation Association's Chapel of Memories was designed by important Oakland architect Walter J. Mathews, architect of other key landmarks such as the First Unitarian Church. The Survey cited it as "an outstanding example of a Beaux Arts funerary building" and a "primary contributor" to a possible historic district at the foot of three important cemeteries (Mountain View and the Jewish and Catholic cemeteries).

Much can be learned about 19th century attitudes toward life and death from these cemeteries and the nearby funeral buildings.



Chapel of Memories demolition aroused anger, controversy, and a closer look at demolition regulations. When this innovative crematorium was built in 1901, it was called a return to the dignified funeral practices of the ancients. (Survey photo)

The Chapel of Memories was a very forward looking building in its time, reflecting the emerging preference for cremation as an alternative to traditional burial. Since Victorians set such store by honoring their dead with elaborate crypts and mausoleums, it was entirely consistent to design a dignified crematorium structure.

So how was it that a significant structure such as this could be demolished without public review? Unfortunately, the Chapel of Memories was not on the Landmarks Board's Study List nor was it located in an area where the Survey had finished evaluating resources. Like Sacred Heart Church, despite its preliminary "A" rating and obvious importance, the chapel had no "official" status, so permit counter staff had no reason to flag Skylawn's request for demolition. There were also questions about the adequacy of public notice, with regard to the street address identifying the building, the description of the building, and the visibility of the notices.

Under the City's demolition ordinance, an owner must normally obtain a building permit for the replacement structure prior to receiving a permit to demolish. Alert owners can make use of a loophole, however. If the owner states that he intends to create a surface parking lot, or a vacant lot, there is no such review. Even though there are indications Skylawn intends to expand on the site, the application did not so state and the Office of Planning and Building signed off, allowing the demolition to go forward.

As a result of this unfortunate loss, OHA has filed a request to receive written notice of all demolition applications, as provided under the Demolition Ordinance. Although this change comes too late to save the Chapel of Memories, perhaps closer monitoring can prevent future precipitous demolitions. --Annalee Allen

■ EBONY PLAZA HOTEL

The same day the Chapel of Memories was demolished, a six alarm fire caused major damage to another significant unreinforced masonry building. The Ebony Plaza Hotel at 2908 San Pablo Avenue was home to dozens of low income residents. Fortunately no one was injured. At the time the fire broke out, all residents had vacated the premises due to a previously scheduled fumigation. There has been speculation that flammable fumigation canisters set off the \$1 million blaze.

The four story polychrome brick hotel with distinctive Mediterranean style decorative elements was originally known as the Roosevelt Hotel and was built in 1928-29 by the same builders as the California Hotel half a mile further north on San Pablo. Sommarstrom Brothers, prolific developers during the

'20s, built apartments and hotels throughout Oakland. They worked with architect Clay Burrell for both the Roosevelt and the California. The Sommarstroms were optimistic about the future of San Pablo Avenue as the main thoroughfare from points north into downtown Oakland, prior to the days of the I-80 freeway. Though San Pablo is no longer the prime gateway into Oakland, it is still an important urban boulevard. The two brick structures are key anchors along the street.

The Ebony Plaza was one of dozens of URM's currently under evaluation by the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey. The URM Ordinance requires Survey evaluations because it gives special treatment to historic buildings, in terms of design review and ability to use the State Historical Building Code. Although the Ebony Plaza had received a C rating (and was therefore not considered a qualified historic structure under the limited definition in the ordinance) it did have a contingency rating of B+. The Survey issued the conservative C rating, not because the building was unimportant, but because over the years parapets and other architectural features had been removed.

A "Catch-22" situation exists for C rated buildings like the Ebony Plaza. If architectural integrity is lost due to earthquake damage or long term neglect, an otherwise A or B rated building receives a lower rating, thereby missing the crucial threshold for "qualified historic structure" status. Only qualified historic structures are eligible for incentives such as access to the State Historic Building Code, which can benefit property owners interested in rehabilitating their buildings. The very buildings most in need of assistance are cut out of the loop.

The fate of the Ebony Plaza is uncertain, but if it should not be repaired and brought back into the housing stock, it will be a real loss for the San Pablo corridor, the community, and Oakland's architectural heritage. --Annalee Allen



Ebony Plaza before the fire: parapets on this side survived the earthquake but are now gone. (Survey photo, 1991)



Oakland Point firehouse: while historic unreinforced masonry buildings are closed up awaiting retrofit, they are vulnerable to fire and other damage. (Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey)

■ HISTORIC FIREHOUSE BURNS

As the Oakland Fire Department marks its 125th anniversary, the oldest existing firehouse building, located at 1681 8th Street in West Oakland, has been severely damaged by fire. The blaze in early February gutted the landmark brick structure, leaving little but the facade with its double doors and Beaux Arts style arched windows.

The building served Oakland Point (as West Oakland was then called) as Engine House No. 3 from 1896 to 1950. Oakland Point's was one of the city's three original professional fire companies created in 1874, succeeding various volunteer and militia forces that had served in Oakland's first two decades.

The station was designed in 1895 by prominent late Victorian architects Cunningham Bros., who also designed the flatiron Maclise Drugstore (now Haley Law Offices) at 17th and Clay Streets. Located within a block of St. Patrick's Church, Prescott School, two Masonic halls, and the heart of the 7th Street commercial district, the firehouse was part of the civic nucleus of Oakland Point for half a century.

In 1950 the city's three oldest firehouses were sold to private owners. For many years well known glass artist John Lewis used this building as his studio and living quarters. Lewis renovated the old fire station and nominated it for landmark status in 1980. It retained many features from its early days - a "lockup" in back for prisoners awaiting transfer to the main jail downtown, hooks for horses' bridle equipment, and a hayloft. Lewis had to move out of the building after the 1989 earthquake. He was using it for storage and evaluating options for seismic strengthening at the time of the fire.

Assistant Chief Neil Honeycutt, unofficial historian of the Oakland Fire Department, in March urged the Landmarks Board to explore every possible means of saving the building.

--Annalee Allen

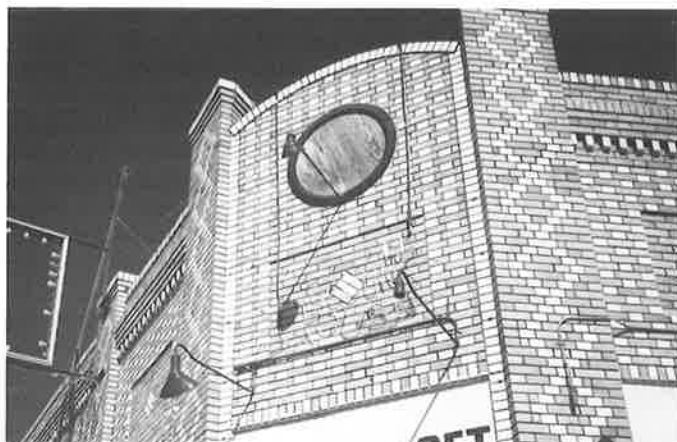
■ UNREINFORCED MASONRY BUILDING SURVEY

The city's Unreinforced Masonry Building Ordinance, passed by the City Council in July, gives a new level of recognition to historic buildings in Oakland, and to the findings of the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey. Owners of unreinforced masonry (URM) buildings are required to meet specified safety standards within two to seven years. No permits for seismic hazard mitigation work under the ordinance can be issued until the building is evaluated by the Survey.

Special design review procedures apply to "historic" buildings (review by Landmarks Board, at the Board's option), and the State Historical Building Code is available for buildings meeting the Ordinance's definition of "historic." In addition to designated landmarks and buildings in S-7 districts or on the National Register, the ordinance recognizes as "historic" buildings with Survey ratings of A or B.

Accordingly, following passage of the URM Ordinance in July, the Survey was requested by the Seismic Safety Division to complete formal evaluation of all the approximately 1600 buildings on the URM list. The Survey's effort to document the city's URM buildings has been going on in a part-time, minimally funded way ever since the 1989 earthquake; this in-depth survey was finally begun in December after negotiations to arrange staffing and funding.

The citywide URM survey has cast new light on Oakland's history, architecture, and development patterns, particularly neighborhood commercial strips and the industrial belt along the Estuary. In the short term, results are being reported to the Seismic Safety Division in summary form; if funding is available, the URM survey will be written up in traditional Survey format and made available at the Oakland History Room and at Oakland Heritage Alliance. --Betty Marvin

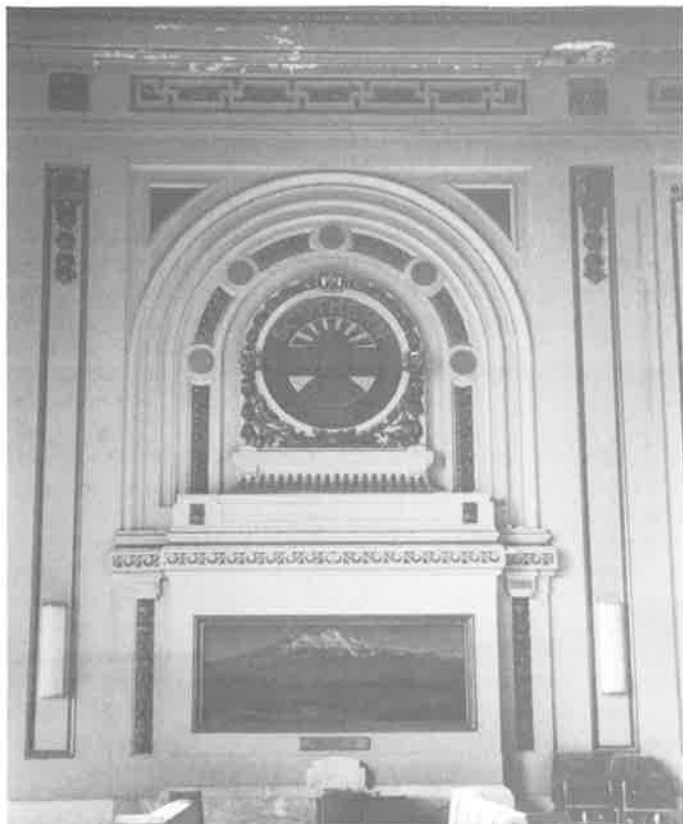


A builder named Jesse James built several of these exuberant brick commercial buildings in East Oakland around 1929. URM survey may increase appreciation of these and many other hidden treasures throughout Oakland. (Betty Marvin)

■ GOOD NEWS, BAD NEWS FOR S.P. STATION

The California Transportation Commission in February approved Oakland's application for \$77,000 in Intermodal Surface Transportation Enhancements Act (ISTEA) funding for pre-acquisition studies of the Southern Pacific station at 16th and Wood Streets. The application was rated second in the nine-county Metropolitan Transportation Commission region. This is the first step in developing a reuse project for the station that will take advantage of its proximity to the new route of I-880, and respond to the needs of the West Oakland neighborhood. The enhancements portion of the project is being administered through the city's Office of Planning and Building.

In the meantime, the physical condition of the landmark building continues to suffer. Blistering, mold, and salt crystal deposits continue to damage the murals of Mount Shasta and Emerald Bay at either end of the waiting room. In a conservation examination report prepared for CalTrans last fall, fine arts conservator Anne Rosenthal concluded that the greatest threat to the murals is deterioration caused by extremes of temperature, humidity, and direct water contact, and that if nothing is done to minimize continuing water damage from roof leaks the murals are certain to deteriorate



Murals and plasterwork in the S.P. station are showing signs of water damage. (courtesy of Carolyn Douthat)

to the point of complete destruction within five years. Based on that report, the City of Oakland has requested that Southern Pacific secure the building from further damage as required under the city ordinance covering earthquake damaged historic buildings. CalTrans is responsible for any potential damage to the paintings due to freeway construction, and will be installing temporary protection against damage from falling debris. --Carolyn Douthat

■ DRAKE HOTEL REOPENS

Another earthquake damaged building in downtown Oakland has come back on line. The Adcock/Joyner Apartments, formerly known as the Drake Hotel, at 532 16th Street, was formally dedicated February 24th. The six story steel frame brick building at 16th and San Pablo will provide 50 apartments for low income people on the upper floors, and a job training facility on the ground level.

The \$5.6 million rehabilitation is a joint effort of the East Oakland Fruitvale Planning Council (EOFPC) and Catholic Charities Housing Development Corporation of the East Bay. The building has been renamed for Rev. Isiah Adcock (1931-88) and Lawrence Joyner (1937-92), founders of the EOFPC.

Built in 1906 by architect Charles F. Mau, the building is among Oakland's earliest Chicago influenced commercial structures, according to the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey. Originally four stories, it was enlarged in 1918. Its angled facade establishes a sympathetic relationship with the Westlake Building directly across on 16th Street. These two buildings mark the northeast perimeter of City Hall Plaza, effectively defining the plaza at that end.

From 1906 until 1922 the Drake was headquarters of Heald Business College. Edward Payson Heald, the school's founder, came west in 1863 to make his fortune. He had attended business college in Portland, Maine, and noted that San Francisco had no similar institution. After a modest start, his business college became the best known in the west. The earthquake and fire of 1906 destroyed his San Francisco school, and the 63 year old Heald was forced to start over. Many of his students fled to the East Bay, so Heald reestablished his school in downtown Oakland at 16th and San Pablo, close to the banks and insurance brokerages springing up along Broadway.

After 1922 the business college moved on to more spacious quarters. In 1944 the upper floors were converted to apartments, in response to wartime demand for housing. The building was still providing affordable housing at the time of the 1989 earthquake. It was declared structurally unsound and remained vacant until this rehabilitation



The Heald College/Drake Hotel building, before the earthquake. Top floors were added in 1918. "16th Street Canyon" between the tall buildings was an admired part of Oakland's big city image in the 1910s. (Survey photo)

effort. Because of its status as a contributor to the Downtown historic district, it was eligible for the State Historic Building Code, according to Catherine Dolph, architect for the project. Particular attention was paid to preserving the architectural character of the exterior.

With the opening of the Adcock/Joyner Apartments, this particular downtown building has come full circle. The 1906 earthquake provided the impetus for a job training center to be located at the site. The 1989 earthquake created a situation where once again job training and affordable housing exist in the building, a stone's throw from City Hall. --Annalee Allen

■ MADISON PARK APARTMENTS COMING BACK

At the time of the Loma Prieta Earthquake, the Madison Park Apartments at Ninth and Oak Streets contained 98 apartments and provided affordable housing for dozens of people within walking distance to BART, Laney College, and Chinatown. The historic five-story wood frame building, built in 1908 by Charles M. ("One Nail") MacGregor, suffered damage in the earthquake. Residents had to leave behind their belongings and were not allowed to come back in.

Located across Ninth Street from BART headquarters, the Craftsman style building was purchased by BART in March 1990 with a view toward office expansion. (See Winter 1991-92 OHA News.) A coalition of preservation and housing organizations, including California Preservation Foundation and OHA, worked together to convince the BART board to turn the building over to a nonprofit housing developer and give up the idea of erecting offices on the site.

After more than four years, rehabilitation of the Madison Park Apartments is about to

begin. The East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC), a nonprofit developer that has undertaken other housing projects such as the Madrone Hotel in the Old Oakland District, is spearheading the restoration, and groundbreaking was celebrated April 20.

The \$9 million project is scheduled to be completed in January 1995. Financing sources include Bank of America, Community Alliance for Syndicated Housing (CASH Inc.), Federal Home Loan Bank, First Nationwide Bank, the Sisters of Mercy, and the Oakland Redevelopment Agency. Financial assistance was also provided by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

In the early 1980s, previous owners had listed the Madison Park on the National Register of Historic Places in order to qualify for preservation tax credits. This official historic status proved valuable at the time of the earthquake, as an argument against demolition. If strict guidelines are followed in the current restoration, the tax credits may again be applied.

To qualify for the National Register, a building must be distinctive indeed. The nomination for this structure states that "its large size, interesting use of materials, and bold decoration along with its highly visible corner site, combine to make the Madison Park Apartments a prominent landmark in its neighborhood... Over the years the residential quality of the area has changed, as newer governmental and educational buildings have moved in. The Madison Park easily complements the scale of these newer buildings, while providing a link with the past. As such, it is a vitally important building in an important central Oakland neighborhood."

Through the dedication and perseverance of many individuals, this building has survived the earthquake and threat of demolition, and will continue to be a link with the past. Still more important, much needed housing will again be available. --Annalee Allen

■ PRESERVATION DESIGN AWARDS

Two Oakland projects were recipients of the 11th Annual Preservation Design Awards of the California Preservation Foundation in late February. At a ceremony in Los Angeles' restored Union Station, the City of Oakland and Architectural Resources Group received a joint award for the innovative earthquake repair and retrofit of the elaborate plaster ceiling in the Calvin Simmons Theater at the Oakland Auditorium. To prevent damage or injury in future earthquakes, a fine mesh netting was installed over the ceiling. Virtually invisible from the floor of the theater, the netting accomplishes the twin goals of safety and preservation on a tight budget and schedule.



Award-winning new ramp blends into the slope of Courthouse site on 12th Street. (California Preservation Foundation)

The second award for an Oakland project was given to Alameda County and Lerner and Nathan Architects for disabled access to the Alameda County Courthouse. The Courthouse, an outstanding example of WPA Moderne architecture, was wheelchair accessible only from the County Administration Building through a tunnel under Oak Street. To comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act, the County had to provide access through a primary entrance. Proposals included ramps and lifts at the ceremonial entrance on Fallon Street. The selected design, giving access at the 12th Street entrance, integrated a ramp with the original granite base without major alteration to the historic appearance of the building. --Alan Dreyfuss

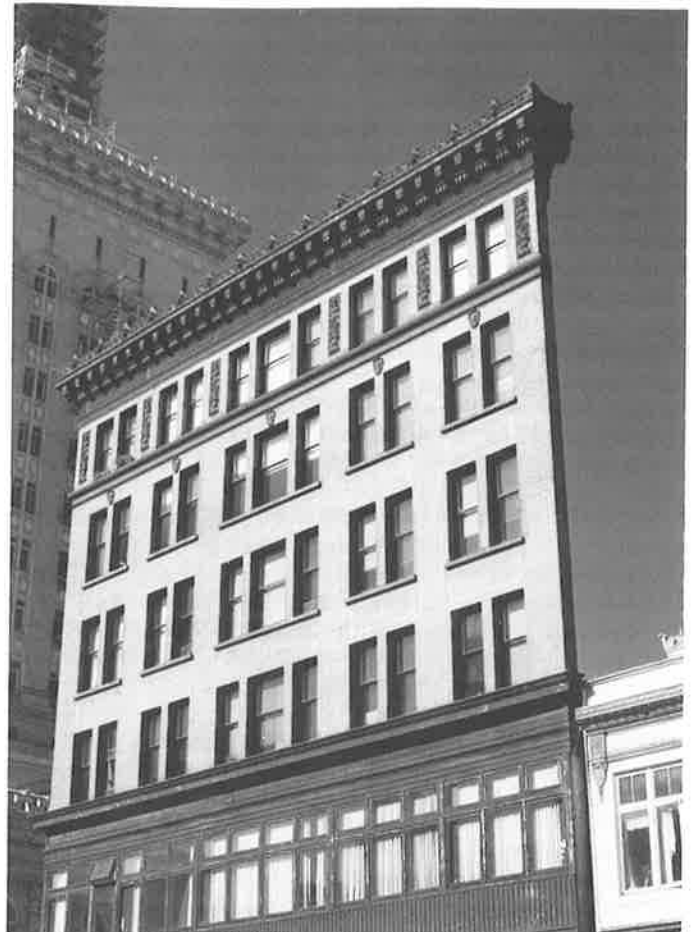
■ CITY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING PROJECT

A report from the City Manager's Office in March updated the City Council on progress of the City Administration Building project, which has been in the works for several years. The project addresses two problems resulting from the relocation of city offices to leased space following the Loma Prieta earthquake: the high cost of leasing, and inefficiency resulting from dispersal of City departments. In addition to replacing space now leased, the project includes space based on projected needs for the year 2000, and space for the Police Department's command and administrative units. The police offices were added after engineering studies last year concluded that the Police Administration Building at 7th and Washington would not withstand a major earthquake.

Possible sites, or combinations of sites, for the project include the Dalziel Block (15th/16th/San Pablo/Clay), the Taldan property (Broadway Building and adjacent), the City Hall West/Miller Federal Building site

(14th to 16th, west of Clay), the Rotunda, and the Clay Street garage (see Spring 1993 OHA News). Most of the alternatives under consideration in the draft Environmental Impact Report involve demolition of buildings that contribute to the National Register eligible Downtown District. In response to comments from OHA and others the EIR has been expanded to include an alternative that retains the Pardee Building on San Pablo and replaces the space it represents with a four story building on the Clay St. garage site.

In addition to environmental review, in the coming months City Council committees will be considering other issues related to the project, and work sessions of the full Council are tentatively scheduled for July. Issues before the committees include evaluating project alternatives on the basis of economic development in downtown as a whole, possible project financing, the design-build process, impacts on the Downtown Historic District, the revitalization of City Hall Plaza, and use of the Plaza Building at 15th and San Pablo (which is not part of the administration building site) as an arts center or studio space. --Carolyn Douthat



City Hall, Plaza Building, and Pardee Building, a striking juxtaposition at one of Oakland's many flatiron corners. The Plaza Building is an outstanding example of a high-base commercial building. (Betty Marvin)

■ "WE THE PEOPLE" COMES TO OAKLAND

Former Governor Jerry Brown is planning to move his radio show, political organization, and residence to Oakland's Produce Market District. In an application submitted early this year, Brown proposed demolition of the annex to the American Bag Company building at 228 Harrison Street as well as the Dante Market at 2nd and Harrison, for construction of a live-work complex and a surface parking lot. The buildings, which are contributors to the National Register eligible Waterfront Warehouse District, would be replaced by a two story corrugated metal structure housing live-work space, a radio studio, assembly room, and office space for Brown's political organization, We the People. Brown's radio program is currently broadcast from facilities at KTVU in Oakland.

The project was reviewed by the Landmarks Board in February because the American Bag Company building is on the Study List. That building, which currently houses some live-work space, is not part of the project but would share space in the parking lot. The Dante Market building marks the south edge of the district, facing the new Amtrak site. The Landmarks Board asked that the architect review the historical material on the Waterfront Warehouse District, and consider using design elements to reflect the character of the surrounding district. Environmental review has been completed on the project, and a Negative Declaration was issued in the first part of March. --Carolyn Douthat

■ OLD MERRITT DEVELOPMENT CONTINUES

The long awaited renovation of Old Merritt College appears closer than ever to becoming a reality. But as might be expected in a difficult economic climate, the process is not simple. In October the City Council voted to enter into a six month exclusive negotiation period with developer IDG/Baner (see Fall 1993 OHA News). The city and developer are currently negotiating terms of a Disposition and Development Agreement, the next stage in development of the project.

A Section 106 Programmatic Agreement between the city, the developer, HUD, the State Office of Historic Preservation, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation is expected to be signed soon. This will set forth the terms for proceeding with development of the National Register property. It provides a continuing role for the Citizen Advisory Committee that selected the developer, and for Oakland Heritage Alliance in review of the design and development of the site. The city and the developer have also agreed to adhere to Department of the Interior guidelines in the rehabilitation.

Since the developer selection, tenants and uses for the main building have been identified. Some 80% of the square footage in that portion of the project is now spoken for. Tenants include Koncepts Cultural Gallery, which will use both the auditorium and the former library, Oakland Sharing the Vision, Cal State Hayward, and the YMCA. Plans continue on a fast track for a 15,000 square foot senior center, North Oakland's first. In a major departure from earlier plans, the rehabilitation facility on the site of the manual arts wing has been replaced with a skilled nursing facility. The development team says this change will not substantially alter the impacts of the project.

Funding requirements have also been refined, with an increase in HUD Section 108 loan guarantees to \$14 million due to costs of the skilled nursing facility. Federal rehabilitation tax credits, previously part of the financing package, may be unavailable if the developers demolish the gymnasium, manual arts wing, and the single story rear portion of the building. As the National Register designation covers the entire site and all of the existing buildings, National Register eligibility could be affected.

Yet to be resolved is what, if any, of the interior of the main building will survive. North Oakland Voters Alliance has expressed a strong interest in restoration of the most significant interior spaces, including the library and auditorium, both of which have been identified for public use.

Fears that Old Merritt College would be destroyed by weather and vandals before any development began have abated with the city's long overdue but substantial efforts to secure and weatherproof the building. An alarm system has been installed, smoke sensors are wired to the fire station, and extensive roof repairs have kept areas like the library free of standing water.

At a time when other important North Oakland structures like Sacred Heart Church have been lost, the continuous effort by many city departments to further the Old Merritt College development is heartening. Weekly meetings have involved representatives from the offices of the Mayor, Councilmember Jordan, the City Manager, Housing and Neighborhood Development, Aging, General Services, and Planning. Remaining issues to be resolved in future meetings and public hearings include the type and density of housing, traffic flow and parking, location of the small on-site park, and retention of significant interior features.

For more information on the project, contact Robert Brokl or Al Crofts of North Oakland Voters Alliance at (510) 655-3841, or Jim Ishimaru or Vivian Massingale of IDG/Baner at (510) 839-8313. --Robert Brokl

OHA Update

■ ASHMOUNT HOUSE TOUR

The distinctive Ashmount district of Lakeshore Highlands is the setting for **Oakland Heritage Alliance's** 1994 Spring House Tour, described as "An Ashmount Avenue Architectural Amble." This tour of eleven spectacular homes takes place Sunday, May 22, 1 to 5 p.m., co-sponsored with the Ashmount neighborhood association. It is OHA's major fundraising event of the year.

Ashmount occupies one long ridgetop block bordering Piedmont, with spectacular views and houses developed from the turn of the century up through the 1950s. Of special interest are outstanding homes designed by major architects of the Bay Area Tradition including Bernard Maybeck and John Hudson Thomas, as well as classic and provincial revival and Mediterranean style houses.

Co-chairs Don Tyler and Marlene Wilson, with Shelley Gordon from the neighborhood, are putting together an exciting afternoon in this lovely neighborhood. Dolores Bermak, David Nicolai, Ed Phillips, and Don Wardlaw are researching, writing, and illustrating the interpretive brochure.

This is a self-guided tour easily walked from house to house. Refreshments will be offered throughout the afternoon. Tickets are \$25 general, \$20 for OHA and Ashmount members. As always, docents are needed at each house, earning a free tour while helping OHA. To volunteer please call the OHA office (763-9218). --Helen Lore



This dramatic 1912 house by John Hudson Thomas is a sample of the glories of Ashmount Avenue. House tour on May 22 will display eleven remarkable homes. (Donald Wardlaw)

■ FESTIVAL AT THE LAKE

If you like meeting the public and telling them about **Oakland Heritage Alliance**, you are needed to help staff OHA's booth at the Festival at the Lake. We will be sharing the booth with Preservation Park and the Pardee House, and will be selling Oakland, the Story of a City, which we have just reprinted. The Festival is Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, June 3-5, at Lakeside Park. To volunteer, call OHA, 763-9218. --Helen Lore

■ OAKLAND HISTORY BACK IN PRINT

The long-awaited reprint of Beth Bagwell's book, Oakland, the Story of a City, being published by **Oakland Heritage Alliance**, is here! Out of print for several years and much in demand as the only comprehensive history of Oakland up to 1982, the book will be available in local bookstores as well as in the OHA office and by mail. There is a hard cover reprint at \$22.50, and a paperback edition at \$11.95.

Author Beth Bagwell, now living in Paris, has given OHA not only the publishing rights to the book, but the royalties as well. OHA is grateful for this generous offer. Beth was a founder and the first president of **Oakland Heritage Alliance**. The book was based on a series of articles on Oakland history she wrote for The Montclarion.

William Sturm, librarian in the Oakland History Room of the Main Library, calls the book "a cohesive, well-written history of the city, which places Oakland's development within the context of state and national history... Colorful, lively and well-paced."

According to historian Harre Demoro, "This is a book that Oakland deserves. For the first time the city's history is documented in a professional yet readable manner. All the stories are here, and so is the flavor."

Since OHA is doing the marketing and distribution of the book, we need your help. If you would like to volunteer to deliver, pack and mail, or visit bookstores for orders, please call OHA at 763-9218. --Helen Lore

■ GUIDE TO BAY AREA HOUSE MUSEUMS

An updated and expanded eighth edition of Bay Area Historic House Museums is now available. The 30-page booklet is a guide to 25 Bay Area house museums, with photographs, maps, descriptions, admission fees, hours, and a calendar of events. It is arranged by area for convenient day trips. The book is available by mail from BAHHM, 22701 Main Street, Hayward CA 94541, for \$3 which includes postage and handling. It can also be obtained at the various house museums. For information call (510)851-0223.

■ SUMMER WALKING TOURS

The popular OHA walking tours are coming, for eight weekends in July and August. Every Saturday and Sunday from July 8 through August 28, a different Oakland neighborhood will be featured. As usual, there will be new tours as well as old favorites.

Look for the schedule coming out around June 1. OHA members will receive theirs in the mail. Others who would like to be notified can call the OHA office, 763-9218.

--Helen Lore

■ NEW BOARD MEMBER: HARLAN KESSEL

OHA is pleased to announce the appointment of Harlan Kessel to serve on the Board of Directors for the unexpired term left by the resignation of Susan McCue. A prominent East Bay environmental activist, Harlan comes to us with a vast background in community affairs. He is probably most widely known for his 16 years on the East Bay Regional Parks Board, from which he retired in 1992.

As former marketing director for the U.C. Press in Berkeley, Harlan brings his publishing skills to us at just the right moment, as we republish Oakland, the Story of a City. He is a board member and newsletter editor of the Book Club of California, immediate past president and publication chair of the Alameda County Historical Society, and affiliated with the California Native Plant Society, Citizens for Oakland Open Space (COOS), Sierra Club, and the Lake Merritt Breakfast Club.

OHA welcomes Harlan, and at the same time thanks outgoing board members Susan McCue and Paris Williams, who have resigned from the board due to other commitments. Susan was a co-chair of the Preservation Action Committee, and Paris produced the California Hotel History Project.

--Helen Lore



Project YES students with a large canna they dug out on Goss Street. The c.1870 house behind has since been demolished for the freeway. (Jane Spangler)

■ PLANTS RESCUED FROM APPROACHING FREEWAY

In January OHA board member and neighborhood activist Jane Spangler organized three expeditions to collect plants from the Phoenix neighborhood at the western tip of Oakland, where houses are being demolished for the replacement of the Cypress freeway. About 25 students from John Swett and Westlake Schools' Project YES participated. Fiona Fletcher and Archie Sims from East Bay Conservation Corps obtained vans and tools, and arranged liaison with the schools. The group dug up roses, cannas, and other plants which may be descendants of the Victorian gardens in Oakland's oldest neighborhood, and brought them back to the schools to create history gardens.

--Jane Spangler

■ DOCENT TRAINING AT OAKLAND MUSEUM

The Oakland Museum Docent Council is seeking volunteers who are interested in becoming docents in the Hall of California Ecology (Natural Sciences). Docents give tours to school children and adult groups. The ecology training class is scheduled for Thursday afternoons, from September 13, 1994, through June 6, 1995, with additional classes in fall of 1995. Training includes lectures, films, field trips, and gallery walks with museum curators and staff. Call Betsy Willcuts, docent coordinator, at 238-3514, or write Oakland Museum Docent Council, 1000 Oak Street, Oakland CA 94607, for more information.



Harlan Kessel leading an OHA walking tour of his Adams Point neighborhood. Tours will return in July and August.



Peralta Mausoleum awaits resurrection in St. Mary's Cemetery. Rear view shows timbers shoring up the walls. (Betty Marvin)

■ PERALTA MAUSOLEUM UPDATE

Several major obstacles have been overcome since our last report on the Vicente Peralta Mausoleum restoration project. First, we needed an architect. Last fall at the OHA Annual Meeting, when Lene Diaz of the mausoleum committee made an appeal for services, Andrew Carpentier stepped forward to volunteer. A local architect and OHA member, Andrew is on the Oakland Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board. He has also obtained pro bono services of a structural engineer.

Second, we needed building materials. Gary Lindstrom, a San Leandro contractor, has offered vintage bricks from the 1870s. He became interested in the project after reading about it in the Oakland Tribune.

Third, we needed bricklayers and carpenters. When Susan Duncan, Peralta College District board member, heard about the project, she invited Lene Diaz to make a presentation to the Peralta College District board, along with Andrew Carpentier and Helen Lore. The board was enthusiastic, and in the middle of February Odell Johnson, president of Laney College, called to say that the Carpentry Apprenticeship program at Laney was at our disposal. Two weeks later Stan Arterberry, president of Merritt College, called to offer access to the bricklayer and masonry apprenticeship program at Merritt. Instructors from both colleges are very interested in the project. We expect to start the restoration by midsummer.

The mausoleum committee, which includes members from San Leandro Historical Society, Berkeley Architectural Heritage, Emeryville Historical Society, and OHA, thanks all those who have given to the mausoleum fund. Contributions can be sent to Vicente Peralta Mausoleum Fund, Union Bank, Box 637, San Leandro 94577. --Beverly Higuera Madera

■ KEY SYSTEM CLOCK TOWER REJUVENATED

It has been over thirty years since the clocks on the old Key System station at 41st and Piedmont in Oakland (now J's restaurant) were working and visible to the public. Now, with the help of merchants, residents, and Bay Area businesses, the clocks are up and running for all to see. The remuddling that occurred to the building in the late 50s and early 60s has been reversed and the Art Deco dual plane facade on Piedmont Avenue is back, along with the rejuvenated clock tower.

The building was the Piedmont Station on the Key System "C" line from 1938 to 1958, and had a large train shed attached to it that extended almost to Long's Drugs on 41st Street. By the early 60s signs covered the clocks and a metal awning covered the Piedmont Avenue side of the building.

The concept of restoring the clocks began in the late 1980s, was endorsed by the Piedmont Avenue Merchants Association, and entered the fund raising stage in 1991. In two years, with the cooperation of the building owner and tenant, over \$4500 was donated to purchase two new clock movements and a controller. E Clampus Vitus and Fritz Fynaut donated countless hours of labor to remove the signs and awnings. Fritz also rewired the tower to accommodate the new clocks. Armstrong Painting donated their talents to re-roof the tower and paint it. Benito Guzman of J's arranged to paint the remainder of the building. Colors were chosen by Hiroko Kurihara, a neighborhood resident with considerable experience color consulting on projects in Berkeley. She blended colors from surrounding buildings to come up with the treatment used here.

The Key System Plaque is being reinstalled to honor what was once a fabulous train system and the catalyst for building the Piedmont Avenue neighborhood and business district. --Mike Lydon



Key System clock tower on Piedmont Avenue, before and after community-sponsored restoration. (Mike Lydon)

■ ECONOMIC INCENTIVES FOR PRESERVATION

In February OHA issued a paper by Carolyn Douthat titled Economic Incentives for Historic Preservation. The paper was undertaken as a result of discussions between members of the Preservation Task Force, Landmarks Board, and OHA, along with staff from Oakland-Sharing the Vision (OSV) and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, about using preservation incentives as a catalyst for economic development in Oakland. Recent completion of the Preservation Element and the OSV strategic plan offers the opportunity to integrate preservation incentives into city programs. The National Trust and OHA funded the project.

The paper contains an overview of Oakland's history and historic resources, the general economic benefits of preservation activities, and specific incentives used in 15 other cities. Two pilot programs are set out, one for downtown and another for the Oakland Point neighborhood in West Oakland. Other recommendations include public education and continuing the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey, to identify areas that could benefit from preservation incentives.

Benefits are examined under the headings of job creation, tourism, small business creation, environmental benefits, cost savings, and housing. Incentives fall into three broad categories: direct public financial assistance (tax credits, grants, loans), program support (technical assistance, zoning flexibility), and public/private partnerships (special events, marketing, easements). In 1988, two studies by the National League of Cities analyzed economic development tools in 320 cities. Of the 45 tools reported, historic preservation was cited as the seventh most often used. Of the twenty most successful cities, fifteen had the greatest amount of preservation activity, and the top three, Baltimore, Boston, and San Antonio, considered historic preservation as the keystone of their redevelopment efforts. In another study, rehabilitation rated highly in job creation and increasing household incomes.

In Oakland, the report notes, downtown planning and earthquake recovery efforts have brought together diverse groups in the public and private sectors, forming a base which can be called upon in developing and implementing preservation incentives.

Copies of the report were sent to several hundred individuals and agencies in city government, business, and community organizations. It is hoped that further discussion, workshops, and preservation activities will be generated by the report. OHA members interested in reviewing the report can call the office, 763-9218.

City Landmarks Board Actions

The Oakland Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board meets on the second Monday of each month. 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. 113 landmarks and five districts have been designated since the Board was created in 1974. Meetings are at the Lakeside Garden Center, 666 Bellevue, second Mondays, 4 pm.

Board members are: Annalee Allen, Diana Becton-Brown, Andrew Carpentier, Creighton Fong, Les Hausrath, Estelle Mannis, & Jean Spees. Staff: Helaine Kaplan Prentice, Secretary

DECEMBER

Board approved designs by Berger/Detmer Architects for storefronts, signs, and rear alterations for warehouse retailer Smart & Final at the Delger Block, 901-33 Broadway, a city landmark in the Victorian Row Preservation District.

Board voted to adopt a draft resolution nominating the Oakland Museum for landmark status. The nomination was submitted by representatives of the Museum.

Representatives of the city's real estate department were concerned about the effect of landmark status, including the proposed designation of the interior, on their efforts to sell the 23rd Avenue Branch Library, an Oakland landmark, as surplus property. Board explained that designation does not prohibit changes to the building.

The Office of General Services asked for Board comments on the historic value of the fire-damaged Vernon Street transit shelter (located near 2400 Harrison St.). The Board approved thematic placement of that shelter and another at 300 Oakland Avenue (near Perkins Way) on the Study List.

Secretary Helaine Prentice announced the workshop on historic religious properties sponsored by the National Trust, OHA, et



The elaborate Mediterranean 23rd Avenue Branch is one of the four landmark Carnegie libraries, built in 1917 in different revival styles. (Survey photo)



When the Nabisco plant was built in the West Oakland residential neighborhood in 1915, special efforts were made to be a good neighbor. This "grand opening" photo appears in Oakland: The Story of a City. (Oakland History Room)

al., and encouraged Board members to attend. She reported that the Planning Commission would consider the landmark nomination of the Chinese Presbyterian Church, and that a cellular phone antenna had been approved for the Posey Tube Portal, an Oakland landmark.

JANUARY

The January meeting consisted of a tour of Port of Oakland properties: the Howard Terminal Transit Shed (also known as Grove Street Pier, 1 Martin Luther King Jr. Way) and the Ninth Avenue Terminal. The tour was led by Port representatives and Woody Minor, historian with the EIR team. The Howard Terminal building is on the Study List and rated A by the Cultural Heritage Survey; it is proposed for demolition to accommodate Port expansion. The Board was asked for comments on potential mitigation measures.

FEBRUARY

Ezra Rapport, Deputy City Manager, told the Board about possible alternatives for the new City Administration Building complex to be located in the vicinity of City Hall. Of several alternatives, the one most favorable to preservation would incorporate the Broadway Building, with a new office building between it and the Rotunda. (The Rotunda would contain a technology center with classes conducted by UC Extension and other institutions, not city offices.) The complex would include the Plaza Building and the facade of the Pardee Building; artists in the Pardee Building might be relocated to the Plaza Building. The earthquake-damaged Dalziel Building on 15th Street would be demolished, and 15th Street would be closed. The City Hall parking garage would eventually be replaced by a plaza facing the new State Building on the City Hall West site.

Board moved to recommend this alternative to the City Council and State Historic Preservation Office. They also recommended that the Broadway Building's walls be reinforced as quickly as possible, so the scaffolding can be removed.

Secretary Prentice reported that she was handling two pending applications for signs in the Old Oakland district; detailed design guidelines for signs will soon be developed.

Prentice reported that the 23rd Avenue Branch Library had been removed from the city's surplus property list, after city council member De La Fuente decided to move his district office into it. Volunteers of America remain in the building as well.

Les Hausrath and Annalee Allen reported on a meeting with Planning Commission members to follow up on the public hearing on the Preservation Element. They agreed to support passage of the Element, and allow details of implementation to be worked out later.

Housing development partnership Samuelson, Hornaday and Schaefer gave a presentation on plans to convert the Nabisco Shredded Wheat plant at 14th and Union Streets to 80 apartments and a community center, sponsored by Taylor United Methodist Church. Plans were to insert an intermediate floor within each existing story, for a total of six stories. Some neighborhood residents oppose more low-cost housing in the area, and prefer that the building remain industrial. Board voted to place the building on the Study List.

In response to a CEQA Initial Study on proposed demolition of two buildings at 2nd and Harrison Streets (the Dante Market and the American Bag Co. annex), Board viewed designs for Jerry Brown's live-work project (see Briefing). The American Bag building, rated B by the Survey, will be preserved. Architect Gary Guenther said he considered building a second story on the existing annex, but there were engineering problems.



American Bag building, with its polychrome 3D brickwork, is one of the anchors of the Waterfront Warehouse District. The buildings proposed for demolition, adjoining it on the right, are less showy but supporting buildings in the district.

Board members Andrew Carpentier and Annalee Allen suggested that the design could be more appropriate for the historic Waterfront Warehouse District, and suggested that the developers familiarize themselves with the Cultural Heritage Survey forms on the area.

Secretary Helaine Prentice reported on the demolition of the Chapel of Memories (4406 Montgomery St.; Walter J. Mathews, 1901). Apparently it was carried out within the letter of the law, since the permit was applied for the day before passage of the Unreinforced Masonry Building Ordinance, which requires Survey evaluation of all URM buildings proposed for demolition. Under the rules in effect the day of the permit application, no demolition controls applied if the owner indicated no plans to rebuild.

Les Hausrath reported on the National Trust-sponsored report, prepared by Carolyn Douthat for OHA, on economic incentives for preservation. Andrew Carpentier reported that Alice Carey had been selected as preservation architect for the Dunsmuir House exterior restoration plan. Helaine Prentice reported that sale of the Tribune Tower was proceeding; the Financial Center Building had been sold and the new owners were restoring the terra cotta; and the PG&E Building was being sold. Planning Commission action on the landmark nomination of the Oakland Museum was scheduled for March 9; City Council hearings on the nominations of the Chinese Presbyterian Church (275 8th Street) and St. Paul's Episcopal Church (110 Montecito) had not been scheduled.

MARCH

In response to a request from the Office of Parks and Recreation, Board reviewed a master plan for Dunsmuir House and Gardens. Dunsmuir House has been a landmark since 1980, but only the mansion and carriage house are designated, not the entire property. Board discussed parking and its impact on the historic property.

Board discussed proposed removal of a plaque commemorating the Vandernailen College of Engineering, once located near 51st and Telegraph. The plaque is outside the landmark Temescal Branch Library.

The Alameda County Historical Society proposed installing a plaque on Oakland City Hall when it reopens; Board noted that a time capsule is also being prepared.

Carl Gustafson, representing Habitat for Humanity, spoke about the Queen Anne house at 1471 34th Avenue, placed on the Study List about two years ago at Habitat's request. The city was threatening it with demolition for code compliance failure; Habitat was waiting to hear about a Block Grant application. Board recommended that demolition be delayed for 60 days, and that the building be secured against vandalism.

Board received a recommendation from Oakland Heritage Alliance that the Captain William Shorey House at 1782 8th Street should be a landmark. It is on the Study List and rated B by the Survey; it has been vacant since the 1989 earthquake. Board said that the Notice of Intent should come from the community, not from the Board.

Annalee Allen and Assistant Fire Chief Neil Honeycutt discussed the importance of preserving the fire-damaged Oakland Point firehouse at 1681 8th Street. The building is no longer owned by the city.

Board was invited to tour the Oakland Naval Supply Station with representatives of the Port of Oakland and the Navy. The Port plans to lease part of the base from the Navy. The base has been determined eligible for the National Register, and Port plans would affect historic structures.

Secretary Helaine Prentice reported that the landmark nomination for the Oakland Museum had been approved by the Planning Commission, and that the Commission had asked the developer of the Nabisco Shredded Wheat plant to scale down the project.

--Kathy Olson



Bill Coburn shows the Shorey House on last year's Oakland Point walking tour. Captain Shorey was the only African-American whaling master on the west coast, and a community leader. Booker T. Washington visited here. (Betty Marvin)

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. (268-9524)

Upcoming Activities

ongoing, Sun.-Th., 10-4, Jewish ceremonial and fine arts, historical artifacts, Judah L. Magnes Museum, 2911 Russell St., Berkeley, 849-2710.

ongoing, "Threads of Strength: People, Groups and Organizations of the Afro-American Community," Center for Afro-American History & Life, 5606 San Pablo Ave., Oakland, 658-3158.

through May 8, (W-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 12-7), "Here and Now: Bay Area Masterworks from the di Rosa Collections," highlights of a great patron's 30 year focus on the work of Bay Area artists, The Oakland Museum, Oak & 10th Streets, \$4/\$2 (members free).

through May 30, (T. 10-5:30, W-Th. 12-8, F. 12-5:30, Sat. 1-5:30), "Horse Racetracks & Dog Racetracks of Alameda County," photographs & artifacts showing activities in Emeryville, El Cerrito, Albany & Pleasanton, sponsored by the Oakland History Room & the Emeryville Historical Society, Main Library, 125 14th. St., 238-3222.

through July 31, (W-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 12-7), "Runs, Hits and an Era: The Pacific Coast League 1903-1958," photos, vintage memorabilia & rare video footage from the halcyon days of West Coast baseball, The Oakland Museum, Oak & 10th Streets, \$4/\$2 (members free).

through August 21, (W-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 12-7), "Raymond Saunders," mixed media, paintings & wall pieces by internationally known Oakland African American artist, The Oakland Museum, Oak & 10th Streets, \$4/\$2 (members free).

May 12 Thurs. 5:30-7:30pm, book party celebrating publication of Beth Bagwell's Oakland the Story of a City, Camron-Stanford House, 1418 Lakeside Dr., 763-9218.

May 18-22, W-Sun., "19th Annual State Preservation Conference," Sacramento, California Preservation Foundation, \$90(members)/\$115(includes membership fee), 763-0972.

May 22, Sun. 1-5, **OHA Spring House Tour**, Ashmount district of Lakeshore Highlands, \$25/\$20, 763-9218.

June 4-5, (Sat. 10-8, Sun. 11-5), "Art Deco Weekend By The Bay," largest Art Deco era sale, furniture, accessories, rugs, art, dinnerware, pottery, books, jewelry, etc., Concourse Exhibition Center, 8th & Brannan, San Francisco, \$5/\$4, 415 599 DECO.

June 4, Sat., "Art Deco in the Nation's Capital," 11am, "Collecting Art Deco," 12pm, "High Style Los Angeles," 1pm, "Rediscovering Art Deco, USA," 2pm, National Coalition of Art Deco Societies, "Concourse Exhibition Center, 8th & Brannan, San Francisco, \$5/\$4, 415 599 DECO.

June 5, Sun. 10am, "Pacific Heights Walking Tour," Art Deco Society, 415 982 3326.

July 8 through August 28, Sat.-Sun., 1-4pm, **OHA Summer Walking Tours**, \$6/\$4, 763-9218.

July 9 through October 2, (W-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 12-7), "Jewels and Gems: Collecting California Jewelry," exhibit of museum's collection of 20th century jewelry by California artists, The Oakland Museum, Oak & 10th Streets, \$4/\$2 (members free).

June 11-August 21, "Raymond Saunders: New Work," rescheduled, internationally prominent painter, CCAC instructor, The Oakland Museum, Oak & 10th Streets, \$4/\$2 (members free).

July 15, F. 8:30-5, "Preservation & Affordable Housing," all day workshop, lectures & case studies, California Preservation Foundation, California Dept. of Housing & Community Development, et. al., Mercy Apartments, San Francisco, \$80/\$60, call for details, 763-0972.

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., Ardenwood Blvd., Fremont, \$5/\$3 (Sr.)/\$2.50 (Jr.); 796-0663.

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

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

Hayward Area Historical Society Museum, (M-F. 11-4, Sat. 12-4), 22701 Main Street, Hayward, \$1/\$0.50 (children), 581-0223.

McConaghy House, 104 year old farmhouse, Th-Sun., 1-4, 18701 Hesperian Blvd., Hayward, \$3/\$2 (Sr.)/\$0.50 (children), 276-3010.

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

Pardee Home Museum, 1868 Italianate Villa, Pardee family residence 1868-1981, tours by reservation, (Th.-Sat. 11, 1 & 2:30), 672 11th St., \$4/\$3 (Sr.), accompanied children free, 444-2187.

Presidio, National Park Service walks, every Sat. 11am, meet at main parade grounds, 10am, free, (415) 556-0865.

San Francisco Heritage, Victorian & Edwardian Pacific Heights, Sun. 12:30-2, Haas-Lillienthal House Tours, Sun. 11-4, W. 12-3:15, Chinese New Year Architectural Walking Tour (Jan.)-call for date & time, 2007 Franklin, \$4/\$2*; *Srs./Jrs., (415) 441-3004.

Regularly Scheduled Meetings

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 OHA, 763-9218, 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., 238-3941, for Landmarks Board and Planning Commission agendas.

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 (October through February 1994) are:

Robert G. Adams, Ralph & Joanne Anderson, Christina Bailey, Peg Baldwin, John & Sharon Beckwith, Susan Blachmen, Peter Brandes/Zelda Laskowsky, Richard Brown, Cheri Bryant, Kathryn Burns/Antonio Rossmann, Frank Cash, Jean Marie Circiello, William Conniff, Steven Danziger, Jean Eichelberger, Holly Babe Faust, Bill Florence, Vinita Foor, Thomas & Mary Ann Francis & family, Christine Walsh Geeten, Tom & Mary Ann Haw, H. Mack Horton, Leanna Hudson, Richard Kane, Kathleen Kay, Helen Knopp, Louis & Sally Lewis, Fred Morse, Nina Reuben, Barbara Smoak, and Dolores Thom.

Donors

Special thanks to those joining/renewing as:

SPONSOR (\$100): Bruce Ballentine, G. Pete Encinas, Lynn Fonfa, Les & Linda Hausrath, Alan Michaan/Renaissance Rialto Inc., Craig & Dusty Miller, & Myron Zimmerman.

ORGANIZATION/BENEFACTOR (\$50): Phil Bellman/Betsy Yost, Randall & Cheryl Berger/Lake Merritt Hotel, Berkeley Builders Inc., Haley Law Office, Susan Hyde, Jennifer & Randy Katz, Elizabeth Krase/CALTRANS Environmental South Branch, Oakland Lawn Bowling Club, Gary & Kiki Pound, Ramon Rodriguez/Rehab Supervisor OHND, Sall Shaver, William Shaw, Howard Stein, David Tonelli/David Leinbach, & Winans Construction.

DONATIONS: Bank of America Foundation Matching Grants for Yvonne Barsballe & Matthew Gabel, Jerry Bowling/Libby Jacobsohn, Edmund Clausen, Michael Crowe, Raleigh Hughes Jr., Arthur Levy, & Jack Redford/David Beery.

Oakland Heritage Alliance News

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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. © 1994 Oakland Heritage Alliance.

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 History Notes

The People's Express Co.

In an era innocent of lumbering parcel trucks and elephantine moving vans, the People's Express Company of Oakland transported goods and money throughout the county and provided connections to Southern Pacific Railroad overland shipments. Founded in 1892, the company was dubbed People's Express because the firm's stock was held by its employees. By 1898, the owners claimed that "No city on the Pacific Coast can boast of better accommodations in the express and transfer business than the City of Oakland. The central figure in the local industry, and by far the largest, is the People's Express Company... One year ago the plant

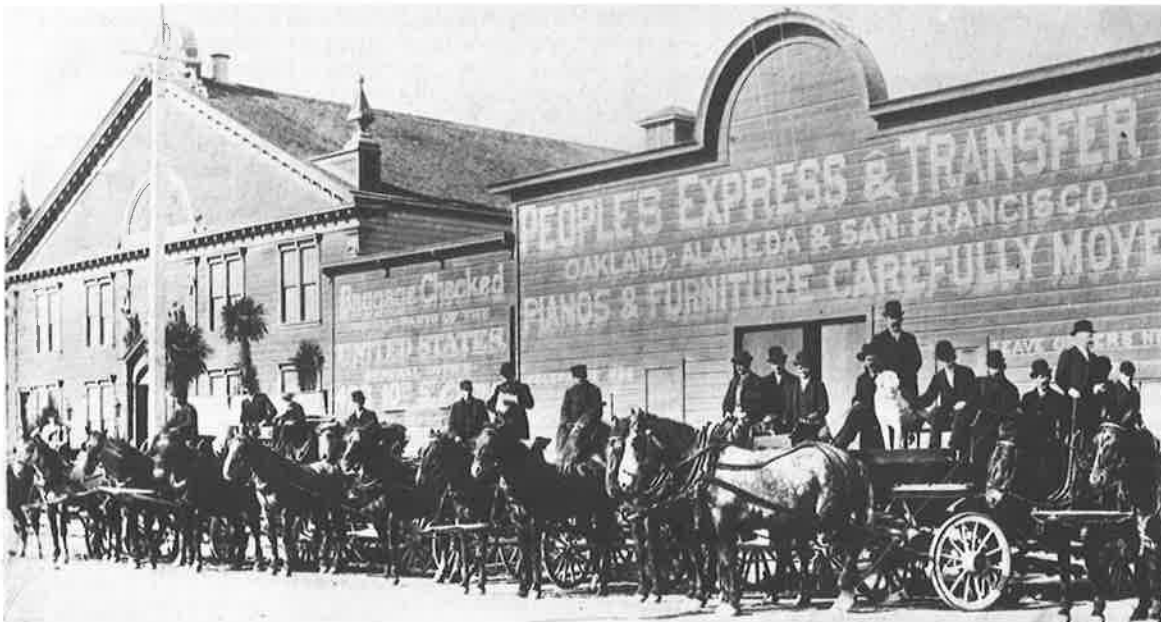
comprised fifty wagons; today it comprises seventy-five. The patronage of this popular firm is in the ascendancy."

In order to accommodate its flotilla of horses, wagons, and goods, the company opened, in 1892, a stable and warehouse on the northwest corner of 12th and Harrison Streets, next door to one of Oakland's pioneering theaters, the Auditorium, later better known as the Dewey Theater. From thence, wagons departed to distant points of the county, carrying pianos, furniture, and other sundry goods of the day. By 1901, the People's Express Company found more commodious stables elsewhere in the city, and its former building briefly flourished as the Dewey Auction and Sale Stables. By 1904, the structure had been consigned to oblivion, replaced by the imposing King Building, which housed the Polytechnic Business College, described as the "largest

and best equipped business college west of Chicago." The King Building stands today, a prime example of early Chicago-influenced commercial style in Oakland. The People's Express Company continued a long career of transporting goods, finally closing its doors in 1934.

--William W. Sturm

People's Express Co. at 12th and Harrison, 1898 (Oakland History Room)



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