

## Uptown Brooklyn: 10th Avenue & Environs



Oakland's only designated residential historic district, on the 1900 to 2100 blocks of 10th Avenue, is located in the neighborhood known at various times as Brooklyn, San Antonio, and Clinton Park. Located just east of Lake Merritt, the subdivision of Clinton Park was created from a portion of Rancho San Antonio in 1854, the same year that neighboring Oakland was incorporated as a city. In that year, three brothers, the Pattens, and San Francisco attorney William Strode purchased land extending from the lake to 14th Avenue from Antonio Peralta. For the

10th Avenue and East 21st Street, probably around 1910. The two houses, built in 1890-92 for "capitalist" W.C. Harrington, are highlights of the historic district today. (Marina Carlson)

four years prior to the purchase, the Pattens had leased the land from Peralta for farming wheat and barley.

In the 1840s a small settlement grew up around 13th Avenue and East 12th Street, initially serving the loggers who brought lumber down 13th Avenue from the San Antonio Redwoods (today's Montclair) for shipment from the San Antonio embarcadero to San Francisco and other growing towns.

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10th Avenue House Tour May 19 - see page 10



13th Avenue from East 12th to East 14th was one of the few East Oakland commercial strips featured in the 1896 *Illustrated Directory*. (Oakland History Room)

According to an 1878 history, "the last Redwood giant [was] laid low" about 1851. Shortly after, in 1852, ferry service to San Francisco and Oakland was begun, and was followed by construction of the 12th Street Dam in 1868, connecting Clinton Park to Oakland by land. As in Oakland, the arrival of the transcontinental railroad in 1869 spurred industrial and residential development. As described in Thompson and West's 1878 history, "Clinton and San Antonio, enjoying as delightful and fortunate locations as any towns upon the Contra Costa, continued to increase in population and business enterprise, and in May, 1870, they [along with the settlement of Lynn to the northeast] ... were incorporated under the name of Brooklyn." Although early predictions were that Brooklyn would be "the nucleus of a large and important city," in 1872 voters agreed to annexation by Oakland.

Early development in Clinton Park centered along East 12th and East 14th Streets with two commercial centers, one near Washington Square (now Clinton Park) at East 12th Street and 6th Avenue, the other around 13th Avenue and East 12th Street near the train depot at the base of 13th Avenue. In the 1870s and early 1880s residential development gradually moved northward toward the hills with a mix of modest cottages, larger family homes, and impressive monuments to the rewards of commerce and capitalism.

Thirteenth Avenue, a convenient commuter location, attracted John J. Valentine, president of Wells Fargo express company. His house, built about 1886, was sited on nearly a full half block between East 20th and East 21st Streets, facing 13th Avenue. According to recollections compiled by the 1937 Works Progress Administration history project, the station at 13th Avenue was an active stop. "Among the commuters were J.J. Valentine of the Wells Fargo Company, T. Edward Pope, the Ireland boys and the Joneses of Highland Park, all insurance men, P.J.G. Kenna, Captain Edward L. Hall,

insurance broker, [and] Joseph Stalder of the Sutter Street Market... J.J. Valentine ... waited for the eight o'clock train each morning and with other prominent commuters loitered about the front of a small building at the top of steps leading down to the tract [sic] at the foot of Thirteenth Avenue."

By 1890 much of the area below East 18th Street was fully developed. Between East 17th and East 18th Street on 10th and 11th Avenues are nearly intact blocks of houses representing a range of Victorian styles: Italianate, Stick, and Queen Anne. Simon Wade, superintendent of printing at Crocker Printing in San Francisco and publisher of the **Brooklyn Independent**, an early newspaper, owned nearly the entire block between 10th and 11th Avenues. Between 1882 and 1887 he built eight houses on the block, several of which were designed by J.C. Mathews and Son. In 1892 he developed a large vacant parcel, at the corner of East 18th and 10th Avenue, with a substantial Shingle style home for himself, designed by architect Henry Schulze.

Moving northward on 10th Avenue, the Eastern Shingle and Colonial Revival styles appear more frequently, attesting to later development. Fewer examples of the Italianate and Stick styles are found, although apartment construction in the 1960s may have removed traces of early houses. Near the border of the 10th Avenue Historic District, the layered development pattern that characterizes the district begins to appear. At 1918 10th Avenue, an 1886 Stick-Eastlake sits next to a 1909 Craftsman bungalow, both built for owner Lillian Berger. Just up the block within the district is a commodious Queen Anne-Colonial Revival built in 1890 for San Francisco attorney George Williams who also owned the Williams Block, a city landmark at East 12th Street and 12th Avenue. This house marks the edge of the district and originally its grounds included the site of the 1920s duplex between it and Berger's 1886 cottage.

The 10th Avenue district reflects two major periods of construction, the first between 1890 and 1904, and the second from 1907 through the mid teens. The architect-

ture and dates of construction reflect the growth of the neighborhood as a residential suburb in the late 19th century, and the housing boom in Oakland that followed the 1906 earthquake and fire.

As originally subdivided, 10th Avenue did not exist beyond East 20th Street. In these northeasterly reaches of Clinton Park, the blocks were double the standard 300' by 300' size until the call for housing warranted further subdivision. It was not until about 1886 that 10th Avenue was put through to East 22nd Street and subdivision into residential parcels began in earnest. The pace of building that followed was such that by 1900 the district was well established as a prosperous residential neighborhood.

In the main, the district's houses were built for, or by, individual owners with occupations ranging from a carpenter and ship's purser to real estate broker and electrical engineer. Four houses prove the exception. These four were constructed between 1890 and 1893 for one owner, W.C. Harrington, a physician and self styled capitalist who used architects J.J. and T. Newsom for at least one of his properties. A.W. Pattiani designed the largest of the houses for Harrington himself, an 1893 Eastern Shingle on a large corner parcel that originally extended along East 21st Street for half a block. Harrington built a fifth house at the corner of East 22nd and 10th Avenue, but all that remains are the palm trees.

William Leach, who ran a San Francisco foundry, built this modern suburban home in 1903-04. The three Leach children who grew up here include Stanley, left, who went into the automobile business. (OHR; Eugene Peck)



Printer Simon Wade developed most of the block of 10th Avenue between East 17th and East 18th Streets with Stick and Queen Anne cottages. His own house, at the topmost corner of the block, was brand new when this drawing was published in M.J. Keller's 1893 *Album of Oakland, California*. (Oakland History Room)

In the post-earthquake era, new construction filled in the blanks and, in at least one case, a new blank was created by moving an earlier structure. The house that replaced it is a 1908 Arts and Crafts Tudor designed by Albert Farr, architect of Jack London's ill-fated Wolf House in Glen Ellen. Architects Julia Morgan and A.W. Smith are represented as well, Morgan by a 1914 house built for Alex Hutchison, vice president of a grocery company on Washington Street where Swan's Market now stands, and Smith by a Craftsman brown





Corner of 10th Avenue and East 18th Street typifies the pattern of large early parcels and earthquake-era infill. James Presho's 1894 Queen Anne is flanked by gambrel-roofed Colonial cottages developed by Presho himself in both side yards in 1907. (Carolyn Douthat)

shingle built for a local dentist. Other more modest houses include those of a builder and a stairbuilder.

The neighborhood is of interest not only for the quality and variety of architectural styles, but also as a history lesson on the development of a neighborhood over a hundred years. Research on individual buildings in the historic district shows that two of the houses were moved to their sites, a remodeled Italianate that first appears in the block books in 1890 and a Colonial Revival moved to Harrington's big corner parcel sometime after 1925.

Three carriage houses are located in or adjacent to the district. One belonged to the Harrington property and sits behind a 1920s apartment building, where it is gradually being reclaimed by Mother Nature and houses a family of opossums. Another was remodeled into a Craftsman house about 1907 and the third is still in use though the carriages are long gone.

Along the edges of the district, 1960s apartment buildings have replaced earlier structures, a legacy of Clinton Park's selection as the first urban renewal re-



Some of Simon Wade's eight Stick and Queen Anne cottages a century later. (courtesy Carolyn Douthat)

habilitation project west of the Mississippi. From 1956 through 1962 an intensive program of code enforcement resulted in rehabilitation of some housing and the demolition of 117 buildings in the project area, opening up new sites for development. Other reminders of mid-century urban renewal include the traffic diverters at East 17th and East 20th Streets.

In 1979, neighborhood concerns over high density housing proposals prompted rezoning of a sixty block area east of Lake Merritt. In the heart of what became the 10th Avenue District, two lots remained vacant. One was the site of a Victorian demolished in the 1960s, the other of a Craftsman house demolished by the city in the 1980s. Concern over the developments proposed for these adjacent sites led the neighbors to consider a preservation zone as a way to protect the character of the district. In 1987, an application was prepared by district resident Marina Carlson and Carolyn Douthat of **Oakland Heritage Alliance** to have the neighborhood designated an S-7 Preservation Zone.

In 1988, after numerous public hearings and outreach to secure the consent of all property owners, the City Council approved the designation, establishing the first residential Preservation Zone in the city. Since then the Landmarks Board and staff have reviewed several projects for compatibility with the district character, the most ambitious of which was new construction on the two vacant lots. As a result, two new duplexes, designed in Victorian style by architect Kirk Peterson and built by Richard Roulett, now fill in the gap in the streetscape and have brought new owner occupants to the neighborhood.

Other projects since the designation include renovation of an 1894 Queen Anne damaged by fire, relocation of several palm trees, and a rear addition to accommodate the needs of a growing family. In addition to protecting the character of the district through Landmarks Board design review, historic status allowed owners to qualify for emergency grants and loans after the Loma Prieta earthquake.

The new zoning, along with a substantial commitment of time, patience, and hard work, has brought greater stability to the neighborhood and gradually the houses in the district are being renewed by owners who appreciate its special character. There are many other neighborhoods in Oakland which could qualify for historic district status, using 10th Avenue as a model. The Cultural Heritage Survey has identified many of them in all parts of the city, and is producing a list and preliminary descriptions of them as one of this year's projects. The designation process is not easy, but it can be a very rewarding project for a neighborhood.

--Carolyn Douthat & Marina Carlson

## Oakland Briefing

### ■ GREENE LIBRARY UPDATE

In recent months, city staff discovered that the National Register Charles Greene Library at 14th Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Way had been broken into and portions of the balusters on the main staircase removed. Closed since the Loma Prieta earthquake, the 1902 Carnegie library is owned by the city and is planned as the location of the African American Museum and Library at Oakland (AAMLO), a project resulting from the merger of the Northern California Center for Afro-American History and Life with the library system. City officials have begun a clean-up of the interior, resealing the window and door openings, and scheduling regular inspections. Speculation is that the closing of the neighboring First Unitarian Church for repair and seismic work has isolated the library and left it more vulnerable to entry.

Work on the restoration and repair of the library has been stalled because the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has thus far been unwilling to accept the cost estimates prepared for the city by architect Michael Willis & Associates and Rutherford and Chekene. Moreover, FEMA has not agreed that the city is required to repair the historic structure, even though it is on the National Register, a city landmark and located in Preservation Park,



Have you seen this staircase? Parts from the Greene Library's magnificent entry have disappeared, to private hands or salvage dealers. Theft of features from unoccupied buildings is a serious problem; vigilant citizens can help. (Oakland History Room)

a designated historic district. Absent that agreement, reimbursement is limited to replacement cost of a "functionally equivalent" new building, although because of the historic district designation, a new structure would be required to comply with design guidelines for compatibility with the district, probably resulting in higher costs than FEMA has thus far been willing to accept.

The AAMLO project grew out of the need which the Northern California Center, currently located in a portion of the Golden Gate library, had for more space for its exhibits and collections. The location of the Greene Library at Preservation Park offered a great venue for a regional museum on the African American cultural and historical experience, and would return the old main library to its historic use. Further possibilities exist for a joint effort between Preservation Park, the First Unitarian Church, and the library to share facilities and create a premier conference and research center.

As always, financing the project is an issue. In addition to the FEMA funds, the library has \$1 million in State library funds for the physical plant, funds which may be jeopardized if construction is not started this year. Were FEMA to agree to the city's cost estimates, the project would still be short some \$4 million for city staff costs, consultant fees, and the fixtures and furnishing for the museum and library. Hope Hayes, AAMLO's director, is exploring foundation and endowment funding while the library has asked that the project be included in next year's capital improvement program budget.

Anyone interested in assisting with fundraising is encouraged to contact AAMLO at 597-5053. --Carolyn Douthat

### ■ NORTH OAKLAND CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Two public hearings have been scheduled to present preliminary plans and receive community input for the seismic work and ADA improvements for the Golden Gate and Temescal branch libraries. The city has selected the architectural firm of Noll & Tam to prepare the design and construction documents. Actual work on the buildings will await the hoped-for approval of the November election bond measure, which is also expected to include funds for retrofitting Studio One.

According to Ed Cheng, the Library's engineer, "the City will prepare the final design for the two libraries, based upon the preliminary plans and community input." The hearings are set for April 29, 7-9 pm, at the Golden Gate branch, 5606 San Pablo Avenue, and May 2, 7-9 pm, at the Temescal branch, 5205 Telegraph Avenue. For information contact Ed Cheng at 238-6715. --Robert Brokl & Al Crofts

## ■ CULTURAL HERITAGE SURVEY ALERT

The Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey, which is funded by federal pass-through grants from the State Office of Historic Preservation, recently received application materials for 1996-97 and learned that its potential funding from this program has been cut in half. In past years each participating local government has been able to apply for two \$15,000 projects; this year only one. The Office of Planning and Building is exploring ways to make up the cut, but political support and creative thinking from the community will be needed as the city budget process evolves. The Survey is also going ahead with a grant application, and will need letters of support to the State Office. If you have ideas, concerns, eloquence, contacts, or other resources, please call Betty Marvin or Gary Knecht at the Survey, 238-3941, or OHA, 763-9218. --Betty Marvin

## ■ OLD MERRITT COLLEGE: MOVING TARGET

On March 4 North Oakland Voters Alliance (NOVA) sent a letter to the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) reporting on the continuing water damage and lack of security observed on an inspection visit to Old Merritt in November, and on the termination of the city's agreement with IDG/Baner Urban Ventures as developer of the site and the consequent halt to leasing efforts. If the letter to SHPO was an inkling of storm clouds gathering over the project, since then the rain, thunder, and lightning have arrived with a vengeance!

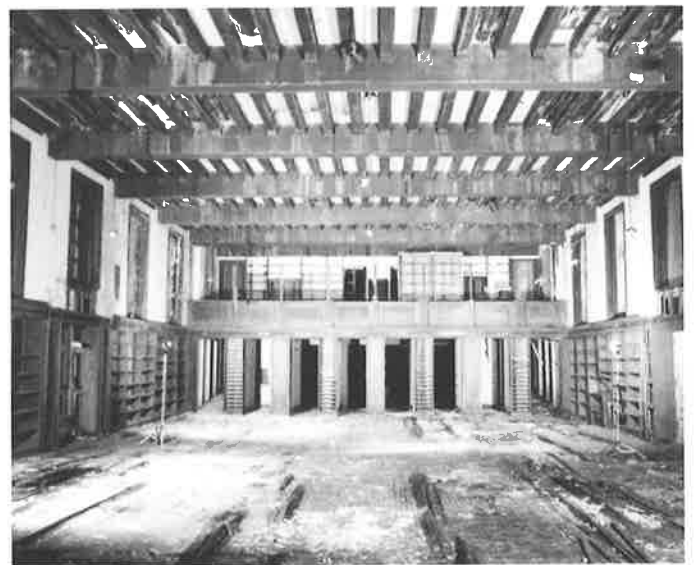
In the intervening month, the developers and the City of Oakland wrestled to the edge of the legal precipice. On March 29 the City filed suit to gain the construction drawings and specifications produced by IDG Architects; the developer made release of these documents conditional upon what they considered to be adequate compensation for their services to date if they were no longer needed, or the right to buy the project back at some future point at cost. As of April 4, the city and developer appeared to have reached a settlement, with Jim Ishimaru/IDG to be the project architect. A week later, it seems Hensel Phelps will be the construction firm and may be seeking another architect to complete the drawings. NOVA understands that Hensel Phelps has submitted a design-build bid in the range of \$11 million for core and shell work and tenant improvements in the senior center and Children's Hospital Research Institute (CHORI) areas, and the city is evaluating the bid.

Another fear NOVA expressed has also proven to be justified. OHND has backed away from the decision - approved by City Council unanimously in December - to undertake renovation of the entire core

and shell of the "main historic building." Current plans, as detailed in a March 19, 1996, OHND staff report, are as follows:

"City staff is currently completing its contract negotiations with IDG Architects to complete the design of the core and shell of the main historic building and the gymnasium, and to design the tenant improvements for the NOMSC [senior center] inside the auditorium of the main historic building. The NOMSC is projected to start construction in August of this year. Parallel to this effort the City will contract with Hensel Phelps Construction Company to undertake selective repair work to improve the condition and appearance of the main historic building."

Whether the cautious approach of lining up tenants before undertaking major renovation will remain the policy is another matter. Apparently Council member Jordan and Mayor Harris are advocating beginning the basic core and shell work on the main



The library of C.W. Dickey's University High School (later Merritt College), in a vignette from the 1929 yearbook and today after years of leaking roofs. Historic photos of the campus are scarce, mostly tiny views in yearbook collages. If you have or know of photos, NOVA would like to hear from you. (NOVA)



building, including replacement of the roof and other facade improvements. Simultaneously, work would proceed for construction of the senior center in the auditorium. Hensel Phelps Construction, which has completed the asbestos work and is about to begin "selective demolition" to determine the extent of dry rot and deterioration, was asked to submit design-build proposals with and without the Children's Hospital component. We do not know if the gym and manual arts wing are included at this time. The City appears to be operating under the assumption that litigation involving the previous developer will not tie up the project.

This keen interest on the part of Jordan to push the project forward before her term expires, while pitting her against the wait-and-see OHND approach, comes as a relief to NOVA, which has been considering reviving legal action against the City if the project once again comes to a standstill. The temporary roof repairs and the alarm system (which was installed without reboarding openings or improving the fence) were the result of NOVA's lawsuit three years ago and clearly are not permanent solutions. The City's \$400,000 investment in asbestos removal, payments to the developer for construction drawings, not to mention staff time, could still all go up in smoke. NOVA has further questioned the wisdom of plunging ahead with just the senior center component, leaving the rest of the building vacant and vulnerable.

With the city as developer, the historic preservation tax credits are no longer available, and historic review of the project shifts from the National Park Service (which administers the tax credit program) to the State Office of Historic Preservation which will review the project under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. According to tax credit experts at NPS, the \$60,000 in "selective demolition" could preclude the building's ever reentering the tax credit program.

This once again high-profile would-be project is a moving target. Anything might happen, even renovation. Further complicating the picture is the prospect of a divisive election runoff to succeed Jordan, and the arrival on the scene of Kofi Bonner, formerly guiding development efforts in the little town that could, Emeryville. In a position over current OHND staff, his vision for the site - whatever that may be - will carry significant weight.

NOVA is seeking donations to its legal fund, and also suggesting that OHA readers subscribe to the NOVA newsletter for late-breaking Old Merritt news. Subscriptions are \$10-\$25, or what you can afford: Box 20486, Oakland 94620. Contact Robert Brokl or Al Crofts at 655-3841. --Robert Brokl

## ■ OAKLAND POINT INTERPRETIVE CENTER

As reported earlier, three houses in the path of the Cypress replacement freeway have been rescued from the bulldozer and stored for a temporary period of two years on what was the site of the Phoenix Ironworks. This effort is being orchestrated by a new nonprofit (status pending), the Oakland Point Historic Interpretive Center. OPHIC meets twice a month to give birth to what is hoped to be a welcome addition to existing cultural institutions in Oakland. The vision of the group is to use the salvaged houses as centerpiece of a cluster of buildings that recreate the feel of late 19th century West Oakland. Emphasis will be on the pattern of cultural diversity and immigration in our city.

OPHIC's board of directors includes West Oakland activists and business interests as well as the wider Oakland community. Efforts are currently focusing on physical planning, development and membership, events, and a project budget. A possible site is being considered near the Pardee Home Museum. The timetable must meet some critical schedule requirements of Caltrans which owns the site where the relocated buildings now sit on blocks.

Discussions are in progress with the city, which owns the site near the Pardee Home. With a permanent site, the group will be able to consider acquisition of other at-risk structures which could be moved onto the site to complement and enlarge the educational perspective. These could include additional houses, barns and other outbuildings, or commercial structures such as a local railroad hotel (see page 13). Oakland has, unfortunately, many such buildings that are abandoned or in the way of development efforts.

Interested persons may contact Melissa Rosengard, president of OPHIC's board of directors, at 444-2187. --Bill Coburn



Oakland Point houses await a chance to interpret the working class history of West Oakland. The city's purchase agreement with OPHIC refers to them as "architectural fragments." (Melissa Rosengard, OPHIC)

## ■ FAREWELL, INDEPENDENT IRON WORKS

"Independent Iron Works, Manufacturers of fabricated structural steel, steel buildings, bridges, barges, dredges, service stations, plate work, steel storage tanks, steel and sheet metal products, miscellaneous iron, truck tanks, road machinery, the latest development in modern steel buildings... RIGID FRAME" -- ad from **Oakland Tribune Year Book**, 1947.

Foundries have played an important part in the economic and physical development of the Bay Area. The Phoenix Works and Vulcan Iron Works are both mentioned in **Master Hands in the Affairs of the Pacific Coast**, 1892, the Vulcan making a specialty of locomotives and similar machinery and the Phoenix casting iron ship fittings.

Phoenix Iron Works is the name we associate most commonly with the large metal shed and foundry recently razed in the West Oakland industrial area to make way for the I-880 replacement freeway. Several of its neighbors came down also, among them a lesser known foundry, the Noble Co., which later became Southern Pacific's machine shop, and Lips, maker of marine propellers, a task the old Phoenix works at 2nd and Castro Streets performed in its heyday when shipbuilding in the Bay Area was at its height.

The original address of Independent Iron Works was 1824 Chase Street. In 1911 twenty-seven Victorian houses stood on its

**Independent Iron Works in 1993, with Phoenix logo on its skyscraper-high crest. Houses at right are two of the three saved by OPHIC, now stored on the opposite side of the vast ironworks site. (Fred Reichman)**

site, mostly on the block between Pine and New Streets and Chase and 9th Streets. By 1935 more than half these homes had been razed as industrialization became the dominant force in the area. New Street came to a dead end at Chase, the original small foundry occupying what would have been the right-of-way. The foundry expanded in several increments onto a quadruple block including the site already occupied by California Fireworks Company Ltd. (earlier the Dunn Cracker Company). This far northwest corner of the lot is where the houses saved from Shore Street now reside.

The Independent Iron Works foundry at its peak contained steel storage, erection and welding shops, a warehouse, a small drafting room above the warehousing area, enormous traveling cranes, and a truck repair shop, plus accessory buildings. The latter are gone; only the office survives at the southeast corner of 8th and Pine Streets. The final physical structure occupied four city blocks. The highest peak of its roof was just ten feet less than the minimum - 75' - for buildings classified as skyscrapers.

When the foundry came down it was hardly half a century old. The Cultural Heritage Survey lists the last owners as Phoenix Properties, the last to use it as a foundry, casting manhole covers and street gratings, quite a downsizing from the ship fittings and marine propellers that the old Phoenix foundry at 2nd and Castro used to handle, and the fabricated structural steel of Independent Iron Works in its heyday. Farewell Independent Iron Works, hello freeway. --Fred Reichman







#### ■ RAILWAY MUSEUM PICKS UP THE PIECES

The Bay Area Electric Railroad Association (BAERA), founded by electric traction historians, collectors, and restorers, is the parent group of the Western Railway Museum (WRM). The museum complex consists of carbarns, bookstore, picnic area, an archive center under construction, and a 22-mile electric interurban railway segment of the old Sacramento Northern that ran from San Francisco and Oakland to Sacramento and Chico, on over 200 acres of former farmland along Highway 12 ten miles east of Rio Vista on the Sacramento River.

The need for a permanent facility with adequate space for archival storage and access had been clear since purchase of the land in 1960. With help from **Oakland Heritage Alliance** and other restoration and historical groups, WRM began about three years ago to persuade Caltrans and Southern Pacific to donate three historic railroad buildings in the West Oakland yards, buildings scheduled to be removed for the Cypress freeway relocation. State and federal agencies committed almost \$600,000 toward this unique project.

Southern Pacific and Amtrak assured the museum that they would be finished using the brick buildings by September 1995. Arrangements were made by BAERA for interior seismic strengthening of two of the buildings as soon as the railroad left. Commitment was made for barges to move the structures upriver from Oakland to Rio Vista and a specialist overweight road transport firm from Washington State contracted to move the loads ten miles from Rio Vista to the museum. Dates were set, and cleared with the railroads. The ten-mile haul would be done late at night and would take about three hours.

Nearing the deadline, Amtrak notified

What a difference a delay makes: the Pullman building (ruins), Master Mechanic Office (beyond), and Car Lighting Shop were demolished in March, after surviving 1906 and 1989 earthquakes intact. (Betty Marvin)

the museum that they could not be out of the buildings in time. The specialist movers who had saved a date in their busy schedules had no other time available. So arrangements were canceled and WRM had to give up the plan. Demolition of the structures followed. Wouldn't it have been a grand sight to see (and photograph) the ancient brick buildings on barges, perhaps accompanied by the bay's restored steam tugboat, chugging up the bay and river? And to see them continue their century of service to railroading at the museum?

In the area prepared for the historic buildings the museum has begun construction of a beautiful new visitor and archive center, named in honor of Borax Smith, consolidator of the Key System. On display will be a marvelous, constantly growing library and collection of photos and artifacts detailing our railway era.

The Western Railway Museum is the only such institution that truly represents Oakland and the East Bay. It has operating electric streetcars and interurban cars of the Key System, Sacramento Northern, and other vanished systems. There is equipment from Oakland's Interurban Electric Railway (SP's "Big Red Cars"), Petaluma and Santa Rosa, Eastbay Street Railway, and San Francisco Municipal Railway, most restored and operated by volunteer members of the association. Twelve hundred hard working members have transformed this farmland into an operating rail center, with four miles of track (more in process), car houses, and landscaped grounds. The association is raising funds to complete the visitor and archive center. The museum is open to the public on Saturdays.--Ted Wurm

## O.H.A. Update

### ■ OAKLAND RENAISSANCE: PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE ON BROOKLYN HOUSE TOUR

OHA's 10th Avenue tour highlights a neighborhood that exemplifies the best of contemporary Oakland, by its reemerging civic awareness, choosing to reinvest in a historic neighborhood, and being energized by the complex social and demographic mix. We will witness how this cultural investment has paid off for residents and visitors alike, linking architectural preservation with resident and civic pride.

As you walk the Brooklyn tour and read the accompanying brochure, evidence of the district's earlier architectural evolution will be revealed in the rich panoply of house styles set into Brooklyn's rolling hillside location. Now a new generation of residents has reinvested their lives into this evolving cultural landscape, reaping benefits from the attractive location in Oakland as well as from the rich historic legacy. Celebrating historic meanings as part of everyday life is one of the emerging cultural waves which should continue to renew other Oakland districts.

Other neighborhoods such as Dimond, Laurel, West Oakland, Adams Point, and Rockridge are also undergoing redefinition and change, each with an individual character and style. Our tour applauds the 10th Avenue district and its residents who are signaling a quiet and integrative Oakland renaissance of neighborhood life.

--William Coburn

The 10th Avenue house tour takes place Sunday, May 19, 1-5 pm, along four blocks centered at 10th Avenue and East 21st Street. Donation is \$20 OHA members/\$25 general, docents free. For tickets or to volunteer call OHA, 763-9218.



In 1976, restoration began on one of Brooklyn's W.C. Harrington houses (see page 1). Visit the 10th Avenue District after 20 years of Oakland renaissance, on OHA's May 19 house tour. (Marina Carlson)



Among notable downtown projects featured in the AIA exhibit is the renovation of First Unitarian Church, which began with this ceremony in November. T.C. Wilson, speaking at cornerstone unveiling, was a panelist in AIA symposium. (Fern Tiger Associates)

### ■ A.I.A. EXHIBIT: DOWNTOWN OAKLAND

The East Bay chapter of the American Institute of Architects is currently sponsoring an exhibit, "Pulling Downtown Oakland Together," in the rotunda of City Hall. The exhibit, running from April 11 to May 16, focuses on the architecture and design of buildings recently completed and under development. OHA members will be glad to know that a number of historic buildings - the Tribune Tower, the Pardee Home, and the First Unitarian Church, to name a few, are also featured. A symposium was held on the opening day of the exhibit at the Federal Building auditorium. Panelists including OHA Preservation Action chair and former board member Carolyn Douthat addressed the issue of how good (or bad) architecture and design can contribute to downtown's redevelopment.

OHA's contribution to the exhibit, prepared by board member David Nicolai, focuses on the three downtown historic districts - Old Oakland, Preservation Park, and the Downtown District. The exhibit can be visited whenever City Hall is open, through May 16. Watch for announcements of "satellite events" focusing on downtown Oakland during the run of the exhibit. --David Nicolai

### ■ OAKLAND TOURS RETURN

If you are in the mood to celebrate Oakland's 144th birthday, come out to Old Oakland - Ninth and Washington Streets - on Saturday, May 4, at 10 am. There will be a special birthday cake, courtesy of the Merritt Bakery's one and only Walt Harmon, cake maker extraordinaire. A dedicated group of tour guides with a passion for Oakland history will be on hand

because May 4 kicks off another Oakland Tours season. After cake, plan to stroll through the Old Oakland historic district, the restored 1860s commercial center, once the hub for streetcar and rail travelers.

For the past 18 years the city has provided free guided walking tours of Old Oakland as well as the Waterfront, City Center, Uptown to the Lake, Preservation Park, Chinatown, and Churches and Temples. New this fall was the First Tuesday tour of the magnificently restored Beaux Arts City Hall. This new monthly tour has been especially popular. The other tours are offered on Wednesdays and Saturdays at 10 am in a rotating schedule. All are free. The guides also lead school group tours and special tours by request. There is a small charge for special tours.

New tours coordinator Annalee Allen will be happy to answer any and all questions about the Oakland Tours Program. She also welcomes anyone interested in learning to be a tour guide. Guides get to wear snappy tour vests and carry a tote bag with the distinctive Oakland Tours logo. Call 238-3234, the Tours Hotline, leave your name and number, and Annalee will get back to you right away. Guides Chris Christiansen, Betty Marvin, Barbara Moore, Chris Pattillo, Ruth Steiner, Helen Tryon, Don Tyler, Brad Whitney, and organizer Dawn Muller are ready for the new season - the best season yet. --Annalee Allen



This ornate flatiron marks the "hub" of East Oakland. Is that the world's smallest building at far left? Come on Andrew Carpentier's new Foothill-Seminary walking tour this summer and find out. (Survey photo)

■ OHA SUMMER WALKING TOURS

Coming in July and August: OHA's ever-popular summer waling tours with some old, some new walks to explore the exciting and diverse neighborhoods of Oakland. Every Saturday and Sunday from July 6 to August 25, volunteer guides lead walks throughout the city seeking out the history and architecture that define a neighborhood.

This year's tours include Mountain View Cemetery, remnants of the Borax Smith Estate, the Waterfront and Produce Market, Pagoda Hill in Rockridge, Haddon Hill (China Hill), Brooklyn's old commercial district, Pill Hill/Auto Row, Chinatown, and a Preservation Park walking workshop.

Brand new walks are Sausal Creek, Riley Doty's tile tour, Leona Heights, Foothill-Seminary, a new West Oakland tour, and the Bay Trail along the Oakland shoreline.

Most walks are in the mornings, 10 am to noon, some in the afternoons, 1:30 to 3:30 pm. No reservations are needed. Donation is \$6 general public, \$4 OHA members. Schedules will be ready about June 1. For a schedule or further information call the OHA office at 763-9218. --Helen Lore

■ COHEN-BRAY HOUSE NATIONALLY NOTED

The spring issue of the *Old House Journal's* new quarterly *Old House Interiors* contains an article titled "Emelita's House Unchanged." This article features Oakland's Cohen Bray House and points out its importance as a near-perfect representation of how "Anglo-Japanese" style looked in 1884. It is illustrated with beautiful color photographs. The Cohen Bray House is supported by its own nonprofit, the Victorian Preservation Center of Oakland. For membership or other information, contact VPCO at Box 5899-139, Berkeley CA 94705. --Barbara C. Donald



New Oakland Tours logo, with a family resemblance to the street signs for the citywide Oakland Scenic Tour (see Spring 1995 OHA News)

## 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. Five districts and 127 landmarks have been designated since the Board was created in 1973. Meetings are held at City Hall, in Hearing Room #1, second Mondays, 4 pm.

Board members are Annalee Allen, Andrew Carpentier, Renee Dymond, Les Hausrath, George Lythcott, Mark Sennette, and Phil Tagami. Secretary is Helaine Kaplan Prentice.



The Glenview Library by Archie and Noble Newsom, a 1935 Depression public works project, gets expanded protection as it goes into private ownership. Oakland's distinguished civic buildings occupy much of the Board's attention. (Oakland History Room)

### MARCH

Michael Crowe of the National Park Service gave a special presentation on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for rehabilitation and restoration of historic buildings. Michael showed examples of alterations and additions that did and did not meet the Standards, which are rules for protecting the historic fabric and character of a building. Projects that seek to use the preservation tax credits must comply with the Standards. They offer good advice for any work on old buildings, such as repairing rather than replacing deteriorated features, cleaning by the gentlest means possible, finding compatible new uses, differentiating new work from old, and respecting the historical evolution of a building.

Representatives of St. Paul's School reported on meetings with the Adams Point neighborhood regarding demolition or moving of the Oakland Club-Casa Romana building (see Winter **OHA News**). The Board agreed to conditions for demolition: comprehensive photos of the building, a

history of the Oakland Club to be prepared by St. Paul's eighth grade students, a plaque in the new school building, an effort to sell the building for relocation, and no demolition until the school is ready to build. Under its authority to "advise on preservation," the Board also expressed concern for the four-unit apartment building on the site.

Board directed staff to prepare a resolution amending the landmark designation of the Glenview Branch Library, 4231 Park Boulevard, to include major interior features. (Landmark resolutions generally cite only the exterior for protection.)

Board voted to place the Berkland Baptist Church (originally Claremont Baptist Mission), 326 Alcatraz Avenue, on the Study List. Secretary Prentice reported that she had received several phone calls about the property, which is being sold and is rated B+1+ (major importance) by the Preliminary Survey.

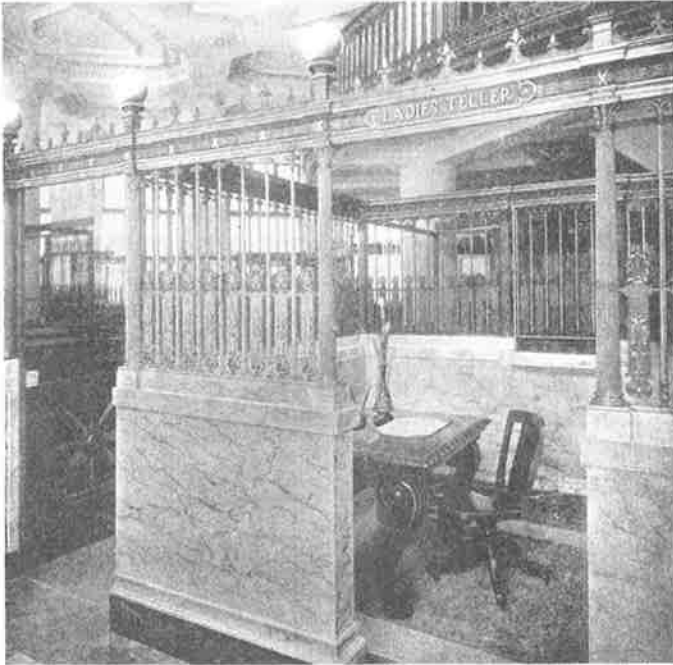
Willie Pettus of the East Bay AIA announced the urban design symposium and exhibit April 11 through May 16 at City Hall. Recent significant projects in the downtown area are featured.

In Open Forum, John and Russell Moran protested demolition of additions at the old YMCA at 21st and Telegraph (Hamilton Hotel, being converted to 93 apartments for families by Catholic Charities), saying there had been no design review; they were concerned about parking and open space impacts of the project. Board asked staff to investigate.

Board agreed that a member should speak at City Council to urge that the recommendation to landmark certain parks not be deleted from the Open Space, Conservation, and Recreation Element (OSCAR) as had been recommended by the Planning Commission. Tagami noted that preservation was not mentioned in City Council goals for 1996, and suggested a presentation by the Board.



Facade improvement: Some downtown buildings, like the Key System Building at 1100 Broadway (F.H. Meyer, 1911-12), vacant and boarded up since the 1989 earthquake, could use a little help. (Betty Marvin)



The Ladies' Department of the bank has long vanished, but some interiors of the Broadway Building will be preserved. Like the Greene Library, the Broadway Building lost interior features to theft after the 1989 earthquake. (Oakland History Room)

#### APRIL

Board approved a resolution recommending amendment of the landmark designation of the Glenview Branch Library to include significant interior features.

Board heard a presentation by Carey and Company on recent stabilization work at the Broadway Building, 1401-19 Broadway (First National Bank building, 1907-08, Llewellyn B. Dutton, architect). The ground floor lobby is to be retained, as are circulation patterns on the upper floors. The speaker warned that things will look worse before they look better during the construction period.

Board heard a presentation by the Swan's co-housing group on their proposal for Swan's Market (501-49 10th Street/901 Washington/9th/Clay). The fate of the building is still unknown (the AIA exhibit includes two different proposals for the site), but plans for the preservation alternative call for retail, restaurants, a bakery, and parking at ground level, with housing above.

Annalee Allen reported on progress of the Preservation Incentives Package for downtown. Facade improvement and revolving loan programs were under discussion. An administrator with both preservation and development expertise was needed.

Board discussed the 1996-97 Certified Local Government (CLG) grant application announcement, which indicates that the maximum available amount is half what it was last year. CLG grants have supported

the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey for several years. Board noted the value of the Survey to the real estate community as well as to the city at large, and agreed that local funding should be found for the project. Public support will be needed.

George Lythcott reported on a community meeting at St. Paul's School. An effort is being made to find places to move the Casa Romana and the apartment building.

Secretary Helaine Prentice called the Board's attention to a notice from Code Compliance citing the Fruitvale Hotel (3221 San Leandro Boulevard; rated B+ and considered National Register eligible by the survey) as a "vacant and substandard building" for which "Code Compliance is proceeding with the condemnation process and demolition." Board members observed that this was not in keeping with the Preservation Element recommendation to "increase preservation emphasis in regulatory activities."

In Open Forum, Marina Carlson, for the 10th Avenue Historic District, announced the May 19 OHA house tour, and proposed that signs designating the historic district (like the Broadway Auto Row and Chinatown signs) be added to the street signs in time for the tour.

National Historic Preservation Week, May 12-18, will be marked by a ceremony recognizing newly designated landmarks at the Tuesday City Council meeting.

--Kathy Olson



The Fruitvale Hotel was built about 1895, along the tracks opposite Fruitvale Station. This building type was important along 7th Street in West Oakland, but all examples there have vanished. Old wall signs read "Snetsinger & Carroll Real Estate" and "Fruitvale Hotel - Board - Rooms." Hotel has long been empty, and is now threatened with demolition. (Survey)

# 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

- through May 16 (daily; public business hours), "Pulling Downtown Oakland Together," comprehensive exhibit of downtown development projects highlighting the cumulative effects on the future vitality of downtown, 1st & 3rd floor lobbies, Oakland City Hall, 1 City Hall Plaza, sponsored by AIA East Bay, free.
- through May 19 (W-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 12-7), "People, Politics, Protest and Promise: African Americans in the News," 41 images from recent gift of 1,000,000 photos from Oakland Tribune archives, vivid view of African American life as portray by media since 1920, The Oakland Museum, Oak & 10th Streets, \$5/\$3 (members free), 238-3401.
- through May 31 (Tues.-Sat. 12-5+) "Bittersweet Triumph: The African American Experience in World War II", new exhibit commemorating the contributions of African Americans in WWII, The African American Museum and Library at Oakland, 5606 San Pablo Ave. (Golden Gate Library), 597-5053.
- through July 15 (9am-11pm daily), "Beyond Expectations," AIA East Bay Design Awards exhibit of honored projects, Barnes & Noble Bookstore, 98 Broadway, Jack London Square.
- through October 15, (1-5, Th.-Sat.), "The Berkeley Literary Scene", sketches, notebooks, books & working places of and by Berkely writers such as Charles & Louise Keeler, Frank Norris, Allen Ginsberg and others, The Berkeley Historical Society Museum, 1931 Center Street, 848-0181.
- May-June, 4 Saturdays, "Berkeley Neighborhood Walking Tours," Berkeley Historical Society, details TBA, info Box 1190 Berkeley, 94701 or 848-0181 Th.-Sat.
- May 2, Th. 8pm, "Transplanting an Aesthetic: Greene & Greene in the Bay Area," Ted Bosley speaker, Claremont Club, 214 Hillcrest Road, Berkeley, Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association, \$10 841-2242.
- May 4, Sat. 10am, "Oakland's 144th birthday party," 9th & Washington, tour of Old Oakland District.
- May 4, Sat., 9-4, all day class on General Strike of 1946, instructor Fred Glass, Laney College, Room G206, \$8.50, register at class.
- May 18 through August 18 (W-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 12-7), "Remember Your Relations: The Elsie Allen Baskets, Family and Friends," exhibiting the work of 26 Native Californian basket weavers from the collection of Pomo weaver Elsie Allen, The Oakland Museum, Oak & 10th Streets, \$5/\$3 (members free), 238-3401.
- May 18, Sat. 10-12, "Ocean View: Victorian West Berkeley," walking tour, meet 6th & Delaware Streets, led by Curt & Stephanie Manning, Berkeley Historical Society, \$5/\$7, 848-0181.

May 19 through August 18 (W-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 12-7), "The Present (H)our: Issues of Identity by Artists of Color," 8+ artists of color explore ideas of cultural, social, political and environmental identity in contemporary society, The Oakland Museum,

May 19, Sun., 1-5, "Brooklyn Tenth Avenue Historic District," Oakland's only residential historic district, **OHA Annual Spring House Tour**, \$20 OHA members/\$25 general public, docents free, 763-9218.



May 30-June 2, "Preservation Comes of Age," California Preservation Conference, San Jose, California Preservation Foundation, 763-0972.

June 8, South Berkeley Cultural Landscape, led by Bill Coburn, location TBA, and...

June 22, Upper Codornices Creek, led by Shelby Sampson, meet at Codornices Park, and...

June 29, Berkeley Civic Center, led by Betty Marvin, meet at Old City Hall, Allston & MLK: Berkeley Historical Society walking tours, \$5 members/\$7 general, 848-0181.

July 6 through August 25, Sat./Sun., OHA Summer Walking Tours, \$4 OHA members/\$6 general public, 763-9218.



## Regularly Scheduled Exhibits & Tours

- The African American Museum & Library at Oakland, museum, archives & programs, 5606 San Pablo Ave., Tues.-Sat. 12-5+.
- 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.
- Berkeley Historical Society, museum, archives, walking tours, Th.-Sat 1-5, 1931 Center Street (Veteran's Memorial Bldg.), 848-0181.
- Cohen Bray House, 1884 Eastlake Stick Style, owned continuously by descendant of first occupants, original furnishings & wall papers, 1440 29th Ave., Oakland, open 4th Sunday, 2pm tours by appt., for info Victorian Preservation Center of Oakland, \$5, 532-0704.
- 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.
- Judah L. Magnes Museum, Jewish ceremonial & fine arts, historical artifacts, Sun.-Th. 10-4, 2911 Russell St., Berkeley, 849-2710.
- McConaghy House, 104 year old farmhouse, Th-Sun., 1-4, 18701 Hesperian Blvd., Hayward, \$2/\$1.50 (Sr.)/\$0.50 (children), 581-0223.
- Mountain View Cemetery Tours, second Saturday every month, 10am, docent led tours sponsored by Mountain View Cemetery, free, 658-2588.
- Oakland Tours Program, guided tours of restored City Hall, first Tuesday of the month, 10am, through April. Meet on front steps, free, reservations encouraged, 238-3234.



May-Oct., 7 free tours of central Oakland, Wed. & Sat. 10am, schedule TBA in May.

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-Lilienthal 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 City Hall. 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 (March) are:

Sharon & Edward Jay, Jack Leutze, Doris Lock, Stuart Swiedler/Judy Weiss

### Donors

Special thanks to those joining/renewing as:

SPONSOR (\$100): G. Pete Encinas.

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Annalee Allen & Carolyn Douthat.

### 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, or OHA, 763-9218. Back issues \$2. © 1996 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 Brooklyn Presbyterian Church

The Brooklyn Presbyterian Church began in an unprepossessing schoolhouse on East 14th Street near 10th Avenue. Later services were held in Swett's Hall over a saloon, with a bull pen located next door. As the congregation grew, the trustees decided to build a church. In May 1861 a new edifice was dedicated on the southeast corner of 15th Avenue and East 14th Street. Built on a lot donated by Brooklyn pioneer James LaRue, the building served its members until in 1887 the need was again felt for a larger house of worship.

A lot on the northwest corner of 12th Avenue and East 15th Street was purchased from Moses Chase, another pioneer of the neighborhood. The congregation raised \$20,000 for the new structure and the eminent architect Samuel Newsom designed the sanctuary. Samuel and his brother Joseph were noted and prolific architects of some of Oakland's most imposing houses, many of which remain today.

The cornerstone was laid on July 16, 1887 amid much pomp, and on Christmas Sunday 1887 the church first opened its portals. The **Oakland Enquirer** noted of the new building, "The style of architecture is Norman Gothic. The spire rises 117 feet from the foundation. The pews will comfortably seat 600 persons." The bell was transferred from the old church, and a new organ, the first church organ east of Lake Merritt, was installed.

The Brooklyn Presbyterian Church extended its help and services to a Sunday school in the Fruitvale area in the 1880s. It later assisted the founding of High Street Presbyterian Church. After the 1906 earthquake, the sanctuary opened its doors

for refugees. During this time Brooklyn Presbyterian Church became the spiritual home of the mission for Chinese girls known as the Cameron House.

Long a vital part of the community and a link with Brooklyn's beginnings, the congregation sold its building to the Grace Temple Baptist Church in 1972. The church remains today as one of the city's oldest and best preserved houses of worship.

-- William W. Sturm



(Oakland History Room)

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