

## *Stanley Lowe Tells Oakland There's* **"Gold in Your Neighborhoods"**



Stanley Lowe came to Oakland to dispel the notion that preservation is "just white folks' stuff." At the invitation of OHA and local cohosts, the dynamic head of the Pittsburgh Housing Authority spoke to a large crowd November 7 at First Presbyterian church. We were pleased to have Allen Temple Baptist Church, East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation, Oakland Citizens Committee for Urban Renewal, Oakland Sharing the Vision, and Spanish Speaking Unity Council co-host the event. These organizations, all active in improving life in Oakland, helped us reach a diverse audience of neighborhood activists, politicians, and preservation people who responded to Lowe's message with enthusiasm. Linda Dunson, educator and community activist, said the talk "put preservation into a broader context than it is generally thought of... how it creates an economic base for the community." Carolyn Sandidge, chair of the Central East Oakland

**"Knowledge": Stanley Lowe (foreground) and Howard Slaughter (left) touring the renovation at Peralta Villa with Ralph Carey of the Oakland Housing Authority. Mural by Dewey Crumpler/Oakland Wallspeak!, 1988.**

Community Development District Board, said "He related innovative, realistic strategic approaches as a resolution to some of our problems."

Oakland Heritage Alliance felt that Stanley Lowe was the perfect speaker to address preservation issues in Oakland. With his broad-based, community-level approach to organizing, his creative approach to financing, and his use of preservation as one of many tools to fight neighborhood apathy, we felt the time was ripe for his message. We felt that as an African American activist he could help us begin to forge alliances with communities that may feel disengaged from preservation.

The day of the lecture included a noon conversation at City Hall hosted by Councilmember Nancy Nadel and broadcast on



Above: Panel discussion broadcast on KTOP: Banker Scott Brown, Councilmember Nancy Nadel, Stanley Lowe, and Howard Slaughter of Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation. Videotape is available from City Clerk's office, or can be borrowed from OHA. Right: Stanley Lowe and colleagues viewing development plan at Allen Temple.



KTOP. Lowe and his colleagues also toured housing sites in Oakland, beginning in West Oakland with rehabs by Jubilee West and the transformation of Peralta Villa by the Oakland Housing Authority. Later they went to East Oakland to visit the Allen Temple Arms and new projects planned by the Allen Temple Baptist Church. A personal touch was added when residents invited the group into their homes.

Stanley Lowe studied economics at Shaw University in North Carolina, and has shaped a unique career in the public, private, and non-profit sectors, in the '80s as head of Pittsburgh History and Landmarks; as an activist on the local level; and now on the city side as housing director. Mtangulizi ("M.T.") Sanyika, nationally-known Bay Area community development consultant who has worked with Lowe, introduced him in Oakland as "a man of enormous good sense... a Renaissance man... who can function efficiently and effectively in all areas without compromise," and "of the flatlands, by the flatlands, and for the flatlands, with the ability to enter into multisectoral dialogue with the hills."

Lowe spoke with the fervor and conviction of a Baptist minister (and, M.T. added, "good old ebonic humor"). He



"Is this public housing?" Stanley Lowe asked. Campbell Village in West Oakland, redesigned with neighborhood-scale rooflines, porches, bright colors, and picket fences: Oakland's alternative to the "demolition party" Lowe organized for one Pittsburgh project. (Survey/P.Magnuson-Peddle)

feels strongly that preservationists need "preservation heroes" to sustain us (he cited Nikki Giovanni, Arthur Ziegler, and others), partnerships on all levels of the community, and strong, creative financial strategies. This combination made it possible for his community group, Manchester Citizens Corporation, to leverage a \$7 million HUD grant into loans of \$24 million for neighborhood improvements.

With talk and slides, he took us to his predominantly African American neighborhood of Manchester. It is an area of late 19th century brick row houses and mansions which, through the hard work of the residents, has become a historic district with "a renewal of spirit and renewal of place." The heart of Lowe's message is that preservation is a valuable way to fight apathy and revitalize neighborhoods in the inner city and that building partnerships is essential to the process.

In the mid 1970s, after trying the scorched-earth policy of urban renewal, Lowe realized the community was losing its identity, so he revisited his plan. He and residents (he stressed that community involvement is essential) formed Manchester Citizens Corporation (MCC) and developed a program: establish a community needs assessment and a strategic plan, develop partnerships, and work from a win-win philosophy. The group worked closely with financial institutions, churches, and city government to revitalize their community from within.

Emphasizing that preservation has to "mean something to a forgotten class of people," Lowe showed slides of the neighborhood's transformation: an old mansion into senior housing, trees planted to soften the streetscape, an abandoned house converted to an after school activity center for children, a dilapidated inn to a bed and breakfast, blocks of public housing torn down and replaced with new infill housing in scale with the neighborhood. Because inner city residents often have no equity or credit history, the community developed programs like "Ain't I A Woman" to make home ownership possible, to make preservation work. They strongly emphasized jobs. "The only way preservation is going to make sense to these kids is if they have meaningful employment.... It is to the spirit." During the talk he returned again and again to slides of children because "this is who we do it for."

He used a photo of a local bank to stress the importance of financial partnerships. "If you don't get *anything* else out of this talk tonight," Lowe said, "*that's* where the money is, it's



"That's where the money is": This vacant building on 7th Street was once the West Oakland Bank & Trust Company. Lowe and his partners have learned to combat disinvestment in old and minority neighborhoods.

not in City Hall." To substantiate this statement, Lowe brought with him from Pittsburgh two friends and colleagues - Howard Slaughter, Director of Preservation Services of the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, and Scott Brown, Vice President of Community Services for Mellon Bank. Lowe stressed that communities need to organize and "create a voice bankers will listen to": do their homework, research how banks work, educate themselves about loan practices and the Community Reinvestment Act.

The "Seven Day War" ("True story.") illustrated his point. An out-of-town bank was buying out a local bank in Pittsburgh but would not agree to the community's insistence on socially responsible investments. Lowe mobilized the MCC, the City, and the Board of Education and threatened to withdraw \$100 million in seven days. The bank said "Where do we sign?"

In Manchester through the years, strategies are continually refined. Community advisory groups can offer a wealth of information and practical advice to financial institutions, because "you can't assume that the banks know what to do for your neighborhood." The MCC has slowly developed strong partnerships with the local banks ("if a corporation can have a bank of record, why not a neighborhood bank of record?"), a relationship that is mutually beneficial.

In the early 1990s Lowe's neighborhood preservation efforts needed a jump start. The MCC was frustrated by the problems still present: drugs, abandoned buildings, trouble bars, high unemployment for African American males, absentee owners, public housing that was a disaster. ("You all don't know nothing about any of this, right?") A neighborhood council worked for a year and a half on a dream of a perfect neighborhood. They mapped problem areas and developed a needs assessment and a strategic plan as a "credit report" for the banks. They developed a cost analysis showing they would need \$35 million to do all the work. With their plan they were able to get a \$7 million HUD grant; through preservation partnerships on the local, state, and national levels they leveraged an additional \$24 million from banks.

Lowe's approach to community, housing, and finance was

not always preservation-based. Fresh out of college, working for a Pittsburgh developer, he was involved in "suburbanizing" his native Manchester. White flight "taught us how to hate our community," so he built ranch-style housing for those who couldn't afford to leave. At the end of the day he would say "Gotcha - got another one" for every old building torn out.

Then he met Arthur Ziegler of Pittsburgh History and Landmarks which was trying to save a street in Manchester. At first Lowe and the Manchester community threw him out, but Lowe began to tally the numbers of the housing they were losing. They asked Ziegler back, but first Ziegler sent the group on a tour of Georgetown and other historic districts. They returned to Manchester realizing they had their own gold mine of fine old housing stock; something unique, a source of pride and self-worth. Lowe then decided to "stop this madness of tearing down our neighborhoods" and make preservation work.

He loves his work and is a proud "card-carrying member and trustee of the National Trust for Historic Preservation." As to how his job as housing director and preservation relate, Lowe said that he only accepted the job when he was allowed to "be dangerous." He asked "What if we decided there was no difference between public housing and affordable housing? ... What if we used public housing money for neighborhood development?" So instead of monolithic project housing that isolates residents from the neighborhood and brands them as poor, he has developed housing in older buildings or new housing with the scale and feel of the surrounding community.

Manchester actively promotes its image, to counter the way "they're always advertising our neighborhood" on the evening news: "so-and-so got shot tonight, don't walk down that street." A basic principle is "the city and outside influences don't own the community, the community owns the community." Mr. Lowe ended his remarks: "When you can fully claim your history, you can soar." --Pamela Magnuson-Peddle

**THANK YOU:** Oakland Heritage Alliance would like to thank our cohorts for their participation which made it all possible. Special thanks to Councilmember Nancy Nadel, the Oakland Housing Authority, Mtangulizi Sanyika, and Jubilee West for their special contributions to this event.



To a question about fear of historic district designation, Stanley Lowe replied, "Let me put it like this: if we'd been handing out \$20 bills in West Oakland this morning, we'd have attracted a crowd. Now, often people have gold in their neighborhoods and just don't realize it..." (Chester Street, Oakland Point, 1987: Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey)

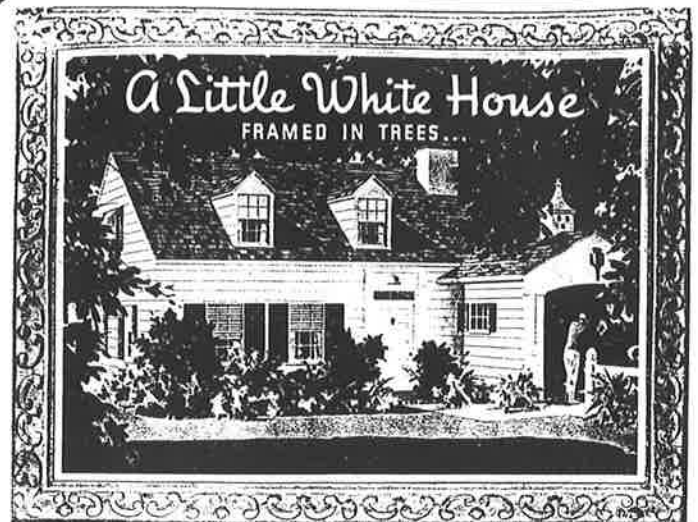
# ACLPPP: Preventing Lead Poisoning While Preserving Older Homes

We are fortunate in Oakland and the Bay Area to have an abundance of homes built in the late 1800s and early 1900s. While these homes have beautiful structural components, they are also usually coated under the surface layers with a toxic substance left over from the past: lead-based paint. If not handled safely, lead-based paint can cause serious, long-term health problems for children living in the home and for people doing renovations. The most common source of lead poisoning is dust from peeling paint and contaminated soil. Poisoning also results from high levels of lead dust generated during renovation, even as simple as preparing a surface for painting.

Historically lead has been valued for its lasting qualities in paint. It was used whenever durability was needed, especially on wood components such as windows, doors, and baseboards and in rooms with moisture such as bathrooms and kitchens, as well as on the exterior of buildings. Cases of lead poisoning were identified as early as 1904. By the mid 1920s there was wide recognition that lead paint was a common cause of childhood lead poisoning. Many European countries banned or severely restricted lead paint in the 1920s and 1930s. In the United States, the industry gradually reduced the amount of lead in paint over the years although many painters continued to mix their own paint using a combination of "pure white lead" and linseed oil. Federal legislation in 1970 restricted the amount of lead in paint to 0.5 percent. In 1978, the limit was lowered to the current standard of 0.06 percent. However, many of our older homes contain high concentrations of lead underneath the surface layers. In fact, it is estimated that 95 percent of homes built before 1950 have lead-based paint.



Plastic sheeting on doors and windows will help keep lead dust out of this Victorian cottage while exterior work is done. In 1905 Oakland architect A.W. Smith cited as an advantage of shingled Craftsman houses that they did not need "a thin film of lead poison" every two years. (ACLPPP)



DON'T LET "CHEAP" PAINT SPOIL THE PICTURE!

H OME, SWEET HOME! You've planned for it. Worked for it. Sacrificed for it. Then why invite the headache that is sure to follow if you use "cheap" paint?

The first photograph at the right shows what always happens—how "cheap" paint soon cracks and scales, not only marring the beauty of a house but exposing the wood to the ravages of the weather.

That's hard to bear, but the sequel is heart-breaking too. For before new paint can be put on the old must be taken off, burned and scraped off, down to the bare wood...a costly operation that takes all the "bargain" out of the original job. Then on top of that comes another expensive extra. Before the finishing coats are applied a new priming coat is needed.

But note the contrast with Dutch Boy. No headaches here. No extra expense. For paint made with Dutch Boy White-Lead does not crack and scale. It resists the weather—wears down stubbornly by gradual



"CHEAP" PAINT

After a few months, about like a and see. New the surface must be repaired. Dutch Boy's lead paint makes normal maintenance easy—no priming coat—no burning and scraping and no new painting cost will be added.

DUTCH BOY

After several years. Same location as "cheap" paint job looks like the difference in condition. No cracking and scaling here. When repainted any day can, no burning and scraping and no new painting cost will be added.

chalking, leaving a smooth, unbroken surface, one that needs no burning and scraping when repainting is necessary.

The experienced painter prefers to put on Dutch Boy because its beauty and durability give lasting satisfaction to property owners and reflect credit on his craftsmanship. He mixes it to suit the requirements of the job and tints it to the exact colors you specify. No one knows paint like a painter.

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Please send me your free booklet "The House We Live In," containing color scheme suggestions and practical advice on interior and exterior painting.  
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Lead was used in paint for durability, as this 1936 "Better Homes & Gardens" ad explains. Dutch Boy's Oakland plant was located on San Leandro Boulevard. (ACLPPP collection)

In Oakland alone there are approximately 150,000 residential units built before 1978, most of which contain some lead-based paint. In these homes live 30,000 young children at potential risk of lead poisoning. A high concentration of cases exists in West Oakland and other neighborhoods where the housing is oldest. However, lead poisoning also occurs in newer and higher maintenance neighborhoods, particularly when families undertake renovations that create lead dust.

In one case, an Oakland family with two young children was remodelling their circa 1920 home. When they took their one-year-old for a checkup they asked the pediatrician for a blood lead test. When the results came back the child had 47 µg/dL lead in his blood, a serious medical emergency. The child was hospitalized for chelation therapy, administered only in high level cases. The Alameda County Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (ACLPPP) conducted a public health investigation at the home, and high lead levels were found in paint and dust.

Adults who work on older homes can also be lead poisoned. This usually occurs when old paint is dry scraped, sanded, flame torched, or removed using power tools. These activities create large quantities of airborne lead dust which are inhaled.

Learning ways to safely handle sources of lead can reduce the risk of lead poisoning for both children and adults.

Lead-safe renovations involve basic steps that anyone can take. Preventing paint deterioration with regular maintenance is really the best way to forestall a problem. Work with peeling paint requires careful planning. When preparing a surface for painting, or removing lead-bearing components, methods that reduce and contain the dust should be used. These can include wet scraping, using chemical strippers (with caution!) or bringing the component, such as a door or window, to an off-site paint removal company. Before you begin, 6 mil thick plastic sheeting should be taped on the floors or secured to the ground, windows, and vents to prevent the dust from traveling to other areas of the home or contaminating the soil. Care should be taken to thoroughly wet-clean all work areas when the prep work is done. Children and pregnant women should stay out of the work area. Workers should change their clothes and wash hands, face, and hair before leaving the work area and should never eat or smoke in the work area.

**MYTH 1:** *A paper dust mask will protect me from inhaling lead dust.* Not true! Lead dust is very fine and can travel right through a paper mask. Whenever there is a chance that lead dust may be generated, workers should wear a half-face respirator with a HEPA (magenta colored) filter.

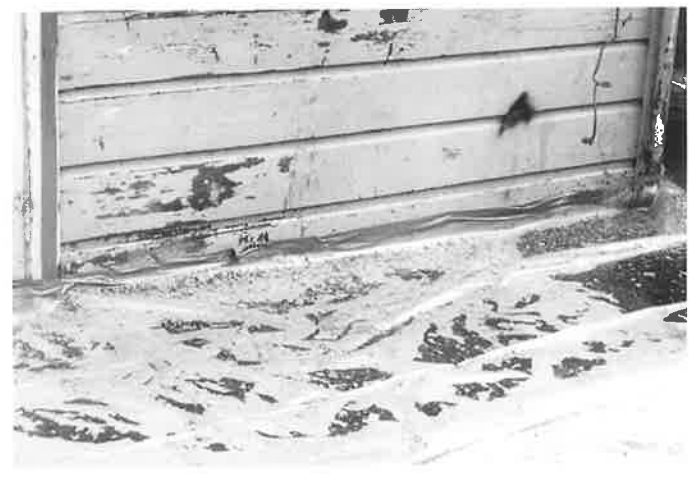
**MYTH 2:** *To reduce a lead hazard I must scrape the paint down to the wood and remove all of the lead paint.* Not true! Removing all the paint can be extremely hazardous and costly. The most important task is to safely stabilize the surface paint so that it is intact and not generating dust.

**MYTH 3:** *It is impossible to preserve historic components when lead work is done.* Not true! There are many ways to safeguard building parts while doing lead hazard reduction. Wet scraping, chemical strippers, off-site paint removal or replacement with like components are several of the options.

For more information regarding lead safe home renovation practices, call the Alameda County Lead Poisoning Prevention Program. According to consumer groups and health officials ACLPPP is "one of the best programs in the country." The program offers free lead safe home renovation classes, educational materials and referrals for preventing lead poisoning and conducting lead safe renovations. *Currently, the program offers a free home site visit, risk assessment and consultation for pre-1978 residential properties in Oakland, Emeryville, Berkeley, and Alameda.* The site visit includes collection and analysis of paint, dust, and soil samples from your home and a written report explaining the results. The ACLPPP schedules a consultation with the homeowner to discuss the results and offer information on what can be done to reduce the family's exposure to any hazards identified. Lead Safe Starter Kits for renovation and painting projects and a HEPA vacuum lending program for cleanup will be available soon. For more information, call the lead information line at (510) 567-8280 Monday to Friday, 8:30 to 5. --Julie Twichell

Julie Twichell is Environmental Services Manager, Alameda County Lead Poisoning Prevention Program. Christine Tasto, A.J. Napolis, Betty Wolverton, and Doug Anderson also contributed to this article.

**Top and center:** Lead abatement was successfully accomplished while preserving the glazed wood doors of this period garage. **Bottom:** Plastic sheeting taped to the base of the building during painting or abatement work keeps lead from contaminating the soil. (ACLPPP)





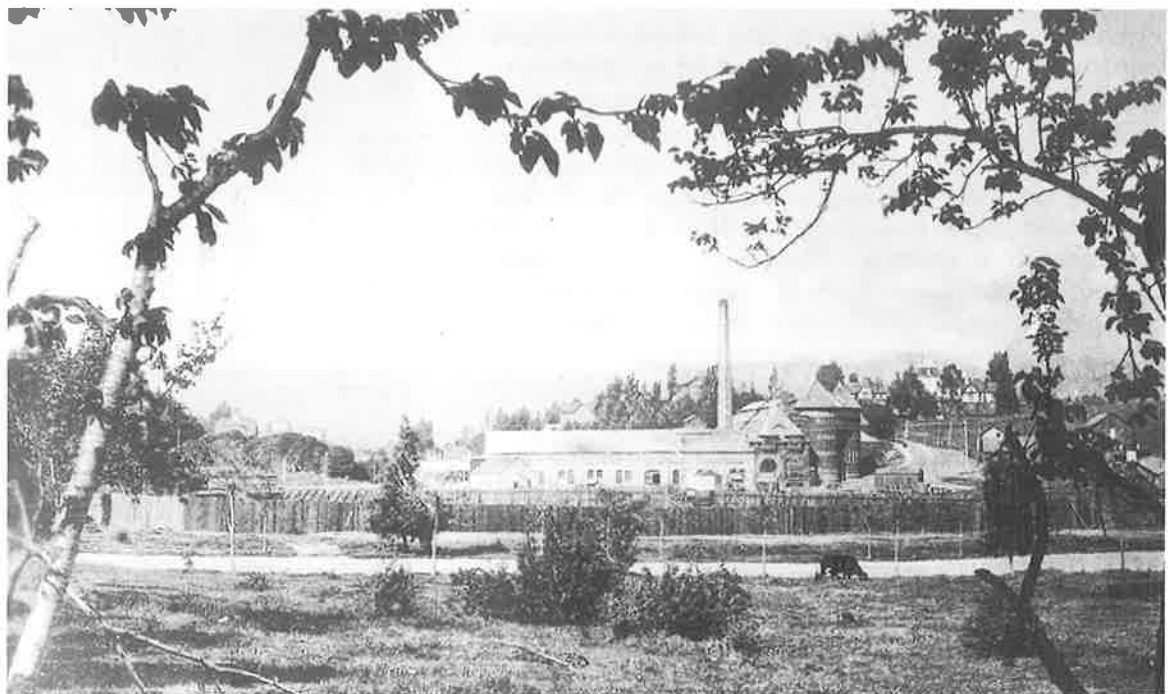
## Piedmont Baths: Background to a Landmark

For nearly five decades, from 1891 to 1939, the corner of Bay Place and Vernon Street was occupied by the Piedmont Baths. The Baths were situated next door to the powerhouse and cable car barn of the Piedmont Consolidated Cable Company, now remodeled as the Cox Cadillac building. They made use of the voluminous quantity of water heated by the boilers at the powerhouse that would have been pumped back into nearby Lake Merritt. The partners in the cable company, with a keen eye toward value, saw that all that heated saltwater could generate further profit through a first-class natatorium. It would even provide another reason to ride their cable cars.

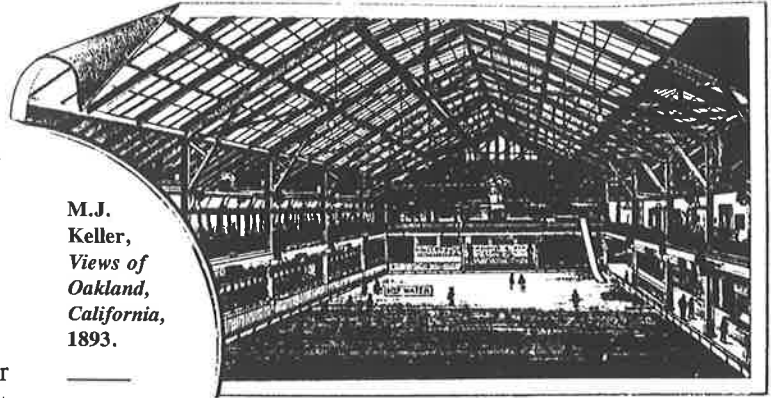
The Piedmont Baths opened with a splash in June of 1891. There was a huge 70 by 120 foot indoor swimming pool, or "aquatic theater," complete with artificial waterfall, private bathing rooms for utilitarian cleanliness, and novelty baths such as Russian, Roman, Hammam, medicinal, and - for the daring - electrical. The facility, built at a cost of \$85,000, also included a cafe, smoking rooms, and a barber shop. It covered three quarters of an acre of land. According to the December 6, 1890, *Oakland Enquirer*, construction required the removal of 23,000 cubic yards of earth, dug out and hauled away for "little or nothing" by Peter Thomson who promptly resold it.

The fanciful building featured two tall turrets and two smaller ones, extensive use of art-glass windows, and a red-wood shingled exterior. The swimming pool roof was made of glass and the windows on the sides were of "English mottled glass of a yellow cream color." Lavish use of tile, marble, and fine woods distinguished the interior. Although the water for the baths was initially drawn from Lake Merritt, later years brought a scheme to bring in water from the Bay which the

"Piedmont Baths and Base Ball Grounds, seen from 22nd Street, 1892." Piedmont Baths building is to the right of the smokestack, car barn and powerhouse to the left. Steep Baths site at the bottom of Vernon Street is vacant to this day. Cable car complex was remodeled into a neo-Gothic auto palace (now Cox Cadillac) in 1925 by prominent Oakland architect Clay Burrell. City Landmark nomination is pending. (Oakland History Room)



NATATORIUM - PIEDMONT BATHS.



M.J. Keller,  
*Views of  
Oakland,  
California,  
1893.*

management claimed was "sterilized with the Ultra-Violet Rays, which absolutely kill all bacteria." Use of the powerhouse ended in 1904 and the Piedmont Baths installed its own heating system.

The Piedmont Baths enjoyed local popularity for years. In 1915 after extensive interior remodeling the focus of the enterprise shifted away from bathing to swimming alone. A 1916 advertisement in the upscale *Observer* asks, "Is your child's life worth \$5?" A course of six lessons at the New Piedmont Baths that year came with an "absolute guarantee."

A fire in 1929 damaged the interior and brought down an exterior wall which was temporarily replaced with canvas and business appeared to carry on as usual. In 1932 the Baths' changed hands, was again remodeled, and reopened in 1933 as the Lakeside Plunge under the management of L.R. McWethy. The change of ownership did not succeed in improving the business's fortunes for long. The Baths closed for good in 1937, victim of the Great Depression and changing public tastes, and came down the next year, marking the end of a recreational era in Oakland. --Kathleen Leles DiGiovanni

## Oakland Briefing

### ■ MOST ENDANGERED LIST RAISES OHA PROFILE

Last summer OHA unveiled its first ever Most Endangered Buildings list, staged a "rare" press conference (in the words of the *Oakland Tribune*) and, in one key instance, may have actually helped to tip the balance. The release of the list, timed to coincide with that of the National Trust, was reported extensively by local media. The *Tribune* and *Montclarion* both covered the press conference and list, with photos of the Floral Depot. Channel 5 sent a reporter and cameraperson and set out after the press conference in a successful hunt for Cox Cadillac, Studio One, and JJ's. The "expanded" East Bay *Chronicle* ignored us, which might be a good reason to call or write the *Chronicle's* East Bay Bureau. (This oversight was perhaps remedied by Rick Del Vecchio's thoughtful article, "Beauties or Beasts - Oakland preservationists see value where others don't" in the *Chronicle* of November 14.) We were also able to provide the Uptown design workshop, hosted by the Redevelopment Agency, with a preview edition of the list.

The most spectacular recent developments have centered on the **Floral Depot**, **Newberry's**, and **Sweet's Ballroom**. The previously unpublicized plan by BART to build a 14 story, 300,000 square foot headquarters on the Floral Depot site apparently evaporated with the advent of public scrutiny and criticism. BART's pull-out from consideration of the 19th Street site occurred in less than a month's time, despite years of planning and the active support of high-level City staff. The opening salvo in the preservation campaign was an articulate, impassioned letter by Steve Lavoie of the OHA board, printed in the *Montclarion* and quoted at length in a sympathetic *Tribune* column by Peggy Stinnett. Lavoie criticized the BART board for picking the Floral Depot site rather than expanding at their present location. Bob Brokl and Al Crofts, under the auspices of the Public Records Act and over the initial reluctance of CEDA staff, reviewed files pertaining to the BART move. These revealed the City had actively worked with the developer controlling the Floral Depot site. Initial plans called for demolition of all the existing buildings. While the BART developers scrambled to revise their plans to include the *facades* of the Floral Depot and Sweet's after the initial flurry of press coverage, another party stepped forward and offered \$2 million for the properties, without elaborate seismic/engineering evaluations. That offer was ultimately accepted by the department store owners of the site. Matthew Fox, the unorthodox theologian who is purchasing the property, indicated he intends to keep most of the existing configurations of the buildings and will use Sweet's Ballroom for "rave masses." A Body Shop is rumored for one storefront.

The future also looks brighter for the **Key System Building** (1100 Broadway). A hotel developer is interested in converting the earthquake-damaged building into a hotel offering "mid-priced" rooms. The other major contender for the property also planned to reuse the National Register building. A poten-

tial problem involves the removal of the two-story annex. It is hoped that the "Keystone Hotel" project fares better than a 1980s proposal for a "Hotel Two" behind the Key System building, minus the annex, which involved years of negotiation and delay and ended with the developer's withdrawal.

**Studio One's** future seems a bit brighter with the formation of a Friends group separate from the Oakland Studio Arts Association governing board and with the support of District 1 Councilmember Jane Brunner. But the estimated cost of seismic, code, ADA upgrades keeps rising, now \$8 to \$10 million. Studio One and several other Parks and Recreation facilities have been in the news recently as examples of facilities that "don't pay their own way" and that serve non-residents without adequate compensation. Upstart Studio One supporters, many from the surrounding Temescal neighborhood, see a need to improve the operations of the Center and bring new blood into the board. The question is whether the changes afoot will pull operations enough into the black to placate councilmembers who have questioned the current location and whether the facility will weather the next Big One. The other nagging problem is snaring money for renovation: the Capital Improvements Program budget is only \$8 million, with some 200 applications waiting their turn!

The case of the **Montgomery Ward** building is becoming a melodrama of epic length. While the City issued an RFP that includes the option of reusing the existing building (at the insistence of Councilmembers Nancy Nadel and John Russo), apparently only one developer team (Emerald Fund of San Francisco) submitted a proposal calling for reuse. The Oakland School District has proposed a new elementary school for the site, and Assemblyman Don Perata, ally of Councilmember De La Fuente, has promised it state funding. Meanwhile, Montgomery Ward has retained nominal ownership, foiling efforts to place the building on the National Register. According to some close to the process, developer selection may be based mostly upon who brings the most money to the table. Because of the recent court decision, a full EIR will be required.

The three **West Oakland houses** uprooted by the Cypress freeway are another "Perils of Pauline" scenario. The July 1 deadline for removal from their temporary storage site at the former Phoenix Iron Works was extended to December 31. The Pardee Home Museum Board recommended against their being moved to the vacant site next door in Preservation Park. At this writing they are still standing.

On a happier note, the **Cox Cadillac Building** in Adams Point may be in luck, and from an unlikely source. Rite-Aid, an East Coast-based corporation which has levelled historic commercial buildings elsewhere to accommodate its stores, in this instance is proposing to place the store in the existing Cox Cadillac complex. (It is also going into historic 1400 Broadway.) Perhaps because of the developer's interest, the Landmarks Board had an easy time recommending landmark status for the building, forwarding the Adams Point Preservation Society nomination to the Planning Commission. Rite-Aid is indicating they will treat the showroom sensitively, but some less obvious structures on the site may go.--Robert Brokl

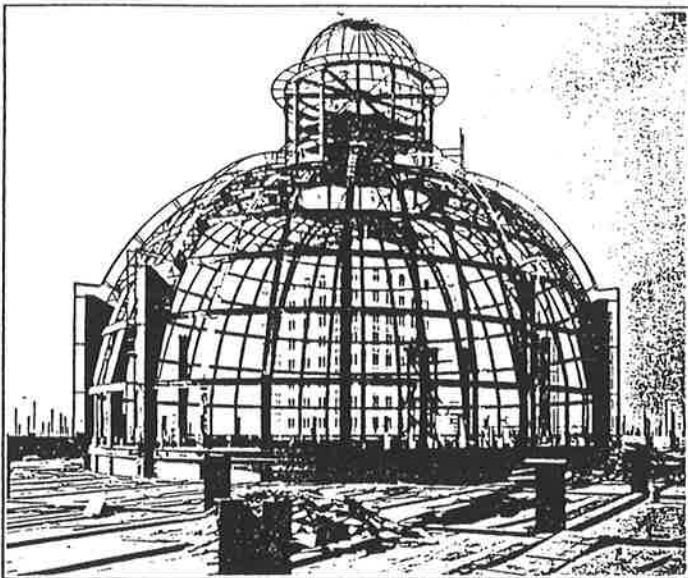
## ■ THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN

An October press release from the Mayor's office and a December memorandum from the Community and Economic Development Agency (CEDA) shed some light on directions and priorities in the downtown for the coming year. Since the CEDA priorities involve several key historic buildings and locations, OHA members should pay close attention.

New appointments to two top positions at CEDA were announced in the press release. William Claggett, formerly the Director of Economic Development for the City of San Jose, is heading up the agency on an interim (six month) basis. Named as deputy to Mr. Claggett is Kent Sims who had been assisting former CEDA Director and acting City Manager Kofi Bonner prior to Mr. Bonner's departure for San Francisco in November. Before coming to Oakland Mr. Sims himself held a top position in the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency.

Now that these top agency positions have been filled, look to see movement on certain projects in the coming months. According to the press release Claggett and Sims will be focusing on the "Magnificent Seven," seven projects which "combined with the Fall 1998 opening of the City Administration Buildings as well as the Harris State Building - will signal the renaissance of downtown Oakland." Except for the Coliseum Shoreline, all are preservation-related.

At the top of the Magnificent Seven list is reuse of the **Rotunda** building. Apparently scuttled for now is the education and high tech center concept (see Fall 1996 OHA News) due to lack of funds. A private partnership, California Commercial Investments, has stepped forward to develop the former Kahn's-Rhodes-Liberty House department store as an office/retail complex. A 120-day Exclusive Negotiation Agreement with CCI went into effect in November. A prior



Top of the list: The Rotunda, designed for Kahn's Department Store by Charles W. Dickey in 1912, reflected the influence of Parisian department stores and brought elegant shopping to Oakland. Dyer Bros.' shop-work on the huge elliptical dome "was so good that when assembled all holes matched exactly." (Architect and Engineer, October 1913)

commitment to repair the south wall facing the reopened Kahn's Alley by December 1997 has not been fulfilled.

Implementing the **Uptown Entertainment District** and "reconfiguration" of the **Fox Theater** are next on the Magnificent Seven list. A Request for Proposals for the Uptown district was issued in August and six responses were received by the deadline. There is still no official word if any are feasible. Any Tax Act project for the National Register Fox must conform to the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. It would seem prudent to consult early on with National Park Service staff to make sure any proposed "reconfigurations" stay within the guidelines. Also of concern are leaks in the roof (see Landmarks Board report). Also in the Uptown district, a multi-parcel acquisition by theologian Matthew Fox which includes the Floral Depot and the Newberry building was about to close escrow as this issue went to press. Renovation and reuse appear to be cornerstones of his intentions, welcome news to preservationists.

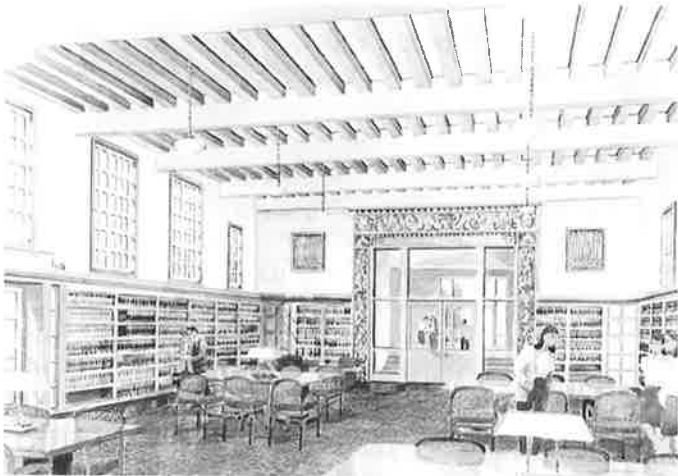
Relocation of the **Wholesale Produce Market**, a cluster of businesses currently located near Jack London Square around Third and Franklin Streets, will vacate a group of buildings that appear eligible as a National Register district. The operators are looking at sites in West Oakland, including land on the former Army Base and Union Pacific property adjacent to the landmark 16th Street Station. If the operators succeed in relocating, the old market will become the target for speculative redevelopment. In fact the area has been the focus of various reuse studies this past year. Can redevelopment be carried out in a manner that utilizes the historic infrastructure?

Next door to the Pardee Home Museum on 11th Street is a vacant parcel commonly called **Preservation Park III**. It is the last undeveloped section of the original Preservation Park district created in the late 1970s as a site for threatened historic houses from other parts of the city. Currently a partially excavated foundation (for the historic Herrick House, moved from Pill Hill and lost to arson 10 years ago) and a deteriorated Classic Revival house up on blocks occupy the lot. A Request for Proposals issued last summer resulted in several responses which are under review. While the RFP did specify that any new development must be "complementary to the Pardee House and Preservation Park," evidently relocating or rescuing endangered buildings is no longer seen as essential. That would seem to preclude the moving of the three West Oakland houses to the site, leaving their fate up in the air.

Two blocks over at Clay and 10th, the Old Town Square development of new market-rate townhomes nears completion. A second phase is planned for the block containing the Housewives Market at Clay and 9th Streets. Vendors are expected to move over to the (hopefully by then) renovated Swan's building at 10th and Washington, another former market. Swan's, determined eligible for the National Register, will also have a housing component as part of its reuse plan. The East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC) is the developer for Swan's. The Swan's project should be a welcome addition to the Old Oakland Historic District.

--Annalee Allen





Architect's drawing for Old Merritt library, showing shelves, beamed ceiling, and rusticated wall finish restored for use by Children's Hospital Research Institute. (courtesy of Children's Hospital Oakland)

## ■ OLD MERRITT UPDATE

OHA readers who have followed years of Old Merritt updates may still be surprised at this unexpected 11th-hour development. We learned only recently of this change in plans, after innocently requesting a copy of the housing RFP and finding a fire station lurking in the midst of the housing and park. Oakland Fire Chief John Baker is proposing to close Station 8 in Temescal and build a new and expanded \$3 million facility at the rear of the Old Merritt site on Dover Street. The longstanding plans for this portion of the site touching the surrounding residential neighborhood, as developed at endless community meetings and described in the EIR, called for housing and a small neighborhood park. This last-minute intervention means that the recommendation for a housing developer (probably Berkeley-based Resources for Community Development) may go forward for Council approval with 2 of the 13 units of housing removed along with the park.

An interesting and growing alliance of groups and neighbors has emerged to fight this intrusive newcomer to the project. NOVA, Temescal Neighbors Together (TNT), the Temescal Merchants Association, and the Commission On Aging have all suggested that the current firehouse location is a superior one. OHA members who are similarly inclined might call Councilmember Jane Brunner at 238-7001, Mayor Harris at 238-3141, NOVA at 655-3841. Brunner made the fire station the topic of her December 6 Advisory Committee meeting.

Other, more familiar Merritt news has the nearly completed senior center (the Michael Willis & Assoc. design shoehorned into the auditorium) opening in May, Children's Hospital a breath away from a deal with the City for approximately half of the main building for their Research Institute, and Hensel-Phelps Construction wrapping up their phase of the project. Vigilance by the design subcommittee resulted in the exterior paint color not being a purplish gray (the selection of a color a bit too pink is still a victory), much of the interior trim in the corridors being stained and varnished rather than

painted (we were unable to save the trim in the senior center or in the classrooms), and the new "main" entrance at the back of the building - off the parking lots, of course - having a clay tile roof and tile floor rather than composition shingle roof and carpeted floor as first proposed by VBN Architects.

The City has run out of money for doing anything about the north courtyard with its "secret forest" of mature sycamores (Children's will control the south courtyard and the library between) or for loans to prospective non-Children's tenants to build out their spaces. The proposed cultural center is on hold, with no operator coming forward cash in hand to develop the space. A contentious neighborhood meeting addressed just who might and might not use the center. In the meantime, the 5,000 square feet allotted for the center sits empty.

Children's Hospital is now negotiating to purchase the entire site from the City, for under \$14 million. The senior center would remain in City jurisdiction, as could the cultural center and public park if they materialize. The nature of the housing might change. NOVA is calling for a community meeting to hear residents' comments about this decisive development.

We understand that the curious may tour the construction site in small groups by calling the site office at 595-1270 or the project manager at 238-3317. --Robert Brokl

## ■ CARNEGIE BRANCH LIBRARIES UPDATE

Work may begin soon on the Temescal Branch Library, the first of the Carnegie branches to benefit from the recent passage of Bond Measure I. If the process leading up to this stage had not been so flawed and the ultimate outcome so uncertain, one might be more optimistic and the tone of this report more congratulatory. As noted in previous updates, the money allowed for seismic retrofitting, code improvements, and ADA compliance was the barest minimum. The original figure submitted by the Library engineer - the minimum amount required to do the most basic work necessary to keep the branches open under the URM mandates - was unfortunately the amount that ended up in the bond measure. No one from the preservation community seems to have been consulted, and political realities governing the bond measure also dictated stripped-down estimates.

Only one bid came in under the roughly \$1.4 million available for the work. This company, Oakland-based American Pacific, was considerably under, but was late submitting paperwork and was generally considered to lack experience in brick work and other areas. Bidder number two, Alton Construction of San Rafael, and bidder number three, BBI Construction of Oakland, both used the services of BMP Earthquake Engineering and both came in substantially over the \$1.4 million figure. Litigation was reportedly initiated over consideration of the first bidder.

After members of North Oakland Voters Alliance (NOVA) and Friends of the Temescal Library protested the number of deserving items not included in the scope of work, such as updated electrical and computer wiring, replacement linoleum, landscaping, and light fixtures, Council found another



Temescal Branch has always had friends! Oakland History Room photo records a lovingly detailed model of Alden Branch - Temescal's original name - made of children's book covers "by Major Luckhart Dec. 1933."

\$100,000 for the wiring. Public Works and the Library's engineer attempted to solve the quandary of an inexperienced contractor, a lawsuit, and beer taste on a tap water budget by rejecting all bids, mandating the first bidder to add more experienced participants to their team, and promising to allocate the savings to extras such as the linoleum.

On behalf of OHA, NOVA, and the Friends, the Library was asked to establish a citizen design committee, such as exists on the Old Merritt College project, to review plans for the work. A meeting was held January 15; it is clear that cost constraints will drive the process. Friends groups from other branches waiting their turn might take notice. --Robert Brokl

#### ■ SHPO CHERILYN WIDELL VISITS FRUITVALE

Fruitvale Main Street stepped up its revitalization efforts this August by hosting Cherilyn Widell, California's State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). Merchants, property owners, and concerned citizens in the Fruitvale district are making preservation a key component of a cooperative effort to improve the quality of life and the economic vitality of Oakland's most diverse and densely populated neighborhood.

Main Street is a multi-level partnership involving state and federal sponsorship, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and a local organization, in this case the Spanish Speaking Unity Council. Fruitvale's is a demonstration Main Street project with an urban neighborhood and ethnic focus. Other accomplishments in recent months have included a wildly successful Día de los Muertos festival on November 1, an invited presentation to the State Historical Resources Commission, and an exhibit of facade improvement projects currently on view at 3211 International Boulevard.

Widell's visit began with a walking tour along East 14th Street-International Boulevard through the former suburb of "Fruit Vale," showcasing completed rehab projects and sites of opportunity. Afterwards a group of Main Street participants, National Trust representatives, Oakland Heritage Alliance

members, and local residents met at Tío Tonio's Restaurant - itself an example of creative reuse of a cavernous garage - to hear Widell describe the very real benefits of preservation.

"Historic preservation," Widell pointed out, "is a booming business, with very specific economic benefits," including tax credits and the creation of new jobs ideally suited for an inner-city workforce. She described Pasadena's historic Colorado Boulevard strip, which since its preservation and rehabilitation generates "more retail dollars per square foot than any other place in California." In Petaluma preservation has returned commerce to the main street after businesses moved out into shopping centers across the river.

The success of these and other preservation projects has set a new trend in urban renewal. "By the year 2000, more money will be spent on rehabilitation than new construction." Widell sees the Fruitvale district as ideally suited for revitalization based on historic preservation. It "has a lot of places where people have come together to influence history." Moreover, the district has what people want. "When we think of historic preservation, everybody thinks of the missions, the landmarks and the Victorian homes of San Francisco," she said, "but communities are now rallying to save places like Randy's Donuts in Los Angeles." "People are looking closer to home, to the places where they live," she continued, "and they're getting tired of the sameness and instead want places to walk - in a more human scale." Fruitvale has exactly those assets.

But, she reminded everyone, its best asset is its community, that has come together around the Main Street project. Preservation, Widell said, benefits most in the neighborhoods, by rewarding the residents with a better quality of life. It is important to nurture those residents, because, she said, using a slide of an historic fountain in Portland, Oregon, that bears this inscription, "good citizens are the riches of a city."

--Steven Lavoie



Main Street tour group with SHPO Cherilyn Widell visits the Fruitvale Hotel. This 1894 railroad hotel has attracted the attention of the Main Street Historic Preservation Subcommittee, which is looking for ways to rehabilitate and reuse this unique building. If you have ideas or would like to help, call Jenny Kassan at Spanish Speaking Unity Council, 535-6924.

## ■ CULTURAL HERITAGE SURVEY UPDATE

In October the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey completed its 1996-97 project and began a new project funded by a Certified Local Government grant from the State Office of Historic Preservation. The 1996-97 project was designed to address two top priority actions in the Preservation Element: Action 1.1.1, by completing the city-wide windshield survey, and Action 3.2.2, preservation management of City-owned properties, by documenting City-owned "Potential Designated Historic Properties" (PDHPs). The Survey's database now has at least a preliminary rating for every property in the city.

When the first windshield survey was conducted in 1985-86, Chris Buckley used his comprehensive knowledge of Oakland to prioritize the work. Areas left unsurveyed were generally the more recent and least endangered, including most of the hills, the Airport-Coliseum industrial area, and large tracts of modest 1920s-40s houses in East Oakland. In 1996-97 we were finally able to complete the windshield survey. Almost 30,000 properties were viewed and rated. We recorded outstanding Period Revival houses in the hills, scattered buildings that appeared much earlier than their neighbors and might have ties to early settlement patterns, and some remarkable modern structures as well. About 70 districts were identified, mostly residential, ranging from the well-known 1920s Maxwell Park to wartime tracts to a cluster of nurseries, farmhouses, and water towers around 105th Avenue. Interesting finds included a 1949 drive-in shopping center on MacArthur (Coolidge Triangle) and a streamlined cluster at the High Street end of the Laurel commercial strip. One surprise was the large amount of high quality home construction from the late 1930s. We also noted 1960s-70s builders' vernacular apartment and house types - chalet, tiki, coach lantern, lava rock - and speculated on their relation to popular culture.

The windshield survey, of course, is only the beginning, since it is largely visual and may miss the stories behind some unprepossessing buildings. One of our 1997-98 projects is preliminary recording, with a photo and description, of the most notable resources found in the windshield survey. This will be followed up with research in a later phase.



The 1925 Gilson Electric building (rated "C") was demolished this summer at 11th and Madison, and with it this 1988 mural, "An invitation to read, and to understand," by Brooke Fancher and Kriska Boiral. (Betty Marvin)

The survey of City properties gave an overview of the civic history of Oakland. Surviving resources represent the earliest town platting and infrastructure (the original town squares, the North Training Wall in the Estuary), the Progressive era and City Beautiful movement (Carnegie libraries, Port improvements, park acquisitions), the WPA era (Woodminster, early public housing), and successive generations of schools.

One of the Survey's most satisfying activities has been working with CEDA's Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization (NCR) Program. This is continuing in the East Lake commercial district in 1998. The 1993 Fruitvale NCR survey was instrumental in Fruitvale's acceptance into the Main Street program and has assisted facade restorations and tours. The 23rd Avenue survey is also being used. For future work, there are many more NCR areas, with Foothill-Seminary, Laurel, and Elmhurst among the most interesting. There has been enthusiastic response to the City's facade improvement program, which offers matching funds and design assistance. The Survey has been providing ad hoc advice, and facade program participants are encouraged to consult the Survey for information on their buildings: plans, permit history, uses, early photos.

Survey staff in the 1996-97 projects were Betty Marvin and Gail Lombardi, with volunteers Beth Armstrong, Gaye Lenahan, Cecile Litherland, Pamela Magnuson-Peddle, Fred Reichman, Sylvia Gagne, Linda Kastner, Jane Spangler, and Georganne Thurston, and high school interns including Tiffany Small and Khoa Nguyen. Throughout the Survey's existence, volunteers have enhanced the quality and quantity of work and have provided unique personal and neighborhood perspectives. This year's projects offer opportunities to assist with photography and building descriptions throughout the city, and with research in the East Lake district. The Survey is also a resource for your own research: your house, your neighborhood, a tour, or an article. Call Betty Marvin at 238-6879 or Gail Lombardi at 238-3797 weekday afternoons. --Betty Marvin

## ■ CALIFORNIA GETS ITS OWN REGISTER

A reception in Sacramento on January 21 celebrated the inauguration of the California Register of Historic Resources. In 1984 the California Heritage Task Force recommended establishment of a comprehensive official register of California resources. In 1987 the State Historical Resources Commission established a committee chaired by Dr. Robert Hoover to develop the register, with input from interested individuals and organizations. On January 1, 1993, Assembly Bill 2881, introduced by Robert C. Frazee, became law, creating the California Register. The Commission then sought suggestions from throughout California for developing regulations for implementing the Register. Effective January 1, 1998, the State approved the regulations, and California has its register.

The California Register is designed as an authoritative guide to the state's historical resources. Substantial adverse changes to properties on or determined eligible for the Register are considered "significant effects" on the environment under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).



1996-97 Survey finds (top to bottom): the Allendale Theater on 38th Av., turned into wartime apartments by the Home Owners Loan Corp. c.1942; a castle on Thornhill Drive; water towers in the South Elmhurst area; Golden Gate School, one of several 1920s schools given 1930s Art Deco remodels in the course of their Field Act seismic work. (Survey photos)



## ■ PRESERVATION ELEMENT REVISITED

In January, City staff presented proposed revisions to four policies in the Historic Preservation Element of the Oakland General Plan to a joint meeting of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and the City Planning Commission.

Adopted in March 1994, the Preservation Element is a comprehensive document which identifies 25 policies and 66 action steps necessary for implementation, grouped into four priority levels. A work plan presented to the Council's Public Works Committee in April 1994 set out an implementation schedule for the 22 actions in the first priority group, with a projected completion date of December 1996. Of the four policies under reexamination, three are in priority group 1. To date, this work program has not been put into effect.

When the original Task Force sent the Element to the City Planning Commission for review in 1994 it was anticipated that unresolved issues would be addressed in the implementation phase and, if necessary, policies could be amended at that time. In the ensuing years, changes in planning staff, constant reorganization of the department, and work on the Land Use and Transportation Elements effectively put the Preservation Element on the shelf. It was the Montgomery Ward decision last year that brought renewed attention to the document.

In June, at the request of staff, Council directed reexamination of certain policies in the Element related to environmental review and landmark nomination of City-owned or City-assisted properties. A public workshop was held in August. In November, Councilmember Ignacio De La Fuente sent a letter to owners of some 10,000 properties rated "A", "B", or "C", alerting them to a document called the Historic Preservation Element that means "modifications to your property could require special environmental or design review" and inviting them to a special meeting of the Community and Economic Development Committee to discuss economic development and preservation. Hundreds of people packed the Council Chamber, many of them homeowners from the flatlands. It was clear from testimony at that meeting that the letter had raised fears in the West Oakland community that the city intended to take their homes, as happened in the ill-conceived redevelopment clearance projects of the 1960s.

The joint meeting in January drew only about 30 members of the public, perhaps due to a rather shorter notification list. Speakers at the five-hour hearing came from the Chamber of Commerce, OHA, the California Preservation Foundation, neighborhood representatives and individual building owners.

The staff report recommended changes to each of the policies examined. Under the proposal affecting environmental review, the number of historic buildings which would be subject to review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) would be limited to properties rated "A" or "B" by the Cultural Heritage Survey or located in Areas of Primary Importance: about 2% of all properties in the city. The result would be that protection of the remainder of "Potential Designated Historic Properties" (PDHPs), about 20% of the city, would depend on design review, a program which



The "parking lot loophole" in the demolition ordinance allowed this 1875 cottage at 947 Center Street to be demolished with no discretionary review whatever, although it was determined eligible for the National Register - and therefore was on the California Register - as a contributor to the Oakland Point District. Board and Commission discussed this case and asked staff to work on the loophole. (Survey photo, 1988)

historically has been under-funded, understaffed, and subject to the vagaries of politics.

It appears that the City Attorney's office is interpreting CEQA and the Ward's decision in a way that forces staff and policy-makers to either accept the recommended revision or require applicants to submit a full EIR for demolition or major alteration of any building with any degree of historical or architectural value. This would seem to contradict the whole purpose of the Survey rating system, "determining the *relative importance* of each of those properties so that preservation efforts may be *appropriately gauged*." (Preservation Element, Objective 1; emphasis added.)

Changes were also proposed which affect City-owned or assisted projects. Currently the element calls for the City to consider historic designation for properties it owns, as a way of leading by example. The proposal limits this policy to buildings the City holds for long-term occupancy. Properties acquired for future disposition, which in most cases are held by the Redevelopment Agency, would be exempt. Instead, the eventual developer would be required to submit a nomination as the owner of a City-assisted project. Under Policy 3.3, owner submittal of a nomination for historic designation is a condition of City assistance. The Element currently requires that the nomination be submitted prior to project funding; staff recommends changing the policy so that the owner would not have to submit the application until after the project was designed, but prior to issuance of a building permit.

Comments by the Chamber of Commerce and others in favor of the changes cited the uncertainty engendered by the Ward's case about "C" rated buildings, developers' need for flexibility in projects involving historic buildings, and the delays which environmental review and historic status may cause. Board, Commissioners, and public alike called for increased communication with property owners to allay the

fears which the November notice had created, and commitment of staff and funding to implement the Element. Several speakers questioned the ability of design review alone to effectively protect "C" buildings, which by their large numbers define Oakland's neighborhoods, and the necessity for their wholesale exclusion from environmental review. Concern was also raised that if the City was not required to nominate redevelopment properties for designation, some interim control be established during the project development phase. Although not originally under discussion, staff was also asked to look at closing the "vacant lot" loophole in the city's 1987 demolition ordinance which exempts demolition for creation of a vacant lot or parking lot from the ordinance provisions.

Upon conclusion of the public hearing, the Board and Commission formed a working group to meet with staff to address the issues raised. A report will be presented to the Landmarks Board and the Planning Commission for review and comment prior to forwarding to the City Council.

Among the public speakers was a West Oakland homeowner who had attended the November meeting. In eloquent remarks directed to the Board and Commission members, he stated that with redevelopment "All the vital elements of our community necessary to remain healthy were closed and moved away. Crime and drugs were permitted ... and now twenty-nine years later after letting the West Oakland community deteriorate almost beyond repair, the Oakland City Council once again under the disguise of Landmark Preservation return to take away through Eminent Domain what they left."

Another speaker called the six months' work on theoretical revision of the four (unimplemented) policies an overreaction to the Ward's decision and a "misuse of staff time ... Let's get back to work helping owners of historic properties fix them up rather than arguing about angels dancing on the head of a pin."

These remarks illustrate what has become increasingly clear since this process began in June. The contents of the Element, if known to the public at all, are widely misunderstood. Few members of City staff were familiar with the policies, or with the workings of the Cultural Heritage Survey. Informational material on the city's historic preservation program has not been made available to property owners or the general public. Overall lack of implementation, which includes completion and updating of the Intensive Survey, adoption of preservation incentives, and consistent application of historic preservation policies within the city, has frustrated a primary goal of the Element - "to use historic preservation to foster the economic vitality and quality of life in Oakland."

A week before the joint meeting, City Manager Robert Bobb was asked by the Planning Commission for his top priorities with respect to land use issues. His response seems relevant to the Preservation Element: "To the extent that we have in place a formal document, that we give that document an opportunity to become a living, breathing program before we begin to make substantial amendments to it, particularly if we have gone through a very comprehensive community involvement input process. That would be my number one priority."

--Members of the OHA Preservation Action Committee





**Ou la la! Is there anyone out there with a livelier use than scrap metal for this windmill? (City Planning Department 1963 visual survey)**

### ■ WINDMILL SEEKS A GOOD HOME

The remains of the long-vacant Moulin Rouge Theatre (originally the Gem) will be giving way to a new mixed use development designed to complement the Old Oakland district. The Moulin Rouge - named for the famous Parisian burlesque house - offered "French farces" and later "Spicy Girlesque" from 1932 to about 1980. (One informant on an Old Oakland tour, whose father ran the stage lights, said as a child it seemed pretty tame to her.) The theater was built in 1925 as a movie house by Allen King who also operated the Lincoln Theater on Seventh Street in West Oakland.

Now the developer is looking for a suitable recipient for the namesake neon-lit red windmill that graced the marquee at 485 8th Street. The sheet metal artifact is very large (a full story high); operating condition unknown, but obviously in need of work; available now, and must be removed by May 31; terms negotiable. Please help save Oakland's kitsch by finding the Red Mill a new home. Contact Barbara Armstrong, 337-1998.

### ■ JJ'S UPDATE: THE DINER THAT WILL NOT DIE

JJ's Diner is still standing, albeit with its eyes closed and surrounded by a chain link fence, over a year after it was forced by Chevron to turn away its customers and shut its doors. On November 1 a group of about fifty aficionados gathered on the sidewalk in front of its closed doors to commemorate the first anniversary of the community's continuing vigil. It was an upbeat event with poetry reading, music, classic cars, and lively exchanges. A few pieces of the diner seating, rescued by Friends of JJ's, were brought out of storage for people to sit on and pose for photographs.

In February of 1997, Friends of JJ's applied to the State Office of Historic Preservation for a Point of Historical Interest designation. Two representatives of the State Office visited the site and Chevron even agreed to show them the interior. The application needs the Mayor's signature to go forward, however, and when asked in April, he declined.

Chevron initially appeared to have tabled its effort to

demolish the building last April after the city informed them that an EIR would be required because "there may be a significant impact to historic resources." However, they have decided to go forward with the EIR for the McChevron project. A Notice of Preparation was issued January 23. (see p. 15)

Friends of JJ's were encouraged by Chevron's handling of a recent Oakland project and felt it might indicate a new awareness that trying to run over a community is not an effective, profitable strategy. At 55th and Telegraph, Chevron team leaders listened to the community and addressed their concerns. They even said they had never before designed anything like the station proposed there. We hoped the same flexibility would be applied to 27th and Broadway.

It remains inexplicable that a corporation the stature of Chevron continues to expend resources to fight a community that is trying to save a resource that was economically performing before they closed it. Rather than spending resources on its demise and replacement, why are they not pursuing the profits that upgrading and reopening it could bring? Friends of JJ's stands ready to help them find an operator. Which would bring more cars to their pumps and to Auto Row - a highway prototype fast food/mini-mart or a car and pedestrian friendly historic auto icon diner restored to its original flying saucer glory? This could be one of the clearest examples of historic preservation as an engine for economic development. So perhaps the friends of JJ's/Biff's, far and wide, need not give up hope. --Joyce Roy

### ■ DESTRUCTION AT HOLMES BOOKS

Just before press time two sharp-eyed City staff people noticed that something didn't seem right behind the plywood securing the all-glass 1925 storefront at the former Holmes Bookstore at 274 14th Street. A look between the boards revealed that the storefront had been entirely demolished. A building inspector verified that there was no record of a building permit, much less the Zoning and Landmarks Board review this should have had as a Study List property and a Historic URM. A stop work order was issued and various penalties may follow, but the historic fabric is gone forever.



**Holmes storefront: even improved Demolition Ordinance and Preservation Element won't prevent work without permits. (Survey photo, 1982)**

## ■ EIR NOTICES OF PREPARATION

The City of Oakland has recently issued Notices of Preparation for two projects. (1) The proposed amendments to the Historic Preservation Element affect policies on definition of significant resources for environmental review and designation of historic properties owned or assisted by the City. (2) The McChevron project at 27th and Broadway (construction by Chevron and McDonald's of a fast food restaurant with drive-through, convenience market, and gas station) includes demolition of JJ's Diner. A Notice of Preparation means an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be prepared for each of these projects, and the City is soliciting comments on the scope and content of the EIR. Effect on historic resources is the only impact that has been identified for either project.

Both NOPs are dated January 23, 1998. Therefore all comments should be submitted to the City's Planning Department by February 22, 1998. OHA has copies of the Notices of Preparation. (We receive these regularly, but because of the short review period it is rarely feasible to announce them in the News.) Copies of the Initial Studies are available at the Zoning Division office, 1330 Broadway, second floor. --Shawna Brekke-Read

## ■ CPF WORKSHOP: CEQA & HISTORIC RESOURCES

The California Preservation Foundation (CPF) is offering one-day workshops on "advanced topics" in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and historic resources. Topics will include proposed revisions to the CEQA Guidelines, CEQA exemptions, and how to incorporate the proposed new CEQA Guidelines and California Register of Historical Resources into local preservation ordinances and elements. Other discussion issues include ministerial versus discretionary actions, city compliance with Montgomery Ward case law, the threshold of significance and level of environmental harm necessary to trigger an EIR, how to track properties (both designated and undesignated) so demolition permits are not improperly issued, use of Mitigated Negative Declarations, State Historical Building Code, and much more, all highly relevant to the current Preservation Element discussion in Oakland. Faculty includes Carolyn Douthat of OHA.

The full-day workshop will be offered February 6 in Sacramento, February 12 in San Jose, February 20 in Long Beach, and February 27 in Claremont. Continuing education credit is available for the State Bar, AIA, AICP, and Certified Local Government commissioners. Registration fee varies with CPF membership status (\$65-105). Call CPF at 763-0972.

California Preservation Foundation is a private nonprofit statewide preservation organization offering educational programs, information exchange, and advocacy. CPF also sponsors the annual **California Preservation Conference** to be held this year in **Berkeley, May 7-10**. The conference theme will be **New Perspectives on Preservation**, and headquarters will be the Julia Morgan-designed Berkeley City Club and the Hotel Durant: watch for announcements.

## O.H.A. Update

### ■ OHA ANNUAL PRESERVATION AWARDS

**Oakland Heritage Alliance's** third annual Partnership in Preservation Awards were presented at the holiday party at the Locke House to the following individuals and organizations:

- ★ Catherine Campbell and Kyrill Fischer for their innovative revival of screenings at the Parkway Theater at Lake Merritt.
- ★ Rick Del Vecchio, reporter with the *San Francisco Chronicle*, for his informed and courageous coverage of Oakland's preservation movement.
- ★ Jennifer Dowling, Jeff Norman, Leiko Yamamoto Pech, and Ray Raineri for the Temescal History Project.
- ★ Dennis Evanosky, Steven Mix, and Eric Turowski for *The Laurel: A History 1998*, a pictorial calendar sponsored by the Laurel Community Action Project (see p. 17).
- ★ The Dr. Huey P. Newton Foundation for its tours and other efforts to preserve the legacy of the Black Panther Party.
- ★ María Martínez for the restoration of her distinctive 1904 commercial building at 1210-16 Fruitvale Avenue.
- ★ Vishnu Patel for his efforts maintaining the structural and architectural integrity of the Palm Hotel at 641 West Grand Avenue, designed by Julia Morgan in 1906.
- ★ Naomi Schiff of 17th Street Studios and Willie Pettus of the East Bay Chapter of the AIA for their ongoing advocacy of Oakland's Uptown Historic District.
- ★ Alison and Dagoberto Siegel-Sánchez for bringing national attention to the Fruitvale neighborhood as the only California winners in the National Trust for Historic Preservation's 1997 Great American Home Awards.

The Partnership in Preservation Awards were conceived in 1995 to acknowledge the efforts of Oakland residents, property owners, and organizations in enhancing Oakland for all its citizens. If you know of a project that deserves recognition, or if you would like to serve on the awards committee, please call or write the OHA office.



Parkway Theater, in the neighborhood commercial center at the foot of Park Boulevard, is an unusual 1925 design by Mark Jorgensen. (Survey)



## ■ OHA WELCOMES SHAWNA BREKKE-READ

Helen Lore's retirement ended an era for **Oakland Heritage Alliance**, a period that saw the organization emerge as a powerful voice of pride for this city. Shawna Brekke-Read's appointment as **OHA's** second administrative director begins a new era. Born in Oakland, the seventh of eight children, Shawna brings her devotion to her hometown and a strong planning background to **Oakland Heritage Alliance**.

Raised in the family restaurant business (Brekke's Cafeteria on Havenscourt Boulevard), Shawna graduated from Bishop O'Dowd High School in East Oakland. She attended Merritt College and graduated from Sonoma State University's School of Environmental Studies with a degree in planning. She interned with the planning department in Sonoma - the town that briefly flew the flag of the California Republic - before accepting a position in Susanville, the former capital of the secessionist Territory of Nataqua. She served as Susanville's Community Development Director for six years, before joining a Sacramento planning consulting firm.

Shawna returned to Oakland with her husband, Don Read, to raise their children (Nicholas, 4, and Dillon, 2). They live in the King Estates area of East Oakland. Raised Roman Catholic, Shawna now serves on the vestry of St. Cuthbert's Episcopal Church.

Her devotion to the spirit of consensus, her Oakland roots, and especially her passion for Oakland, already have made a great impact in this city. With the help of our members, that impact will benefit Oakland's neighborhoods and its families for generations to come. --Steven Lavoie

## ■ ...AND SHAWNA WELCOMES YOU! (A CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS)

Do you find yourself with passion to share? Would you like to show just how much a well-managed computer can do? Do you have office skills that you'd like to share? Do you enjoy cutting up old newspapers for a clippings file? Do you want to learn about a database by working on one?

There's a place for you - a lot of you. **Oakland Heritage Alliance** is expanding its role. We're even more active with City historic preservation policy. We're exploring alternative approaches to historic preservation through use of a revolving fund. We're becoming available to neighborhoods. Schools have asked for a walking tour program, and we'd also like to provide a classroom local history experience. We recognize that the key to historic preservation is the use and reuse of structures: we've got to market our resources.

All this sounds exciting - and some of it we are beginning to pursue. We hope you will join in these ambitious projects. But at the same time, daily life goes on. Membership appeal letters need to be sent, membership renewals need to be processed. Newspaper clippings need to be filed. Publications (books, postcards, tour brochures) need to be delivered. Typing and copying and mailing need to be done. The House Tour and other special events need to be produced.

A wish list follows. Board and staff would especially like assistance in these areas (with estimated time commitments):

**Membership:** Send out quarterly renewal letters and letters to members who haven't renewed. Process incoming renewals and new memberships. Inventory members to know areas of expertise. Requires familiarity with a computer or desire to learn. Time commitment: 2 half-days per month.

**Publications:** Process invoices for publications. Deliver books. Send out collection notices. Maintain clippings file. Maintain copies of newsletters. Gather information, calendar for newsletter. Runner for copies. Requires transportation, use of scissors! Time commitment: 2 half-days per month.

**Computer:** A new computer is on order for the office. We need a volunteer that is computer-savvy to load programs and organize computer files. Time commitment: 4 half-days total.

**Spring House Tour:** House selection, research and writing, graphics, tickets, docents, donations, logistics, reception. Time: As intense as you want, for a couple of months!

The **OHA** office is an exciting place to be. If any part of this appeals to you, or if there are other ways you'd like to help, give us a call at 763-9218, and we'll make you most welcome. --Shawna Brekke-Read

## ■ ANNUAL MEETING AND NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The 1997 Annual Meeting was held January 29, 1998 (it's been a hectic year) at the University of Creation Spirituality, where Rev. Matthew Fox presented his vision for the Floral Depot, Sweet's Ballroom, and a reawakened Uptown Oakland. A large and lively crowd re-elected Bill Coburn, Xandra Grube, Steve Lavoie, Jane Spangler, and Don Tyler to two-year terms, and elected two new members to the **OHA** Board, succeeding outgoing directors Marlene Wilson and Ethel Tinnemann. A by-law amendment added two seats to the Board, which will be filled in the near future. New directors Jane Powell and Joyce Roy introduce themselves:

**Jane Powell** is a self-taught restorationist who is attempting to restore Oakland's neighborhoods one bungalow at a time. Holding a completely irrelevant degree in fashion design, she spent 14 years as a display designer before turning to hands-on historic preservation. An on-and-off Oakland resident since the 1970s, she has lived in many neighborhoods and is now involved with the Adams Point Preservation Society, Laurel Community Action Project, and Dimond Improvement Association. She was chair of the house selection committee for the 1996 **OHA/BAHA** Arts and Crafts tour. She believes the MacArthur Broadway Center should be blown up.

**Joyce Roy** had her own architectural firm in New York for 15 years. The majority of its projects were design-build renovations in '20s apartment buildings and 19th century brownstones. Before New York, she lived in India for eight years. She felt right at home with Oakland's inclusive diversity when she moved here in 1992. She sees its historical assets as a great revitalization resource, and as one of the two leaders of Friends of JJ's she has been instrumental in (so far) saving one of those assets.

## ■ TAKING IT TO THE STREETS

Key System's No. 11 travels 38th Avenue with the marquee of the Allendale Theater in the background: September photo in the Laurel calendar. (Oakland History Room)



As the century wanes, the OHA board is looking toward the neighborhoods - from Columbian Gardens to Golden Gate and from Panoramic Way to Sheffield Village. A new Neighborhood Outreach Committee is working to bring the spirit of OHA into the community, with slide-lectures to neighborhood associations, seminars on the advantages of preservation, programs in the schools, and most ambitiously, a revolving loan fund that will help owners of historic properties do what we all want for this city - retain its integrity. Anyone with a stake in their neighborhood, an appreciation of the past, and a little free time is cordially invited to help make Oakland the greatest city on Earth at the end of the century. Call committee chair Steve Lavoie at 531-4794 to volunteer.

Meanwhile, our neighbors are taking matters into their own hands - with the full sanction and occasional subsidy of OHA. Here are some details on two neighborhood projects that received 1997 Partnership in Preservation Awards from OHA.

**Laurel Reclaims its History:** When neighbors of the MacArthur Boulevard corridor between Maple and High Streets are asked where they live, the reaction is too often "The Laurel? What's that?" Well, a 1998 illustrated calendar recognizes one of Oakland's best kept secrets - a small town in an inner city where the California Dream has been coming true for both Yankees and immigrants for almost a century. With the sponsorship of the Laurel Community Action Project (LCAP), OHA member and Pardee Home docent Dennis Evanosky has created *The Laurel: A History 1998*, a blow-by-blow history calendar with photographs provided from the Oakland History Room by Bill Sturm, an alumnus of Laurel School.

Evanosky, who earned the nickname "The Junkyard Dog" for his incessant hounding of city staff, unveiled the calendar at the first Laurel Street Fair last September, an event spearheaded by Naomi Kamiya of Maxwell Park. The calendar was printed in Oakland and its production donated by the *Montclarion*, where Evanosky is the real estate editor. To purchase copies, contact the OHA office, or send \$6.50 (payable to the Laurel Community Action Project) to Pauline Evanosky, P.O. Box 19055, Oakland 94619, or visit the Laurel's favorite merchants: Laurel True Value Hardware, Brewberry's, Farmer Joe's Marketplace, or the Laurel Gift Shop. Just take the 35th Avenue exit from 580, or the Redwood Road exit from the Warren, and head east on MacArthur - that's the Laurel.

**Temescal - "Where We Live":** The neighborhood that

claims to be the earliest site of human habitation in Oakland took to the streets in a big way this fall with its Temescal History Day and the accompanying self-guided walking tour brochure. Jennifer Dowling and Ray Raineri, a Colombo Club veteran, did the research and writing, and Jeff Norman, Leiko Yamamoto Pech, and designer Kathryn Hoffman put it all together. The Temescal History Project also included a pageant, street fair, storefront exhibits, oral histories, and a brochure by Betty Marvin and Bill Sturm on researching your house.

The Temescal chapbook is the first of an ongoing series of neighborhood histories to be published under OHA's imprint. This is something that OHA has been clamoring to produce for years, inhibited only by lack of time and initiative. OHA contributed toward printing costs - subsidized as usual with much volunteer labor. To purchase a copy, send \$6.50 (\$5 plus tax, postage, and handling) to OHA. --Steven Lavoie

## ■ OHA PROPOSES REVOLVING LOAN FUND

OHA's January board meeting was a retreat to address our "vision" for 1998 and beyond. A top priority will be setting up a revolving loan fund and associated technical preservation services. A committee led by Bill Coburn and Xandra Grube will be developing a plan of action.

It became obvious with Stanley Lowe's presentation in November that in other cities and other parts of the country these activities have enormous potential for aggressively promoting economic revitalization through preservation. OHA learned that Pittsburgh's preservation organization, in 30 years' experience with its loan fund, has leveraged some \$3 billion in commitments to Pittsburgh neighborhoods.

Our committee is currently looking at other funds across the country and speaking by phone with some of the organizations that run them. Our aim is to present the board with a plan of action including how to position the fund within the existing structure of OHA, develop a mission statement, examine preservation fund potential in the city, develop a funding strategy, and set up a capitalization program for initiating the fund.

Assistance from the membership is eagerly sought, in the form of advice, volunteer time, technical expertise, or financial or material contributions. Please contact the office or committee members. It is our hope to initiate this program within the next few months. --Bill Coburn

## ■ OAKLAND: THE CITY OF DREAMS - WEB SITE BY CROCKER HIGHLANDS THIRD GRADE CLASS

The History/Social Science Framework in California asks teachers to highlight the theme of Continuity and Change. In the third grade this is accomplished by a close examination of local history. For our class it was a study of our magnificent city, Oakland. Several things brought about this development. The most significant was that in 1991 the Oakland School Board voted not to adopt textbooks in many grade levels. This meant that teachers needed to develop their own materials. Thus our book, **Oakland: the City of Dreams**, was begun.

Beth Cantrell from Thomas Bros. Maps did a presentation for teachers and offered cameras and duplication of materials. She is inspiring teachers throughout California to have their students observe, photograph, draw, and write about their communities. I was inspired and decided to take her up on the offer. Then the work began. I talked with students, their parents, and other educators. Parents like Peggy and Michael Gough informed me that they could create a web site. This dramatically changed the book's potential from one that would be for our use, to one that could have potential to benefit students throughout Oakland.

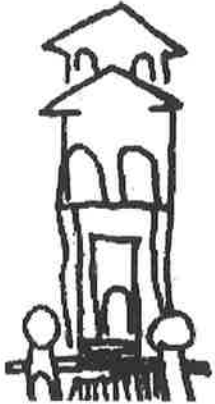
We went on field trips, gathered information, interviewed people, took photographs, and began learning as much as we could about our city. We asked questions, researched, and discovered what history means. We gained a sense of pride and an appreciation for the things we see every day. It is this enthusiasm that the students want to convey in their pieces. The book is a collection of reports, drawings, and photos that highlight our city. It has 35 chapters including the Alameda County Courthouse, Pardee [left] and Camron-Stanford houses, Old Oakland and Preservation Park, Children's Fairyland and the Coliseum, Crocker Highlands School, and many more.

It was the intent from the beginning to make this a book done by third grade students. They wrote, edited, formed research teams, checked drafts, selected photographs, painted watercolors, and learned about many stages of writing a book. They also gained valuable computer skills. All parents in the class were involved in the development of this book. Many worked with their children at home and others volunteered in the classroom. The children's watercolors would not have been possible without the patient teaching of Keith Wilson. Thomas Bros. Maps provided support, cameras, and reproductions so that each student could have a copy of our book.

It is our hope that this book will be used by teachers and students throughout Oakland. It can serve as a model for other studies. Classes can use these materials as they see fit. We are anxious to share your discoveries. Explore Oakland! Visit us at

[www.ousd.k12.ca.us/~sdonahue/history](http://www.ousd.k12.ca.us/~sdonahue/history)

--Sherwood Donahue & his 1996-97 third grade class



## ■ HOTEL OAKLAND EASEMENT COMPLETE

In 1991, OHA was approached by the owners of the Hotel Oakland to consider accepting a conservation easement on the property. In 1993 the Board voted to accept the easement (see Fall 1993 OHA News). Execution of the grant of easement was delayed pending completion of the senior facility in the ballroom and dining room areas. This past November Hotel Oakland Associates notified OHA that they were ready to close the transaction, and the process is now complete.

Under the terms of the easement the owner agrees to maintain the building in good repair, make no changes to protected features without approval, allow periodic inspections, and provide occasional public access. OHA agrees to administer the easement in perpetuity (it may be transferred to another qualified organization) and monitor the owner's compliance with the preservation provisions. OHA receives an easement fee intended as a reserve in case action is necessary to enforce compliance and has the assurance that the building will be preserved in perpetuity, while the owner receives tax benefits reflecting the transfer of a part interest to the nonprofit.

--Carolyn Douthat

## ■ SAN PABLO AVENUE EXHIBIT COMING TO OHR

"San Pablo Avenue in Transition: The Changing Face of the East Bay's Longest Street" will be on display at the Oakland History Room of the Oakland Main Library from March 1 to April 30. Co-sponsored by the Emeryville Historical Society and the Oakland Public Library, the exhibit will feature the Oakland-Emeryville section of San Pablo Avenue and will draw upon library treasures like a history of the avenue written by Mayor Frank Mott. The History Room is located at 125 14th Street, second floor; hours are Monday and Tuesday 10-5:30, Wednesday and Thursday 12-8, Friday 12-5:30, Saturday 10-5:30, and Sunday 1-5. For more information call 238-3222 or 238-3136. --Don Hausler



Demolition of St. Francis de Sales Cathedral in 1993 was a major change on San Pablo Avenue. For more, visit the exhibit. (Don Hausler)



## City Landmarks Board Actions

The Oakland Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board meets on the second Monday of each month, 4 pm, in City Hall Hearing Room 1. 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. Six districts and 129 landmarks have been designated since the Board was created in 1973. Members are Andrew Carpentier (chair), Annalee Allen, Janet Benson, Carolyn Douthat, Rene Dymond, Norman Hooks, and George Lythcott. Secretary is Helaine Kaplan Prentice.

### JUNE

Board approved design review application by St. Paul's Episcopal Church (110 Montecito) to replace a slate roof with composition that matches in color and general texture. Board expressed some reluctance, but applicants said the existing slate roof is damaged enough to be a hazard, and the composition material is thick enough to show some shadow line. Carolyn Douthat suggested salvaging or reusing the slate, but that was not a condition of the approval.

Board approved modification to Fentress-Bradburn's design for ground floor storefronts on the Broadway Building (1401-19 Broadway, a historic URM and on the Study List). Design issues involved in the conversion of the building into City offices continued from the Board's May meeting.

Architect Yui Hai Lee presented designs for a proposed BART entry in City Hall Plaza, adjoining the Broadway Building. Board discussed location, lighting, paving, height of the elevator silo, etc. BART has final approval of all plans.

### JULY

Mara Melandry, Caltrans environmental planner, made a presentation on replacement of the east span of the Bay Bridge. Board commented that a more impressive entrance to Oakland would be preferred. Board members discussed their role in the Section 106 process, mitigations, and public input.

Board approved application for seismic reinforcement of roof ornament at the Bellevue Staten Apartments (492-98 Staten Avenue, a contributor to the S-7 Bellevue-Staten District, a historic URM, and on the National Register). Board requested that the owners consider landmark status. Design of the BART entry in City Hall Plaza was further discussed (see June); Board would write a letter.

Chief of Planning Andy Altman announced the first of a series of public meetings on proposed revisions to the Preservation Element (see Briefing, pp.12-13).

Norman Hooks reported on the Uptown Design Workshop held on June 28. Plans centered on the Fox Theater and vicinity, and all the proposals emphasized housing.

A Stewardship Award for Efficiency and Service was presented to Board Secretary Helaine Kaplan Prentice by the board of the landmark Seventh Avenue Missionary Baptist Church at their anniversary banquet in June: she called it "one

of the nicest things that ever happened to me in this job."

A speaker in Open Forum suggested an "oak tree walk of fame," beginning with a plaque at the site of the ("other") Sweet's Ballroom at 1414 Franklin Street.

### SEPTEMBER

Board heard a presentation on the Sunshine Ordinance by Deputy City Attorney Joyce Hicks.

In response to a Notice of Intent submitted by John and Russell Moran to nominate the Hamilton Hotel (the former YMCA, 2101 Telegraph) as a landmark, Board accepted the preliminary eligibility rating and directed the applicants to prepare the nomination. The Morans agreed to a three-month waiting period at the owners' request.

A California Preservation Foundation workshop, "Award-Winning Design Solutions," was announced, at City Hall on September 19; Board members were encouraged to attend.

Possible reuse of the slate roof shingles from St. Paul's Church was discussed: they should not go to the landfill.

The Bay Bridge EIR and suggested mitigations were discussed. Board emphasized the importance of relating the new east span to the existing west span.

Annalee Allen reported on the August 19 CEDA workshop on revisions to the Preservation Element; a joint meeting of the Landmarks Board and Planning Commission would follow.

Janet Benson and Norman Hooks reported on KTOP-TV's "Oakland on the Move"; the program recognized St. Joseph's Convent in West Oakland. Allen reported on Cherilyn Widell's visit to the Fruitvale Main Street project, and on the well-received Oakland history booth at Festival of the Lake.

Secretary Helaine Kaplan Prentice reported that she would be presenting the Board's quarterly report to City Council; that the Board should comment on proposed changes to the State Historical Building Code; that BART had withdrawn its interest in the Floral Depot and a private owner was acquiring the property; and that no action had taken place on the Board's proposal to waive design review fees in S-7 historic districts. In Open Forum, S-7 designation for the Produce Market district around 3rd and Franklin Streets was suggested.



Unique special-purpose 1916 buildings in the Produce Market figure in both the Estuary Plan and the Magnificent Seven (p.8). District designation could recognize their importance and guide future use. (Survey)



1100 Broadway (right center) is the southernmost of the row of corner skyscrapers that distinguished the Beaux Arts downtown from the Victorian city center and now distinguish it from the redevelopment areas. Hotel project is in the works for 1100 Broadway, National Register nomination for the district. (1963 Visual Survey, City Planning Dept.)

## OCTOBER

The Adams Point Preservation Society had submitted a landmark nomination for the Don Lee Cadillac building at 2500-42 Harrison Street (a historic URM on the Preservation Study List, aka Cox Cadillac: see p. 6); Board postponed action until the developer presented plans in November.

Board accepted landmark eligibility rating for Chapel of the Chimes (4499 Piedmont Avenue), nominated by the owners. Status of the post-Julia Morgan additions was discussed.

Phil Tagami of California Commercial Investments presented preliminary plans for a hotel incorporating the Key System Building at 1100 Broadway, a historic URM on the Study List and on the National Register. The two-story annex on Broadway was to be replaced by a taller structure that would act as a buttress. Board suggested that the new building should be more clearly distinguished from the original.

Tagami also reported on the status of the Rotunda (Kahn's Department Store, 1501-39 Broadway, a historic URM on the Study List and on the National Register). He said a reuse proposal was forthcoming, and offered the Board a tour.

Andrew Thomas of CEDA reported on status of the reuse study for the 16th Street Southern Pacific Station, a landmark listed on the National Register. There will be structural and toxics analysis, an environmental study, and a market study for the 25-acre site. Market value may have been affected by the freeway sound wall that obscures the site from view.

David Nicolai, representing the Pardee Home Foundation, asked the Board to endorse nomination of the Pardee House as a State Historic Landmark: designation will qualify it for a sign on the freeway. Board agreed to write in support.

George Lythcott, Carolyn Douthat, and Annalee Allen reported on a Port boat tour of historic resources affected by the 50-foot dredging and widening of the Estuary. There was concern over removal of the North Training Wall (erected in 1874) and construction of a vertical concrete pier for the entire length. Lythcott noted that this will substantially change the landscape and industrialize the entrance to the Estuary.

Several members reported on the California Preservation

Foundation workshop held at City Hall (which was one of the featured projects). The Board co-sponsored the workshop.

Prentice reported on the status of developer selection for Preservation Park III, the half block next to the Pardee House. She reported on a hearing before the Mayor's Commission on Disability to find an accessible restroom design that will preserve the historic hose tower at the landmark Fire Station #10 on Santa Clara Avenue. She reported on the installation of Brownie McGhee in the National Blues Hall of Fame in Hollywood. She had consulted on modifications to approved plans for the Tribune Tower and the First Unitarian Church.

In Open Forum, Steve Lowe reported that forty Southern Pacific "lattice poles" - 35' power poles made of strap iron - had been salvaged from the demolished Yards and Shops: perhaps they could be erected in the Produce Market District.

## NOVEMBER

Board toured the Rotunda building. Developer (and former Board member) Phil Tagami explained the earthquake damage and the pre-earthquake rehabilitation project.

Board approved an application by Michael Willis & Associates, architects, for seismic upgrade and rehabilitation of the Charles Greene Library (659 14th Street), a landmark in the Preservation Park S-7 zone. Project manager Ed Cheng and project architect Jeff McGraw described plans for removal and reinstallation of the woodwork in the children's room, treatment of historic finishes upstairs, roof replacement, concealed duct work, addition of an elevator, and landscaping that will integrate the building with Preservation Park.

Board voted to recommend landmark designation of the Don Lee Cadillac building, nominated in July by the Adams Point Preservation Society. Board, applicant, and owner's representative discussed whether to designate the entire building or just the showroom: decision was to recommend the entire building, which would be consistent with National Register standards and possible Tax Credit eligibility.

Andy Altman, Chief of Planning, reported on the Estuary Plan as related to the Produce Market. The City and the Port



Lattice poles stood in great numbers at the Southern Pacific Yards and Shops in West Oakland (shown here in 1996 before demolition) and still stand along the tracks east of Lake Merritt. Steve Lowe says they need a more distinctive reuse than reincarnation as a Toyota. (Betty Marvin)



Board is concerned that ornate gilded plaster ceilings in the Fox Oakland Theater - one of the Magnificent Seven - are vulnerable to damage if roof is not maintained. (Fred Reichman)

are working with ROMA Design Group on a waterfront plan that includes the Jack London area where the Produce Market is located, and generally supports entertainment, retail, and live-work uses. The Produce Market appears eligible for the National Register, and presents an opportunity for reuse.

Board commented, at the Port's request, on the preliminary script by Marjorie Dobkin, Quest Productions, for a video documentary on the Naval Supply Center. This is a mitigation for demolition of the buildings at the Naval Supply (FISCO) site, which was determined eligible for the National Register.

Alex Greenwood of CEDA and consultant Nancy Stoltz reported on the status of the Downtown Preservation Incentives Package, created to mitigate the demolitions for the City Administration Complex. A Downtown district (11th to 17th Street) is to be nominated to the National Register. All 40-plus contributing buildings will be eligible for tax credits.

Chair Andrew Carpentier reported on Oakland Sharing the Vision's Strategic Planning Clinic for boards and commissions.

Helaine Prentice reported on the new bonsai garden to be located in Lakeside Park: the only comparable collection is at the Huntington Botanical Garden in Southern California. She also reported on continuing concern over Fox Theater roof repairs and on the State Historical Resources Commission meeting at City Hall on November 14.

## DECEMBER

Board voted to forward the landmark resolution for the Don Lee/Cox Cadillac building to the Planning Commission.

Board reviewed an application by Public Works to alter designated interior features at Fire Station #10, 172 Santa Clara. A wall in the original hose tower needed to be moved to accommodate an ADA accessible restroom. The existing paneling would be reinstalled; Board suggested looking for a matching wider door in a salvage yard.

Board reviewed changes to approved plans for Old Merritt College (University High School, M.L. King Jr. Plaza), 5714 M.L. King Jr. Way, for Children's Hospital Oakland Research Institute (CHORI): interior uses and finishes, roof vents, trash

enclosures, and landscaping in the courtyards. Board reviewed the exterior under design review; comments on the interior were made under the Section 106 process. Lengthy discussion focused on the ten-foot black iron fence ("being manufactured as we sit here") and removal of a ginkgo tree. Hearing was continued pending a presentation by the landscape architect.

Landmark nomination by John and Russell Moran for the YMCA-Hamilton Hotel, 2101 Telegraph, was continued to March at the request of the old and new owners, CREDO Housing and Mercy Housing. CREDO's representative said they had fulfilled their mission by housing 92 homeless people and restoring the building. Mercy asked for time to clear the idea of landmark designation with their various funders.

Board members reported on the visit of the State Historical Resources Commission, the Landmarks Board report to City Council Community and Economic Development (CED) Committee, and an East Bay AIA Achievement Award presented to Board Secretary Helaine Kaplan Prentice.

Annalee Allen reported the need to make sure that cost overruns on the City administration buildings are not taken out of the Broadway Building restoration budget, and requested an update on work in progress at Dahlke's.

Board members reported on the November 13 CED Committee hearing on preservation and economic development, called by Councilmember De La Fuente. Norman Hooks was concerned about the alarming tone of the announcement, the fears of eminent domain expressed by West Oakland residents, and their pleas for rehab money from the City: he cited Stanley Lowe's message that the money is in the banks, not at City Hall. Board discussed the 10,000-piece mailing for the meeting, and the unlikelihood of getting similar exposure for important follow-up meetings or educational material.

Prentice reported on correspondence with the Parks and Recreation Commission about eucalyptus on Castle Drive, where 9 of 90 trees were being removed by a private owner. Consideration of a Heritage Tree Ordinance might result.

In Open Forum, Betty Marvin noted several recent instances of need for a salvage program when buildings are demolished - the door for Fire Station #10, millwork, rustic siding, Kawneer sash. YouthBuild's "deconstruction" project at the Naval Supply Center is an example; Jenny Kassan at Spanish Speaking Unity Council is interested. --Kathy Olson/LPAB minutes



In 1874 the Army Corps of Engineers created the modern Oakland Estuary by dredging and constructing stone Training Walls on the Oakland and Alameda shores. Port proposes to replace Oakland's north wall with additional container berths. (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) or Wardlaw@aol.com

## Upcoming Activities

through February 28, (W.-Fri. 1:30-4, Sat. 11-4, Sun. 1:30-4), "Victorian Times & Victorian Homes," drawings & photographs of Alameda elementary school students, Alameda Historical Society Museum, 2324 Alameda Ave., \$5/\$3.50 members, 521-1233.

through March 28, (Th, Fri., Sat. 1-4), "The Louis Stein Collection - The Neighborhoods of Berkeley," Berkeley Historical Society, 1931 Center Street, 848-0181.

through July 26, (W-Sat. 10-5, Sun. 12-7), "Gold Fever," sights, sounds & voices of the Gold Rush era in extensive exhibition, History Gallery, The Oakland Museum, Oak & 10th Streets, \$5/\$3 (members free), 238-2200.

February 12, Th. 8:45-4:30, "CEQA Workshop," see p. 15; San Jose Historical Museum, 1600 Senter Road, Kelly Park, 763-0972.

February 19, Th. 10:30am, "Quoting Black Voices," Oakland students recite poetry & speeches on the African American experience, Dimond Branch Library, 3565 Fruitvale Ave., 482-7844.

February 20, Fri. 8:30-4:30, "Revitalizing Main Street," workshop, California Main Street program, Oakland, location TBA; \$85 after Feb. 6; info. 916-322-3520.

February 28, Sat. 8:30-5?, "Tools for Building Green: Cost Effective & Environmentally Sound Buildings," conference and trade show, Alameda County Waste Management, Shenanigan's, Jack London Village, \$30, 510-639-2498.

March 1-April 30, (M-T. 10-5:30, W-Th. 12-8, F. 12-5:30, Sat. 10-5:30), "San Pablo Avenue in Transition: the Changing Face of the East Bay's Longest Street," Oakland History Room, Main Library, 125 14th St., 238-3222.

April 23, "20 Years of Berkeley Historical Society: Retrospective," new exhibit opens, Berkeley Historical Society, 1931 Center Street, 848-0181.

March 27-28, Fri. noon-8, Sat. 9-5, "A Century of Prospecting for Ancestors," California Genealogical Society 13th Annual Family History Fair, lectures and exhibits, Concourse Exhibition Hall, 8th & Brannan, San Francisco, (415) 777-9936.

May 7-10, "23rd Annual State Preservation Conference," Berkeley, California Preservation Foundation, call for details, 763-0972.

May 10, Sun. 1:00, 2:00, 3:00, 4:00, "Mother's Day Tea at the Cohen Bray House," elegant tea service in dining room, period gown showing, music, 4 seatings, 1440 29th Ave., reservations required, \$15/\$10 VPCO members, 843-2906.

## Regularly Scheduled Exhibits & Tours

**The African American Museum & Library at Oakland,** museum, archives & programs, 5606 San Pablo Ave., 597-5053.

**Cohen Bray House,** 1884 Eastlake Stick Style, original furnishings & wall papers, 1440 29th Ave., 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., \$4/\$2, free first Sun., 836-1976.

**Dunsmuir House & Gardens,** Colonial Revival mansion tours April thru Sept., 1st & 3rd Sun., noon/ 1pm /2pm, Wed., 11am/noon, \$5/\$4 Sr. & Jr., 2960 Peralta Oaks Court, Oakland, 615-5555.

**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, meet on front steps. Free. Full tour schedule resumes in May, group tours welcome, 238-3234.

**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.

## Regularly Scheduled Meetings

**OHA Board of Directors,** last Monday of the month, 7:30pm; for agenda and location, 763-9218.

**OHA Preservation Action Committee:** contact OHA, 763-9218, for time, place and agenda.

**Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board,** 2nd Mon., 4pm.

**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 (May through December) are:

Heritage Design Group (Carolyn Murray), Ann McClain, Martin & Nancy Thomas (gift of Terry Kulka) Maria Alexander & Family, John Protopappas, Ray Raineri (gift, Jennifer Dowling), Anne Willson, Renate & Robert Coombs, Bill Zerke, Mike Bienstock, Kathleen Hutchinson, Bruce & Martha Smyser, Deborah Del Rio, David Paige, Kathy Erion/Jill Sizemore, Katherine Sessen-York, Mary Rudser/Dan Gonzales, Frances Johnston, Mark Edwards, Heather Ehnke, Judith & Barry Bloom, George Buvitti, Greg Grassi, Jim Putz, Elaine Danforth/Michael Grabiah, Nancy Pierce Owens, Claudia Waters, Joanne Lafler, Karen McKinney, Marilyn McAndrews, Nellie Chin-Fung, Siddika Pat Angle, Barbara Nelson, Catherine Kehr, Zetta Lynne Poli, Charmain Soldst, Jason Armstrong, Ann Killebrew, Ellen & Barry Levine, Gary R. Brower, Jim Zabriskie, Vicki Santiago, Bob & Sarah Sharman, Michael Tomlan, Theodore Hafiz, Karen Long, John & Virginia



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COMPLIMENTARY: Stanley Lowe, Scott Brown, Howard Slaughter, Nancy Nadel, Harold Davis/Oakland Housing Authority, Jubilee West, Mtangulizi Sanyika, Spanish Speaking Unity Council, East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation, Allen Temple Baptist Church, OCCUR, Paul Cobb, Oakland Sharing the Vision,

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Special thanks to those joining/renewing as:

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SPONSOR (\$100): Steve & Terry Beck, Frances Johnston, Rollin & Tereasa Lippert, Christopher Buckley, Eldien J. Kistner.

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DONATIONS: Terry Kulka, Larry Strauss, Anne & Richard Copenhagen, Steve & Terry Beck, Chevron, Helen & George Strauss, BankAmerica Foundation (matching grant for Yvonne Barsballe & Matthew Gabel), Dario Meniketti, Jerry Bowling & Libby Jacobsohn, Marie Pritchett. Peet's Coffee (Piedmont Avenue)

Oakland Heritage Alliance News

CONTRIBUTORS

Annalee Allen, Barbara Armstrong, Shawna Brekke-Read, Robert Brokl, William Coburn, Kathleen DiGiovanni, Sherwood Donahue, Carolyn Douthat, Don Hausler, Steven Lavoie, Helen Lore, Pamela Magnuson-Peddle, Betty Marvin, Kathy Olson, Fred Reichman, Joyce Roy, William Sturm, Christine Tasto, Julie Twichell & Donald Wardlaw.

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 BetMarv@aol.com, or OHA, 763-9218. Back issues \$2. © 1998 Oakland Heritage Alliance.

Oakland Heritage Alliance

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

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## Oakland History Notes

### Fruitvale Congregational Church

"There can be no more attractive place for a home than the suburb of Oakland called Fruitvale, so named for the large quantity of fruit that has been and still is raised there. Sausal creek runs through the center of it, and for centuries, it has been bringing down the wash of the hills, which has made a soil of unexampled richness." So declared the *Oakland Tribune* in March 1893. The paper's description also noted that "The Congregationalists are making good progress toward a permanent and harmonious church body. ... The meetings are held at present on East 14th Street, in Blake's Hall not far distant from Fruitvale Avenue."

Begun in 1892 by Rev. Loyal Lincoln Wirt as a Sunday school, the Congregational flock swiftly grew and by 1895 had secured land and built a church on the southwest corner of East 16th Street and Fruitvale Avenue. The new church, modest in size and simple in design, was one of the first



religious edifices in Fruitvale. Following the 1906 earthquake, the church played a vital role in relief effort. Reported the *Fruitvale Progress* on April 27, 1906, "The first place opened for refugees in Fruitvale was the Congregational Church and Armory, and by Thursday night, it was sheltering sixty-five people, mostly women and children, in its building and tents. It has kept up this service all this time, feeding on an average seventy-five people at each meal, being helped by the stores from the depot. Sunday a very impressive outdoor meeting was held, which was attended by over 200 people."

With the influx of San Francisco refugees Fruitvale grew, and soon the Congregationalists outgrew their little church. In 1907 a fund drive was launched for construction of a larger church. The ladies of the church published a 200-page cookbook as a money raiser. The services of architect Hugo W. Storch, a church member, were secured to plan the new edifice. "Plans are for a beautiful and serviceable building in the mission style of architecture," reported the *Fruitvale Progress*. During construction the original church was moved forward to allow for the erection of the new church. Upon

completion of the sanctuary in 1911, the old church was demolished. The new Congregational Church, a proud addition to the Fruitvale neighborhood, boasted some of the most beautiful stained glass windows in the city.

In 1964 the church became home to the Fruitvale United Church of Christ. In 1971, Fruitvale's pioneering church was demolished for the new Clinica de la Raza.

--William Sturm

The first Fruitvale  
Congregational Church, 1895-  
1911 (Oakland History Room)

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