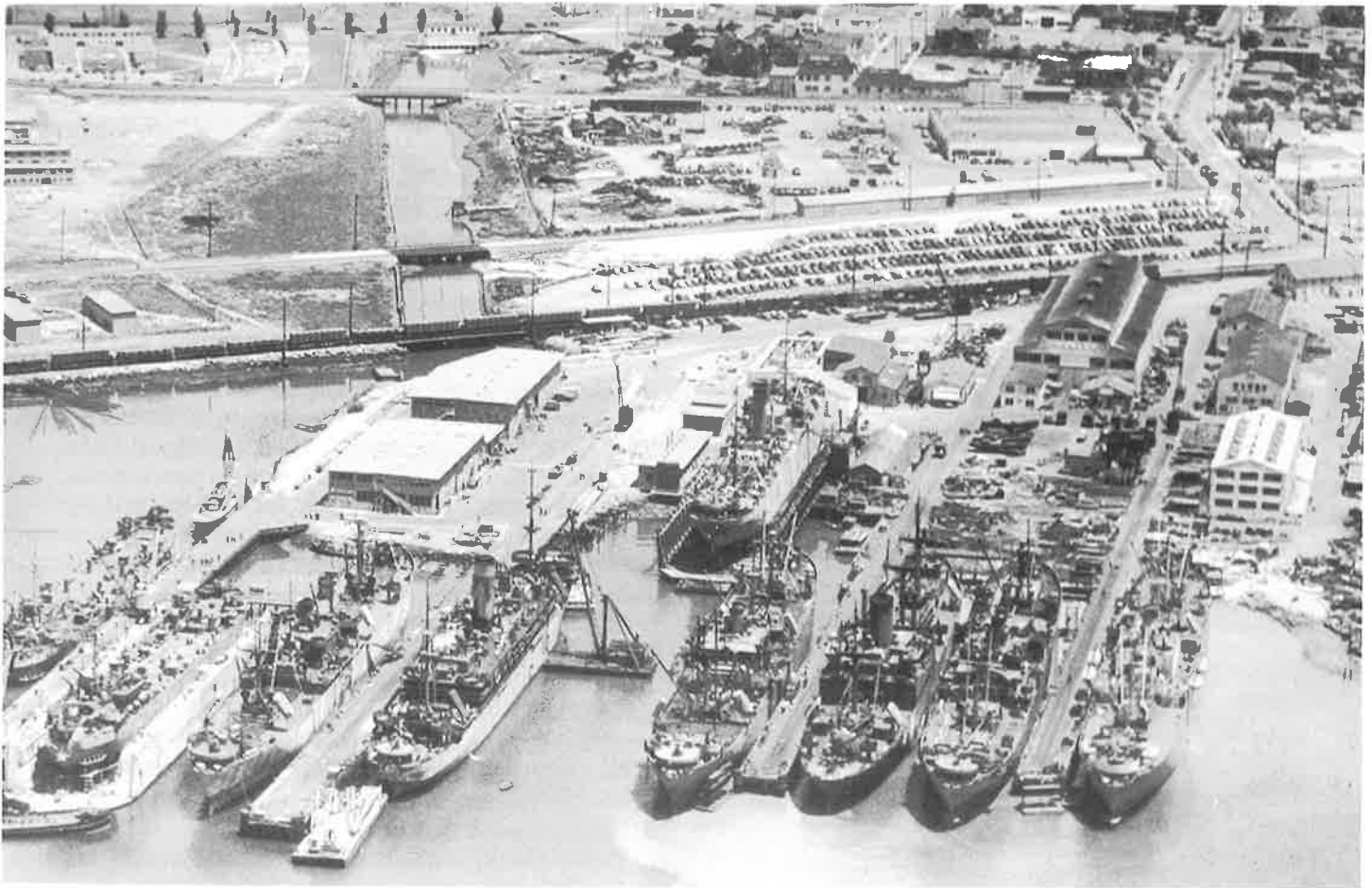


A Brief History of Fifth Avenue Point



Foot of Fifth Avenue in the 1940s, when it was Hurley Marine Works. Note dry docks at left and center, Lake Merritt channel, and edge of Auditorium Village housing project at upper left. Present Fifth Avenue community is along the far right: light colored building with three stories of windows is the Plate Shop. (Sunderland aerial photo, Oakland City Planning Dept.)

From its beginning Oakland has struggled over its waterfront. Mainly through the aggressiveness of Horace W. Carpentier, the town was incorporated in May 1852. Within two weeks an ordinance was passed making Carpentier owner of the entire waterfront. A long saga of legal and political strife has ensued to this day. The Estuary Channel is federal, and the tidelands are held in trust for the people by the state, granted to Oakland with the provision they not be alienated. In 1925 Article 7 of the City Charter created the Port of Oakland to develop the tidelands for commercial shipping. Our Port executed its charge with alacrity. Containerization and the decline of heavy marine industry now leave us with an opportunity to redevelop a small portion of our waterfront for recreational, cultural, and other more intimate human uses. An example of this has evolved here at the foot of Fifth Avenue by simply being relatively unmolested.

In the 1800s the land area now called East Oakland was known as Brooklyn and the water here was the San Antonio

Creek Estuary or Inner Harbor. To move goods up and down the coast and beyond many shipbuilding businesses started. One of those involved in shipbuilding was Dan J. Hanlon. In the early 1900s Hanlon contracted out of other yards. Around 1915 when he could not find yards to do his work he leased from the City of Oakland a "semi-submerged, apparently useless area of what seemed to be a deposit of soft mud at the foot of Fifth Avenue." Here, despite the ridicule of competitors, Hanlon and a small crew of men built dams, drove countless piles, and eventually reclaimed enough land for one slipway and a few machine shops, just in time for the massive expansion of shipbuilding along the Oakland waterfront in World War I.



Another Sunderland aerial from the mid 1940s: Hurley Marine Works from the southeast. Building with smokestacks in front and right of the Plate Shop is the Great Western power station. Across Clinton Basin in the foreground is the open cargo area of the 9th Avenue Terminal (City Planning)

In this initial yard, Hanlon in 1916 finished two gas-driven vessels of 397 gross tons, and the following year completed the five-masted schooner *Flagstaff* of 2,101 gross tons. This not only represented the largest wooden craft ever constructed on the Pacific Coast but also "was recognized as the best built wooden vessel in the United States since the time of the great American Clipper Ships." After thus singly demonstrating the success of his undertaking, Hanlon ceased to encounter any difficulties in raising funds for the conversion of the rest of his



Hurley swing shift riggers, 1945; Plate Shop is at left rear. "A fighting ship speedily repaired and returned to service is as important as a new warship added to the fleet." (*Hurley Marines*, May 1945, Oakland History Room)

marine holdings. With an outlay of half a million dollars, he reclaimed thirty-six acres of mud flats and built the first electrically controlled dry dock on the coast with a capacity of 4,000 tons. He laid five additional slipways (three for 5,500 ton ships and two for 10,000 ton ships) and installed electric machinery capable of manufacturing hull plates, boilers, and engines for the largest vessels any ship owner might order.

Beginning with a force of 500 men in 1916, the company by 1920 had a personnel of close to 4,000 working around the clock. In 1918 the yard launched two steam powered steel freighters of 5,862 total gross tons. After the war was over Hanlon designed, built, and installed the largest marine railway on the coast. In 1919 two vessels of 6,958 total gross tons were built. In 1920 as many as six ships with a total gross tonnage of 20,851 tons were built, and finally in 1921 a steamer of 3,473 gross tons, and four Coast Guard cruisers with a total of 7,120 gross tons. There followed in 1925 a gasoline-driven vessel called *Motor Mates* of 273 gross tons and finally in 1930, four more Coast Guard cruisers of 7,900 gross tons. Hanlon also had a good run of repair work. Towards the end of the 1920s Hanlon retired and the establishment became part of the General Engineering and Dry Dock Company of Oakland.

When General Engineering and Dry Dock acquired this plant they greatly improved it. There they built a number of ships for the government and private owners and did a large repair business. Then General Engineering decided to concentrate their ship building activities at their Alameda plant, and for a time the old Hanlon yard was vacant.

In April 1940 it became known as the Hurley Marine Works, Inc. Under the leadership of Jack Hurley, president, and Herbert Magnuson, executive vice president, it made records in voyage and hull repairs on many merchant ships. Jack Hurley was a native of California, born in Oakland in 1894, the son of John Hurley, who owned the Acme Boiler Works of Oakland. The younger Hurley served a machinist apprenticeship in his father's shop and was associated with his father for some years. In 1936 he formed a partnership, Hurley and Dow, Machinists, with Lloyd W. Dow of Oakland. This was dissolved in March 1940, and in April Mr. Hurley took a lease on this site. He tackled the job of modernizing the plant and at the same time repairing ships. The famous marine railway was completely rebuilt and its



electrical hauling-out machinery reconditioned. The yard was completely paved and industrial rail trackage and crane tracks thoroughly overhauled. The administration building was modernized and enlarged and new sanitary equipment installed throughout the yard. The machine shop lighting was modernized and new and used tools installed. A new plate shop equipped with fabrication machinery and cranes was completed. A new joiner shop had the most modern woodworking machinery under skilled carpenters. This shop not only took care of all the joiner work in connection with the repair business of the yard, but was kept continuously busy on job work for shipbuilders such as big orders for mess tables and seats for Liberty ships.

In 1944 eighteen acres to the west of and adjoining the existing plant were acquired and filled in. On completion of this work a floating ferro-cement dry dock, additional outfitting piers, and several gantry cranes were installed. The repair shops and equipment were increased in size and working capacity as follows: sheet metal shops doubled; electric shops by 75 percent; and more tools added to the machine, plate, and pipe shops. A new and well equipped cafeteria was built.

The existing buildings around the terminus of Fifth Avenue were used by Hurley Marine through World War II to build subassemblies for Liberty ships and other war efforts. Since then hundreds of commercial and pleasure craft have been built here. Thousands have been repaired, maintained, or modified. The next operator listed was Pacific Dry Dock and Repair Co., West Pier. Then the west side of the Fifth Avenue Point was operated by Merritt Shipyard till about six years ago. Its pier, cranes, and dry dock were removed about five years ago, and the last wooden buildings demolished just this year.

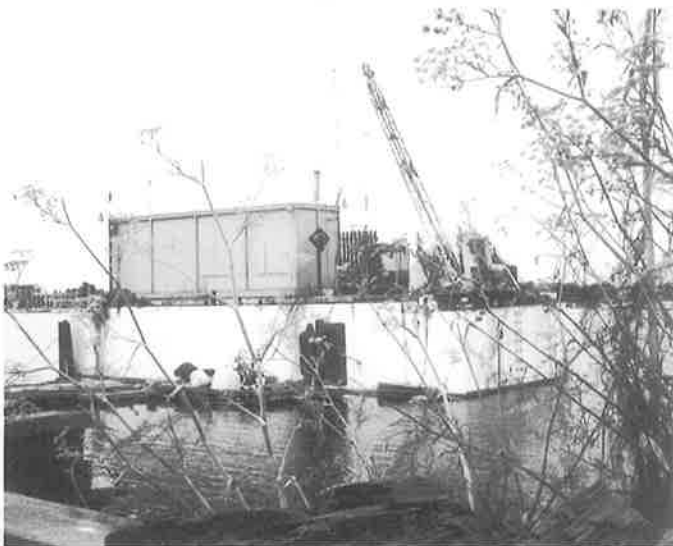
In 1963 J.W. Silveira and a partner bought six and a half acres here, with J.W. buying out his partner in 1967. Robert Schultz bought his piece of land in 1979. There continues to be boat construction and repair work in the area by Philbrick Boat Works, Weber & Co., and others. In keeping with the wide range of skills fostered by the marine trades, a variety of arts and crafts thrive here. The largest building on the property, the



More to life than money: utilitarian Hurley Marine Works buildings now foster ceramics, painting, poetry, and invention. (Robin Bartoo)

Plate Shop, continues to be a hub of large scale construction activity. Several steel vessels for commercial uses have been built, outfitted, and launched from here in the last three decades. As markets have shifted these skills and facilities have increasingly been applied to other constructs. The entertainment industry has generated contracts for all manner of stage sets and effects. We have built stationary and articulating effects for Disney, the Rolling Stones, Pink Floyd, the Olympics, and amusement parks around the world. Many of the local artisans gain part-time employment on these projects. Currently under construction in the plate shop is a ride simulating the sinking of the *Titanic* for an amusement park in Australia.

Bounded on the northwest by a concrete batch plant set up by Kaiser Cement and now run by Berkeley Ready Mix, a graying dust is prevalent. To the southeast is the site of the Great Western power plant, a rival to PG&E which also provided power for the Key System electric trains. This awesome building was both pre- and post-stressed concrete, and designed to last through the ages. It took two years to demolish some twelve years ago. The massive subterranean understructure still remains. The Port of Oakland now stores containers on the site. Container trucks sometimes back up to the Embarcadero which forms the northeastern boundary of the area. The stacks of container boxes obscure the view of the Oakland Estuary to the southwest and the Ninth Avenue Terminal to the southeast.



Pete Baker's shop barge relocated from Howard Terminals (Grove Street Pier) to honor long term lease with Port of Oakland. Plants and wildlife are gradually returning among the riprap and contamination: environmental improvement is "phenomenal and free." (Bonnie Hamlin)

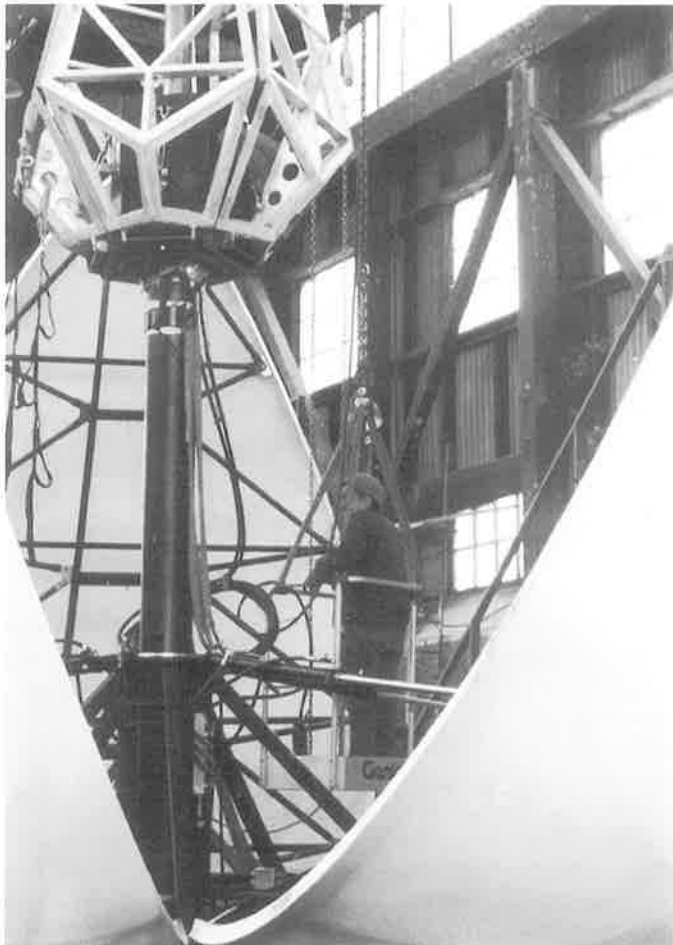


Craig Clemens' restored 1933 Ford Phaeton is admired on OHA's Fifth Avenue tour in August. Conservation of cultural artifacts is highly developed at the Point: witness also Weber & Co.'s classic and antique speedboat restoration business. (Bonnie Hamlin)



Silvery elephantine tooth by sculptor J. Seward Johnson, staking out Robert Schultz's section of the Point. Cairn of stones at left of center supports a plaque dedicated by E Clampus Vitus. (Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey)

Paradoxically the seclusion of the beach adjoining Clinton Basin which is mostly fallow has allowed natural processes to begin to remediate this once contaminated area. Returning plant and animal life has benefited from benign neglect. Some of the old docks now serve as protected hatcheries and refuge for



Final assembly of the Laser Ball in the Plate Shop. Precisely fitted segments are headed for LotoLand theme park in Korea. (Robin Bartoo)

birds. Clinton Basin was for many years an active marina bounded on the west by a small boat repair yard and on the east by the historic Ninth Avenue Terminal. Deeper in the basin some of the last vestige of Oakland's commercial fishing fleet is moored. The Seabreeze Cafe remains active and commands a fine view of the basin, estuary, and Ninth Avenue Terminal.

To this day the Fifth Avenue Point is a lively place. Many and varied uses have evolved from the marine trades which once prevailed here. This is no accident. It remains an ideal place for dreamers and doers, artists and craftsmen, entrepreneurs and businesses, poets and scholars, tinkers, tuners, and inventors. The value of these old buildings is in their usefulness for these functions. They are varied, versatile, practical, unpretentious, and relatively inexpensive to rent. Centrally located in Oakland, a wide range of hardware, material, and culture is locally available. Our proximity to the Estuary, Bay, and Pacific Ocean provides a moderate climate, and tempers dreams with the practical rigors of seafaring. A dynamic, talented and sustainably productive community continues to evolve here.

Unfortunately we live in an age of price tags and these less quantifiable values tend to be overlooked. The opportunity to redevelop a small portion of our waterfront has spawned a land rush, and money is very persuasive. Strictly interpreted Article 7 makes monetary profit our Port's primary goal. While our Fifth Avenue Point community represents an invaluable social resource, our buildings are old, and the land we occupy is worth big money. Our landlords are content with a reasonable return on their investment, but this is not the common trend. Will we displace this vestige of marine heritage for a fast buck? Or can we learn from this prototypical and sustainable community resource that there is more to life than money? There are several vacant waterfront parcels currently available for public use. This is an unprecedented opportunity to leave intact a bit of our marine heritage for our children. I urge you to obtain a copy of the recently released *Estuary Policy Plan*. Please take the time to read it and submit your comments to the agencies which even now are shaping the city our children will inherit.

Fair winds and following seas. --Robin Bartoo & Harlan Barr

Future of the Past: *Golden Bear* Lives on as ARTSHIP

What is ARTSHIP? ARTSHIP represents the next exciting chapter in the life of a historical vessel already steeped in history. ARTSHIP is a vibrant example of the transformation for peaceful uses of former U.S. war equipment in the light of base closures, a living monument to the spirit of reinvestment. In November 1997, Congress authorized the transfer of title of the T/V [training vessel] *Golden Bear* to ARTSHIP Foundation, an Oakland non-profit. The foundation, which since 1991 has been pursuing a wide array of art and performance programs in the East Bay, is dedicated to transforming the *Golden Bear* into a multi-purpose creative arts, cultural, and educational center to be permanently berthed on the Oakland waterfront.

The foundation intends over time to restore many of the ship's original Art Deco features, highlighting her first life as a 1939 vintage passenger freighter, as well as her contribution in World War II as the *U.S.S. Crescent City* and finally as the California Maritime Academy's training ship *Golden Bear* from 1977 to 1993. She will house a maritime history museum preserving the memory of these chapters in the vessel's life and of Oakland's long and important role as a maritime center and port city.

Also planned are a 500-seat amphitheater in a redesigned section of forward holds, and a smaller children's theater in the stern of the ship. There will be galleries and studios in existing staterooms and cabins, a restaurant, cafes, a bookstore and gift shop. The ship will support vocational training and welfare-to-work programs, and the offices and programs of ARTSHIP Foundation, including its dance theater company, ethnic music ensembles, an environmental literacy program, and curated public art programs. The ship will be home to other local cultural and educational non-profits as well. ARTSHIP is recognized by the Robotics Society of America and the World Institute on Disability, and has been chosen as the future U.S. campus of the International Peace University. Currently based in Berlin, the Peace University has a board of directors and advisors which includes twelve Nobel Peace Prize laureates,

ARTSHIP at war, 1940s: photo from the *USS Crescent City* Association.

among them Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Elie Wiesel, Nelson Mandela, and Frederick DeKlerk.

Much remains to be done before the *Golden Bear* can be brought from Suisun Bay to the mooring site identified by a Port-City-ARTSHIP study group. A long, difficult legislative process begun in 1991 culminated in the congressional act of 1997 authorizing transfer of the ship. To meet the financial stipulations of the U.S. Maritime Commission set forth in this authorization, ARTSHIP Foundation must raise \$100,000 before next spring. These funds, not payment but an indication of reserves, are required to show that assets are on hand for the takeover and maintenance of the vessel. Arrangements must be made with the City and Port of Oakland to secure mooring, permits, insurance, and at least partial funding. A Memorandum of Understanding must be ratified between ARTSHIP and these institutions which could go part way toward raising the funds, but the foundation is primarily dependent on outside sources.

Meanwhile, ARTSHIP continues its successful programs on land: the Windows at Jack London Square, the Augustino Dance Theater, performances in parks, and of course its involvement with the International Peace University. ARTSHIP stands for cultural equity, both preservation of heritage and the creation of new culture, as collateral for economic development.

The *Golden Bear*. Between 1971 and 1995, the *Golden Bear* was the floating classroom and practical training ship of the California Maritime Academy in Vallejo, the second of three ships of that name in service at the Academy. After 24 years of inactivity following her life as the *Crescent City*, a troop carrier in the second World War, the ship was converted at a fraction of her original estimated cost of \$1.2 million by the labor of academy midshipmen and staff.

On training cruises students could apply all they had learned of the basics of ship operations and maintenance, navigation, and engineering. Life on the ship was a regular fare of routines. On the other hand were the perennial fascinations of going to sea: sailing out into the wide unknown, marveling at the wonders of nature, feeling the fascination of faraway places and peoples,



learning of their customs, foods, and entertainments. But despite the technical and mechanical nature of the ship's workings, the *Golden Bear*, like every ship, was known for her personality. As one academy graduate put it: "All ships have a personality.... She was designed as one of those passenger-cargo carrying ships and she's a beauty." Another said it this way: "Being the oldest active American-flag merchant vessel she was like the *grande dame* of the merchant marine.... She rode well, for a ship you expected to behave like a senior citizen." A woman graduate shares this opinion: "I've always thought of the *Bear* as a person. She definitely has a personality.... I used to think she was such a lady. Just very elegant. She has gorgeous lines."

The Crescent City. On June 9, 1941, the U.S. Navy took over the year-old passenger-freighter *DelOrleans* for conversion into a troop carrier to assist the war effort. Recommissioned *Crescent City* (a nickname for New Orleans) on October 10, 1941, she sailed from Norfolk, Virginia, toward the Canal Zone and the Pacific. The *Crescent City* saw a long and exciting career in the Pacific theater, participating in the first landings at Guadalcanal in August 1942 and Emirau Island in April 1944, dropping troops at several island battle zones including Guam in July 1944, and finally serving as a temporary hospital evacuation ship at Okinawa until the end of the war. By war's end she had been awarded the Navy Unit Commendation and had received ten battle stars for her service. On February 14, 1946, the *Crescent City* arrived back in Norfolk, operating for another year and a half on training duty in the Caribbean. Then in October 1947 she sailed to San Francisco, and in September 1948 joined the Reserve Fleet at Suisun Bay. It was here that the California Maritime Academy, searching for a replacement for its retiring *Golden Bear I*, happened upon the mothballed *Crescent City* in 1970. According to Captain Carl G. Bowman, skipper of the new *Golden Bear*, finding her in the Suisun anchorage was "like finding grandpa's Rolls-Royce after it had been jacked up in the garage for 20 years."

The DelOrleans. The *S.S. DelOrleans*, along with her sister ships *DelBrazil* and *DelArgentino*, represented the opening of "a new era in South American trade and shipping." These were the first American ships built especially to serve the American Gulf-East Coast of South America trade, with ports of call in Pernambuco, Bahia, Rio de Janeiro, Santos, Montevideo, and Buenos Aires. Contracted in 1938 by the Mississippi Shipping Company for its Delta Line, the three passenger-cargo ships originally carried a combined pricetag of roughly ten million dollars. Designed by New Orleans naval architect V.M. Friede and built by the Sparrows Point, Maryland, plant of Bethlehem Steel, the *DelOrleans* sailed from New Orleans on her maiden voyage September 5, 1940. In 1940 Mississippi Shipping ordered three more identical vessels. Of all six, the *DelOrleans* is the only ship still afloat. She is the last of her class.

The ship's principal characteristics are as follows: length overall, 492'; length between perpendiculars, 465'; breadth, molded, 65'6"; depth to shelter deck, molded, 39'9"; draft, loaded, 25'6"; displacement tons, 14,200; deadweight tons, 8,900; gross tons, 8,300; shaft horsepower (normal), 7,800; normal sea speed, 16.5 knots; cargo capacity, 450,000 cu.ft.

The *DelOrleans* offered "the fastest cargo service and the most modern and luxurious passenger accommodations" between

the U.S. Gulf and East coasts and South American port cities. She had three complete decks - shelter deck, main deck, and 'tween deck. The 26 spacious outside staterooms on the shelter deck accommodated up to 67 passengers. Upper berths could be easily and cleverly concealed in the ceiling while not in use. Wire-inserted "Protex" windows slid in felt-lined channels and were water-tight when closed. Passengers enjoyed complete services including hospital and dispensary, barber shop, laundry, even a library and a salt-water swimming pool. The passenger dining room was on the main deck, accessed by grand staircases from the ship's entrance hall. A private dining room adjoined the main room. The promenade deck housed a cafe with bar and dance floor and smoking rooms and a roomy lounge. Dining rooms, lounge, and entrance hall were decorated with murals depicting scenes at the ship's principal ports of call.

Her Future is Now. It has been nearly sixty years since the *DelOrleans* first slid off her launch. With three distinct lives and two major conversions behind her, it is not surprising that much of her original interior design is hidden. But many obvious traces remain: from brass fixtures and window frames to the curves and angles of original walls to a few surviving murals, the ship cannot help but reflect the sophistication and beauty of her conception. It is one of ARTSHIP Foundation's goals to restore as much of this original charm and historical character as possible in the main salons and public areas, while reinterpreting the holds into performance, classroom, and workshop spaces. She should eventually be returned to seaworthiness and undertake short annual voyages. As the last ship of her class, she represents a living monument to a rich past. Under the name *ARTSHIP*, that past will be carried forward. Her future is now.

If you are interested in ARTSHIP and would like to learn more or help bring the ship to a permanent home in Oakland, please write to us at ARTSHIP Foundation, 1749 Middle Harbor Road, Building D-834, Oakland, CA 94607, or email ARTSHIP@aol.com. You can visit ARTSHIP's Web site at www.artship.org. --Victor Faessel & Slobodan Dan Paich



"A coffee cargo ship with luxury liner passenger accommodations, she made one trip to South America for the Delta Line"; surviving Art Deco interior is displayed on a recent ARTSHIP visit. (Slobodan Dan Paich)

Oakland Briefing

24 Hour Hot Line! "Oakland Briefing" reports and analyzes preservation issues in Oakland, at a pace determined by the News's production schedule. For late-breaking news and action items - letters to write, phones to call, meetings to attend - check the messages on OHA's answering machine, 763-9218.

■ SECOND ANNUAL "MOST ENDANGERED" LIST

Oakland Heritage Alliance announced its Nine Most Endangered list for 1998 at a press conference July 8 at the Julia Morgan YWCA at 15th and Webster Streets. The list appears here with some updates reflecting subsequent developments, encouraging and otherwise, over the past few months.

Demand for historic buildings in Oakland has increased, due to the improved economy and new developer interest. Skyrocketing rents and property values in San Francisco are bringing developers and real estate shoppers to Oakland. Even earthquake-damaged, long-vacant buildings like the Rotunda and the Key System building are to be developed.

The year-long battle to save and implement the Preservation Element of the General Plan demonstrated OHA's value as a voice of reason. The Element, the first plank of the new General Plan to be adopted, came under fire after the Appeals Court ruled against the City's attempt to take down the Ward's building without an environmental impact report.

Preservation became an issue in the mayoral campaign. Vice-Mayor Ignacio De La Fuente sent a mailing to 12,000 owners of historic properties, raising the specter that the Historic Preservation Element and "preservationists" were tying owners' hands and impeding economic development. Then, during the last days of the campaign, De La Fuente and his allies on the City Council awarded the Montgomery Ward site to the Oakland Unified School District, rejecting a developer who was willing to buy the building for \$3.5 million and then spend another \$56 million to rehabilitate it for retail and live/work units.

This year's list includes districts as well as buildings. The fact that it was so easy to assemble this new list, adding to the still-endangered buildings from last year, should be cause for alarm. We are asking for your help. A call to your Councilmember, a Letter to the Editor, an appearance before the City Council will help OHA in the effort to save what is important and distinctive, as well as to ensure thoughtful, quality development in our city.

1. YWCA. An act of God, the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, began the troubles now facing the local branch of the Young Women's Christian Association, founded in 1877 as the Ladies' Evangelical Philanthropic Society. Structural damage forced extensive rehabilitation of the Webster Street facility, designed in 1913 by Julia Morgan at the height of her prolific career.

The Y board voted to completely restore the building: a noble decision that would end up seriously disrupting the association's finances. Cost overruns and revocation of expected underwriting by the Federal Emergency Management Agency left the Y with more than a million dollars worth of construction-related liabilities. The restoration project remains uncompleted, leaving space on the upper floors unusable to generate revenues through



Polychrome terra cotta arches adorn Julia Morgan's YWCA (Survey)

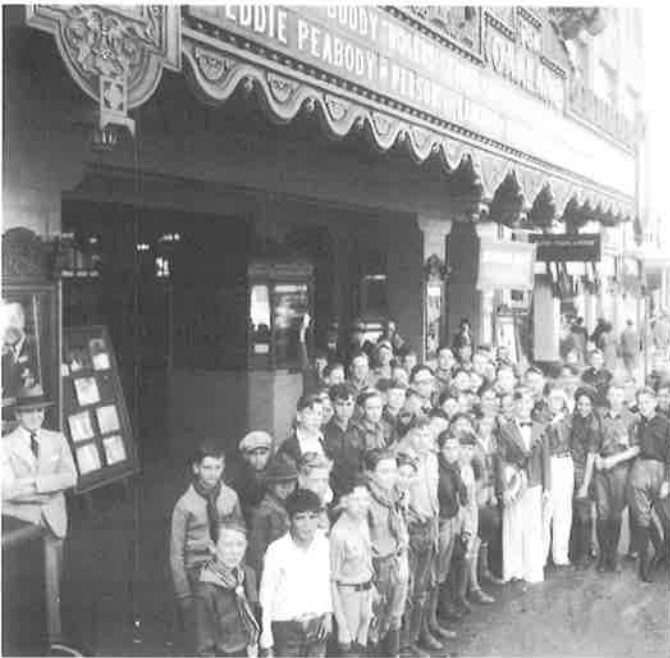
leases or programs. According to sources close to the case, sale of the building may be forced as part of a bankruptcy settlement. Because of its many features that are unique to its original use, as a "sheltering home for girls without home or friends" and a place "to gather children together to teach them helpful things," reuse options in its current configuration are limited.

A glorious skylight atrium is the highlight of Morgan's design, a true masterpiece of the California style. Two other Bay Area YWCAs designed by Morgan, in Berkeley and in San Jose, have been demolished, as have most of her Southern California Ys in Mediterranean and Mission Revival styles.

2. Fox Oakland Theater, 1807-29 Telegraph Avenue/504-38 18th Street/505-41 19th Street. The number of photo-ops with mayoral candidates posed in front of the shuttered Fox indicates the importance of the theater as a key symbol of downtown - past, present, and future. The City would not even be talking of this area as an Uptown entertainment and retail district were it not for the enduring presence of the Fox.

The Fox Oakland harks back to the time of lavish movie palaces in the 1920s. Indeed, the Fox, completed in 1928, may be the last great Oakland movie theater built before the 1929 crash. It was a collaborative project of Maury Diggs, builder and architect, with architects Charles Peter Weeks and William Day. Diggs was responsible for other distinctive buildings in Oakland like the Oakland Title Insurance (Richie) building at 15th and Franklin and the Latham Square Building at 16th and Telegraph. Weeks and Day designed other Oakland theaters - the now-demolished Orpheum at 1744 Broadway and the Dufwin (Roxie) at 512-23 17th Street - as well as the I. Magnin store at 2001-11 Broadway. The theater had a regular schedule of movies until 1962, and special events thereafter.

The Fox's styling is described as "Hindu-Deco," a fanciful Western appreciation of the East, with its 115-foot tiled Sikhara tower, monumental jewel-studded figures that once puffed smoke flanking the stage, auditorium ceiling of plaster cast in "Islamic" patterns painted to resemble wood, and elaborately painted lobby. Even minus the glass and neon ball that once topped the dome and "blinked out warnings to airplanes" and the organ,



Boy Scouts visit the Fox Oakland in 1930. Note the original bare-bulb marquee, and the live acts (Fanchon & Marco, "Radio Stars in Person") appearing on the Fox's magnificent stage. (Oakland History Room)

chandeliers, and seats, the theater is a remarkable repository of "decoration and craftsmanship difficult or impossible to reproduce today," to quote the 1978 City landmark resolution.

The theater is now owned by the City, purchased from the Piedmont family who had been holding it since 1978, helping to save it from demolition. The El Niño rains have not been kind to the Fox. Piecemeal roof patch jobs have not stopped serious leaks collapsing the decoratively painted hallway ceilings and causing paint to peel in the lobby. The wood flooring under the missing seats rotted and the carpets sprouted mushrooms. The City has architect Bill Coburn working on alternative plans that range in scope and cost from sprucing up the facade to roof replacement and seismic upgrade. But CEDA Director Bill Claggett has admitted that roof replacement was not likely before the winter rains. City Manager Robert Bobb has publicly expressed misgivings about the City's purchase of the Fox.

While some like mayoral candidate Ed Blakely called for restoring the Fox first in the proposed Uptown entertainment zone, the City is moving ahead with plans to put what remains of its redevelopment money into a trendy retail/multiplex complex across from Sears (probably assuring that the Grand Lake Theater ends up on a future endangered list). Yet with such a large stage and so much seating, the Fox might provide ample room for large Broadway-type productions. Council voted in July to enter into a six-month exclusive negotiating agreement with Tetsuo Group for development of the "Fox Block" (behind the theater) with bowling, multiplex cinema, restaurants, etc., but renovation of the Fox is not proposed for this stage. A roof replacement and seismic upgrade appropriation was to come to Council in fall, with work to start immediately. This has not yet happened, though facades and interior are being cleaned up. Owner: City of Oakland, Robert Bobb, City Manager, 1 Frank Ogawa Plaza, Oakland 94612. (See *November Landmarks report*.)

3. The Estuary. Development pressures are threatening the historic authenticity of the nation's longest urban waterfront, five and a half miles from Adeline Street to 66th Avenue. The City and Port are increasingly working in tandem on Estuary issues. The League of Women Voters helped raise awareness of Oakland as a waterfront city, and ROMA Design Group released a fat *Oakland Estuary Plan* in February, followed by an EIR. While several open space and recreation opportunities are proposed, preservation is nowhere near the top of the agenda for this vast district. In the Jack London Square area, Barnes and Noble, the multiplex theater, and Yoshi's have helped create a thriving "zone sanitaire" for tourists and locals alike, and live-work lofts contribute a hip and arty atmosphere. But overheated development pressures - the Port which uses retail to subsidize its other operations and the City desperate for tax dollars - may doom potential historic districts, venerable buildings, and underappreciated neighborhoods like Jack London Village.

a. The Produce Market. Among the oldest enterprises along the Estuary, dating from 1917 when the market relocated from 11th and Webster Streets to 3rd and Franklin, the Produce District, occupying some 130,000 square feet of space, is distinctive for its low-rise buildings with wide awnings and open fronts. The produce merchants have outgrown the area and will likely relocate to modern facilities at the Army Base or elsewhere. The markets would seem ideal for stores, architects' offices, or restaurants, but much of this area is held by a single owner and the costs of retrofitting balanced against rents currently possible drove efforts to overturn the 30-foot height limit recommended by the ROMA study. If the sky becomes the limit, a new downtown is likely here, rather than fixing the one we already have. The very old 19th century buildings on lower Broadway are also threatened by proposed 6-story height limits.

b. Jack London Village, a unique ensemble of interconnected buildings, walkways, and landscaping dating from about 1970, is described as deteriorating, too remote, and lacking public pedestrian access. Rather than improving access and visibility, ROMA recommends demolishing the Village for a "full-service waterfront-oriented hotel ... [that would] provide an appropriate transition on the Site B property." Site B is the proposed Lincoln Properties gated community, currently in litigation.



First & Last Chance, Johnny Heinold at the door. Posters advertise Neptune Beach and the T&D Theater. Note utility poles, curbs, and gutters. (OHR)



Ninth Avenue Terminal, seen on OHA's tour in July, is the last survivor of the great Oakland harbor improvements of the 1920s (Bonnie Hamlin)

c. **First and Last Chance Saloon**, Jack London Square. This 118 year old saloon was a haunt of Jack London in his youth. It is located at what was the Oakland end of the old Webster Street Bridge and was allegedly the last stop before "dry" Alameda. Recently designated a National Literary Landmark for its association with Jack London, the saloon is a major tourist attraction, noteworthy for its colorful original proprietor, Johnny Heinold, and a quaint vestige of modest wood-frame structures that predominated at the waterfront a century ago. The ROMA study hints ominously that the First and Last Chance could be "incorporated...within a [new] mixed-use complex with ground level retail and restaurant uses...as a landmark element." Proprietor Carol Brookman reports assurances from the Port that "they intend to work with me to insure that nothing in the plan will interfere or detract in any way from the significance of the building or the site," but continued vigilance seems advisable.

d. **Ninth Avenue Terminal** would be demolished to make way for an 11-acre park, according to the ROMA study. This huge warehouse was built in 1927, and is the last remaining example of prewar municipal port buildings in Oakland. It is rated B+ and appears eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. It was once eyed by the Oakland Museum as the ideal location for a satellite "Treasure House" for the thousands of objects that cannot be displayed for lack of space, and would make a logical mooring and adjunct space for the ARTSHIP.

The City and Port of Oakland have just released a new Estuary Policy Plan, available from CEDA, 238-3941. Written comments: Oakland City Planning Commission, attn. Katrina Koh, 250 Frank Ogawa Plaza, Suite 3330, Oakland 94612.

4. **Union Bank Building, 1300 Broadway**. Oakland's first steel-frame high-rise sits largely uninhabitable as it has since the 1989 earthquake destroyed its exit stairs from the upper floors. The damage remains boarded up nearly nine years later. When completed in 1904, the Union Bank building signaled Oakland's emergence as an architectural capital and an urban center on the 20th-century model. Its construction triggered the city's trailblazing role in the brand-new concept of urban planning. The architect of the project, Walter J. Mathews, was the son of pioneer California architect Julius Mathews, and designed many

of the earliest buildings in downtown Oakland. California Decorativist painter Arthur Mathews, whose spectacular murals graced the still-vacant Greene Library, was Walter's brother.

This early skyscraper helped to inspire visionary Progressive-era downtown plans by Charles Mulford Robinson and Werner Hegemann, taking advantage of the East Bay's unique light and energetic street life. Stylistically complementary skyscrapers were scattered symmetrically through the expanding downtown, separated by low-rise development that allowed full view of the towers from all four sides. (See Spring 1998 **Oakland Heritage Alliance News**, "Downtown Oakland Historic District.")

Rumored changes of ownership have failed to dislodge the "For Sale" sign that has decorated the building's Beaux Arts facade for years. The Unity Building, as it is now called, is currently owned by Cathy Haraburda, wife of Joe Haraburda, president and chief executive officer of the Metropolitan Oakland Chamber of Commerce. The Haraburdas are both long-time Oakland residents, associated with the *Oakland Tribune*.

5. **Sears, Roebuck & Co. Building, 2633 Telegraph Avenue**. Like the Fruitvale Montgomery Ward building, the boarded-up Sears was once one of the stars of a retail/mail order chain. The *Oakland Tribune* reported that some 300 people worked in the store in 1930, situated as it was to attract affluent customers from Adams Point, Rockridge, and Piedmont. Built in 1929-30, the building was valued at \$350,000. It was a classic Art Deco design, with many windows, patterned brick veneer over reinforced concrete, cast stone trim, and a three story tower topped with terra cotta fan-shaped ornament. The original facade was buried or removed in a 1963-64 modernization. The exodus to the suburbs, the mall craze, and the atrophying of commercial downtown Oakland led to the closing of the Sears store in 1993. The building has sat vacant and boarded up since.

The Southern California owners, even in this boom period, have been unable to interest retailers. A self-storage proposal is being considered by the Planning Commission and City Council, and may be a hopeful move toward reuse of the building and a turnaround of the Upper Telegraph neighborhood which it anchors. The plan includes seismic retrofitting and facade improvements, with retail on the ground level and perhaps on the other floors as the market improves. OHA has strongly suggested restoring the original facade, rather than placing yet another layer over the 60s alteration. If restored to its original appearance, the store would probably be National Register-eligible and qualify for historic tax credits. On a site visit in October, architect Steade Craigo from the State Office of Historic Preservation explained the 20% investment tax credit, Mills Act, facade easements, State Historical Building Code, and other incentives to the developer, and advised on how to determine whether enough of the original still exists. The visit was arranged by OHA's Shawna Brekke-Read.

Owner: Haagen Hollywood Partnership, Alexander Haagen Co., 3500 Sepulveda Blvd., Manhattan Beach CA 90266; StarAmerica, Vicky Schiff, 9350 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills CA 90212. Former Planning Commissioner Peter Smith has been representing the owners: 987-8300.

6. **Oakland Point District**. Identified as a potential historic district of primary importance by the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey, this neighborhood of over 800 mostly residential



Oakland Point district, isolated for 35 years by the Cypress Freeway, is a prime example of Stanley Lowe's statement that "often people have gold in their neighborhoods and don't recognize it." The Italianate and Queen Anne at right have been on Code Compliance's demolition list. (Survey)

buildings encompasses 35 blocks in the Prescott section of West Oakland. This unique area of largely 1870s houses grew up as a direct response to the arrival of the transcontinental railroad terminus at Oakland Point in 1869. Ever since, the neighborhood has been a place where newcomers to Oakland have settled. In all of the East Bay this district has the greatest concentration of intact nineteenth century houses, as well as a rich ethnic history.

The district, although officially determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, has no official designation in Oakland. Local district status has traditionally required all property owners' consent, a daunting task in an area this size. A number of factors keep the district at risk, including deferred maintenance and neglect, fires, and Code Compliance action by the City, resulting in demolition or inappropriate alterations. The historic importance of the district is also not widely recognized and many residents are distrustful of preservation, especially when they fear higher maintenance costs with no city assistance.

Besides owner-occupied residences, the district has some special situations: owners with limited cash resources, including elderly long-term residents; estates of deceased or incapacitated individuals; properties held for investment; and various forms of subsidized housing. Currently this is an area of extremely low incomes and a relatively high percentage of non-owner-occupied properties. Historically minority ownership and residency have been high, and there is concern about displacement.

Action: Advocate for improved assistance from the City and private sector for property enhancement and for implementation of Historic Preservation Element Policy 3.12.

7. Calou House, 3521 Martin Luther King Jr. Way. This boarded-up house, on Code Compliance's demolition list, is a distinctive Colonial Revival-Queen Anne anchoring the historic Brockhurst neighborhood. It was designed by Thomas Newsom of the famous Oakland-based architectural family. It has further claim to distinction as having been owned by Pierre and Jennie Calou of the Oakland Laundry Company. While ornamentation has been lost and the roof altered, its basic integrity remains.

A determined group of neighbors led by Madeline Wells and Jane Powell have been fighting to rehabilitate the house. They note the effects of BART and the freeway in removing housing

and destabilizing the neighborhoods that survived. Absentee landlords cease maintenance or, as with the Calou house, death and tangled ownerships throw properties into limbo. OHA has worked with the City, neighbors, and potential non-profit developers to stave off the bulldozers; liens must be lifted, title cleared, and restoration work undertaken, in a neighborhood still suffering from neglect, poverty, and crime. (See update, p.12.)

8. Children's Hospital Oakland's original Baby Hospital.

This Spanish Colonial building, hidden from view by additions, dates from about 1927. Built of red brick with decorative terra cotta friezes and a prominent two story angled solarium bay, it has a matching brick wing with solarium built in the 1940s. By 1960 a new lobby was added between the bays covering the arched arcade. The courtyard contains a venerable magnolia.

CEO Tony Paap indicated at a recent community meeting that Children's was considering future expansion within the confines of their existing site. Although in excellent condition, of steel frame and reinforced concrete, the Baby Hospital falls under Unreinforced Masonry mandates, and hospital officials say they are weighing their options of either retrofitting the structure or tearing it down. As the new owner of Old Merritt College, their unsentimental attitude toward the original Baby Hospital - where the hospital's stellar reputation was formed - is worrisome.

Owner: Children's Hospital Oakland, 747 52nd Street, Oakland 94609. Tony Paap, CEO. (510) 428-3000.

9. Oakland Consolidated Street Railway Car Barn, 4629

Martin Luther King Jr. Way. This building, dating from around 1891, appears to be the earliest and most substantial survivor of Oakland's electric street railway system, according to the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey. Electric power revolutionized local transit, and the car barn was built for the Grove Street line, serving Oakland and Berkeley. The powerhouse was across 47th Street. The Oakland Transit Co. was formed in 1898 to take over several streetcar lines, including this one. By 1906, Oakland Transit's barns were consolidated at two locations, one being 51st and Telegraph, and the Oakland Consolidated barn was acquired by Yosemite Laundry. About 1926 Yosemite left to merge with another laundry, and the Pullman Co. had a steam



Ward's warehouse overlooking busy East 14th Street in the 1940s. State Commission has recommended it for the National Register. (OHR)



Studio One building, originally the Ladies' Relief Society Children's Home, faced the middle of the block toward the Society's other homes, for infants and elderly women. Roof shape dates from 1906 fire repairs. (Survey)

laundry here until the 1950s. Yosemite Laundry made some improvements after a fire in 1914, and photos from the carbarn era are sought. The masonry main building fronting on Martin Luther King, with its stepped parapet and arched windows, is very much as shown on the 1903 Sanborn map.

Status: This building, now vacant, is on the Unreinforced Masonry list, and the owner does not appear committed to retrofitting it. The powerhouse was demolished to make way for a Children's Hospital parking lot about 1987. Owner: Lynn Nightingale, 102 Flying Cloud Isle, Foster City CA 94404.

REPEAT PERFORMANCES: OHA is also monitoring the following endangered properties from our 1997 list:

1. Montgomery Ward building, 2825 International Blvd. This building remains the most controversial of our list. The City Council rejected a \$3.5 million offer from a developer, deciding this was the only site possible for a new school in Fruitvale. Only Mayor Harris, John Russo, and Nancy Nadel voted against the latest demolition plan. A suit was filed by the League for the Protection of Oakland's Architectural and Historic Resources after the Council decision. The League also nominated the building to the National Register of Historic Places. The City Council voted 7-1 on October 27 to oppose the nomination. On November 13 the State Historical Resources Commission unanimously found the building eligible for the Register, and admonished the City about CEQA compliance.

2. Fruitvale Hotel, 3221 San Leandro Blvd. A number of individuals and groups are working to save this 1894 hotel building. One of the co-owners has revealed the troubled nature of the partnership and suggested that the hotel was acquired for its land. While the owner does not appear totally opposed to reuse of the hotel, in its vacant and unprotected state deterioration continues and fire remains a threat. This building is also threatened by being on the Code Compliance demolition track.

3. Southern Pacific 16th Street Station. Still vacant and deteriorating, and used as a staging area for diesel trucks. There has been some talk of relocating the Produce District merchants to the 25-acre site that includes the station, and an RFP for a(nother) reuse study is expected in the near future.

4. Studio One, 365 45th Street in Temescal. The price tag for retrofitting and bringing this building up to code has grown to \$10 million, with no bond measure in sight to provide the funds. Councilmember John Russo has instituted a process to bring some resolution to what Downtown sees as a community divided over rehabbing the 100 year old building or starting over. The Friends of Studio One asked the Landmarks Board to place the building on the Preservation Study List. This gives it some protection if a new structure is proposed to replace the existing "unofficial landmark." A major community meeting was held on November 14 to address these new developments.

5. Three West Oakland Houses moved from Shorey and Pine Streets in the path of the new Cypress freeway. Still waiting for permanent sites, still under threat of demolition from CalTrans, still vulnerable to arson and the elements.

6. Central/Southern Pacific Depot (Mi Rancho), 464 7th Street. Still vacant and for sale.

7. JJ's Diner/Biff's Coffee Shop, Broadway Auto Row. Chevron has withdrawn their application for a McChevron at the site, citing Planning Commission coolness toward their plans. But they may be planning to clear the site to sell it. Advocates are encouraging potential operators of a restored JJ's to come forward. For updates and action check www.friendsofjjs.org.

8. Cox Cadillac, Harrison and Bay Place. Rite Aid is still planning a drugstore in this 1925 auto palace built on the skeleton of the 1890s Consolidated Piedmont Cable Car barn and powerhouse. However, so much of the historic fabric will be removed that an EIR is being required. Will another developer come along with plans more sensitive to the structures?

SAVED: There appear to be two spectacular successes from last year's list:

1. Floral Depot and Sweet's Ballroom. Theologian Matthew Fox snatched these buildings before BART could go forward with plans for a 14-story headquarters building on the site. Fox is proposing a variety of uses, including a blues supper club in the Floral Depot, that fit perfectly with the City's plan for an Uptown entertainment and retail district. Storefronts in the Floral Depot are already being cleaned up and occupied.

2. Key System/Security Bank Building, 1100 Broadway. Another happy outcome: though its Annex has been demolished, plans are well along to turn the earthquake-damaged building into a hotel. --Robert Brokl, with Steve Lavoie & Bill Coburn



Harrison Street frontage of Cox Cadillac: Rite Aid's "preservation alternative" proposed to remove the service wing and keep this wall as a freestanding screen or trellis: City is requiring an EIR. (Survey)

■ CALOU HOUSE UPDATE: GUERRILLA GARDENING AND LEGAL MONKEYSHINES

OHA's efforts to save the Calou House at 3251 Martin Luther King Jr. Way (Thomas Newsom, 1902) from demolition by the City ended up taking some interesting turns. At a meeting in May, Code Compliance asked if OHA would take over maintaining the property while negotiations continued. We thought the request a bit unusual, but we agreed. (One reason the City feels compelled to tear down abandoned buildings is the expense of keeping them cleaned up and secured.) Then we had an idea. Instead of just cutting the weeds and picking up the garbage, which is all the City wanted, we decided to do something a little more positive for the property and the neighborhood.

We decided to plant a garden. We got money and plant donations, we rented a rototiller, we got free mulch, we brought tools and weed whackers. And on July 18, an unbelievably hot day, we went to work. Weeds were cut, garbage was picked up, holes were dug. We planted cosmos, agapanthus, tree dahlias, coreopsis, geraniums, nasturtiums, iris, datura, and lantana. The reaction from the neighbors was mostly positive (though they may have wondered about our doing this in the 92 degree weather). The garden continues to grow through the efforts of Madeline Wells, who waters it with borrowed water from the house next door, and who has led the fight to save the house.

Meanwhile, back at City Hall, we continued to negotiate with the city and tried to find a non-profit interested in restoring the house. We learned that an offer (\$45,000) had come in on the property and was to be confirmed in probate court on September 23. This was only two weeks notice and none of the non-profits were able to move that fast. The offeror was an investor in rental property planning to fix it up enough to be habitable and then rent it out again as seven units. This was not quite the outcome OHA and the neighborhood had hoped for. So OHA board member Jane Powell decided to buy some time by going to probate court and overbidding on the property, making time for the non-profits to do feasibility and architectural studies, and then, if it made sense, to purchase the property from her.

The September hearing was continued because the liens from



OHA members take on maintenance of the Calou House grounds. This prominently sited house with its wraparound porch and round tower is an important anchor in the Brockhurst neighborhood. (Jane Powell)

Code Compliance totaled more than the offers and a letter from the City Attorney stating that the City would remove its liens had not been received. In November the competing investor was awarded the property for a bid of \$61,000, more than a serious restorer could afford to spend. One hopes the purchaser will be held to the highest standards in his "rehabilitation" of the building, but realistically the City cannot force him to restore it, or even make it attractive, as long as it is up to code.

This points up a serious problem with any attempt to see that blighted historic properties are restored. It's not enough to have the new blight ordinance - there needs to be some kind of incentive for property owners to make their buildings and neighborhoods attractive. We need the carrot as well as the stick.

We lost this battle but the war continues. --Jane Powell

■ ON THE WATERFRONT (PLAN)

In early November, the City released a second and final draft of the Oakland Estuary Plan, renamed the *Estuary Policy Plan*. The new name reflects some changes to the plan since the first final draft was released last February. (See Spring OHA News.)

The February document had a range of objectives for the entire estuary area, major policies and specific recommendations for three districts along the estuary (Jack London, Oak to Ninth Avenue, San Antonio-Fruitvale), and implementation measures, including regulations, catalyst projects, and public improvement funding. Because the plan will become part of Oakland's General Plan, Port and City staff recommended that the portions dealing with context and policy be incorporated into a new document, the *Estuary Policy Plan*, for inclusion in the General Plan. The remainder of the February plan will serve as the basis for a new document, the *Estuary Plan Implementation Guide*.

In response to comments on the earlier version, more references to historic resources have been incorporated, including a map of historic resources in the Jack London Square area and a revised objective which provides for infill and reuse that respects cultural and historical resources. The plan retains the recommendation that the Produce District be preserved, but still strongly states that the Ninth Avenue Terminal will be demolished.

Two major changes which may impact historic buildings are elimination of height limits and increases in allowable density in two sensitive areas. Along Broadway, where the Survey has identified a locally significant Lower Broadway historic district, the floor area ratio is increased from three to seven. In the loft district east of Broadway, where the Survey identified the Waterfront Warehouse District as appearing eligible for the National Register, the floor area ratio is increased from three to five, and the density of housing units per acre from 60 to 125.

Despite these changes, the City does not intend to revise or recirculate the draft Environmental Impact Report on the plan, and the schedule of work sessions and meetings by the Planning Commission and Port Commission projects that the Planning Commission will certify the final EIR and approve the plan for forwarding to Council by early December. The City Council will then make the final decision on whether to include the Estuary Policy Plan in the City's General Plan.

For copies of the Estuary Policy Plan, contact Katrina Koh in Strategic Planning, 238-3941. --Carolyn Douthat

■ OFF THE WATERFRONT: CUPOLA TO GO

The Port of Oakland is seeking a new owner to ensure the preservation and reuse of a cupola that originally topped an 1880s commercial building at Broadway and 7th Street. The building was designed by the prominent firm J.C. Mathews and Son and contained professional offices and lodgings. The cupola was moved to the Metropolitan Yacht Club when the building was demolished 30 years ago. Now the Yacht Club has been demolished to make way for renovation of the Jack London Square Marina and the cupola sits in the middle of the construction zone. If you have a proposal or an idea, please contact Kate Nichol at 272-1177 or knichol@portoakland.com.



Cupola marked the intersection of Broadway and Railroad Avenue (7th Street) until the building was demolished during BART construction. It is currently parked just west of Jack London Village. (1963 City Planning Department photo: Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey collection)

■ CHANGES AT PRESERVATION PARK III

In recent weeks downtown residents and visitors might have noticed some major changes on the empty lot next to the Pardee Home Museum, bordered by 11th and 12th Streets and Martin Luther King Jr. Way. The abandoned Classical Revival house which stood atop blocks on this city-owned lot for some twelve years was finally demolished by the City, which claimed that the years of neglect had rendered the building unsuitable for rehabilitation. The unfinished foundations, remnants of a failed effort to build a facility for the Black Filmmakers' Hall of Fame on this site, were removed, and the land was levelled. The City is tentatively planning to plant flowering vines along the chain-link fence which surrounds the lot.

These recent developments represent an effort to make the lot more attractive to potential developers. The city issued an RFP, (request for proposals) for the site in 1997, but the review panel rejected all three proposals. (These included the Oakland Point Historic Interpretive Center's proposal for the three Cypress Freeway houses.) The panel concluded that a future RFP might attract stronger proposals if the City cleaned up the lot and if other improvements in the neighborhood were further along. With work completed on Old Town Square and well underway

on the Swan's Market and First Unitarian Church renovations, and with the renovations of Lafayette Square Park and the Greene Library scheduled for the near future, it appears to be time to begin planning for redevelopment of this critically important site within the Preservation Park Historic District.

For this reason, the trustees of the Pardee Home Museum convened a meeting on November 12 for Preservation Park neighbors and other interested parties to share ideas about the site, both for interim uses such as community gardens or parking for tour buses and for permanent uses such as extending Preservation Park or museum space. Anyone who would like to contribute ideas may call David Nicolai, Director of the Pardee Home Museum, at 444-2187. --David Nicolai

■ FRANK OGAWA PLAZA DEDICATION

At the plaza dedication on October 30, City Manager Robert Bobb praised OHA's persistent advocacy for completion of the civic center surrounding City Hall. As part of the day long celebration, a bust of the late Frank Ogawa was unveiled near the entrance of the new wing of the historic Broadway Building. Ogawa, the councilmember-at-large who passed away in 1994, participated actively in the process to redesign the plaza, a process that began over 10 years ago before the Loma Prieta Earthquake. The administrative center now officially bears his name. Following the unveiling a lunch-hour concert featured the Bay Area Blues Society. Food booths from downtown eateries, a mini-farmers market, story telling, clay sculpturing and face painting hosted by the Museum of Children's Art (MOCHA) took place throughout the day. Oakland Tours Program guides hosted tours of the reconfigured complex.

An estimated 7000 government employees now work in the six-block area surrounding City Hall (4000 in the Federal Building, 2000 in the new State Building, and 1000 in City offices). Preservation staff, including the Cultural Heritage Survey unit and the Landmarks Board staff, can now be found in the new Dalziel Building, 250 Frank Ogawa Plaza - next to City Hall across what was formerly 15th Street. The Survey is in the Strategic Planning division on the third floor.

But there is still work to be done. Of over \$123 million in costs associated with the administration complex, \$4.8 million was earmarked for tenant relocation (artists and booksellers from the Pardee Building), a Rotunda Building engineering study, the preservation incentives for the Downtown Historic District, and last but not least, restoration of the red brick Plaza Building. Work has not yet started on the latter and discussions regarding its future use indicate a possible change in focus (see Landmarks Board report for September). Continued OHA monitoring of the situation appears warranted.

When all is said and done, however, OHA activists can feel a sense of pride that the heart of downtown now reflects an exciting mix of old and new landmarks. Tours of the complex continue on the first Tuesday of every month. The free tours, sponsored by the Community and Economic Development Agency, start at 10 am at the City Hall main entrance. The Survey and the Tours Program are always on the lookout for new volunteers. Call Betty Marvin at 238-6879 (Survey) or Annalee Allen at 238-3234 (Tours) and turn yourself in! --Annalee Allen

■ BIFF'S UPDATE: THE DINER THAT WILL NOT DIE

A battle has been won in the effort to revive Biff's/JJ's. On September 18 Chevron withdrew its application to demolish this long-loved round coffee shop and replace it with a McDonald's. Their decision was prompted by strong community support for its revitalization and opposition to the drive-through fast food proposal. Forty to fifty people protesting the project attended the Planning Commission hearing on the draft EIR on August 19. The community came out in force in spite of the fact that they had little more than a week's notice and in August many people are away. Churches, schools, and community leaders made sure Chevron and the Planning Commission heard their voices.

Besides mitigating the loss of a historical resource, Chevron would have had to overcome two other obstacles: a major conditional use permit requirement for a fast food outlet and a zoning variance for a drive-through within 500 feet of a school.

The Landmarks Board criticized the draft EIR which did not include restoration as an alternative. A scoping letter requested study of the alternative of rehabilitating JJ's as a coffee shop with a new gas station incorporating the quick-serve mini-mart, which would serve both Chevron's and community needs. But this letter, which was sent by six neighborhood organizations and Friends of JJ's, was not even included in the EIR.

The so-called Preservation Alternative in the EIR was to gut the building and make some exterior changes to force it to be what it did not want to be: a fast-food drive-through.

No one at either of these hearings, not even the Chamber of Commerce or the auto dealers, said they would prefer a shiny new McDonald's to a buffed-up Biffs. One auto dealer said he was in favor of the McDonald's because he feared that 10 years from now there would still be a chain link fence around the property. In other words, some seemed to feel they had only two choices: the passive blight of a fenced off property or the active blight of a generic, truck-stop McDonald's.

Chevron, as Standard Oil, selected this gateway to Auto Row in 1962 to construct an experimental \$750,000 (over \$4 million in today's dollars) service station-restaurant combination. They selected the genre's premier architects, Armet & Davis, to design this unique round restaurant. The experiment was so successful that 34 years later 10,000 people signed a petition protesting the closing of this circular coffee shop and Oakland's Landmarks Board deemed it eligible for landmark status.

There are "Googie" coffee shops in southern California which were saved by public protest and then became more popular and profitable than ever and have helped revitalize their neighborhoods. A video on one of these, Bob's Big Boy in Burbank, was presented to the Planning Commission and Landmarks Board by John English who conducts Googie tours in Los Angeles.

So only the first battle has been won. A search has begun for experienced coffee shop operators who appreciate Googie style to convince Chevron to restore Biff's and lease it, or to sell it if Chevron cannot see the value of this high profile opportunity.

It has been those who live, worship, and learn in the adjoining community, and who often feel they are invisible, that have put the most energy into preserving this institution. But Biff's restoration would not benefit just them. It would benefit the whole region and add to the vitality of Auto Row. --Joyce Roy

O.H.A. Update

■ SWAN'S MARKET FUNDRAISING

Construction began last May on the Swan's Market project in Old Oakland. Filling the entire block from 9th to 10th Streets and Washington to Clay, this beautiful white glazed tile building with decorative fruit medallions has been vacant for 15 years. It was built in several stages between 1917 and 1940 as a "sanitary" "free" market housing numerous vendors. EBALDC (East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation), a local non-profit that focuses on neighborhood revitalization and affordable housing, has been working to bring the site to life. When finished the building will consist of three parts around a courtyard: co-housing condominiums, low cost rental apartments, and retail space. Retail will include a new home for the historic Housewives Market, restaurants reflecting the diversity of the neighborhood, a bakery, and a site for MOChA (Museum of Children's Art). The courtyard will open onto 9th Street to take advantage of the Friday Farmers Market. Revitalization of this landmark will continue the changes already taking place here with the popular new housing at Old Town Square.

In February **Oakland Heritage Alliance** plans a Valentine's fund raiser for EBALDC and Swan's Market (details to be announced). Funding for the project, put together with EBALDC's usual "unique mix of funding sources," covers construction costs but has had to postpone some of the finer historic elements - historic lighting, glazed brick tiles, gateway to the courtyard, a fountain. EBALDC has set up a Special Recognition Campaign so the community can become part of the preservation project by helping to fund specific items. Donors will be recognized in various ways from small gifts and mention in the newsletter to major donor plaques. For more information about this campaign and to help EBALDC make Swan's a truly great preservation project contact Margaret Gee at EBALDC, 287-5353 x627. --Pamela Magnuson-Peddle



Swan's Market, taken down to its bare essentials. When rebuilt, it will be a single structure with homes, businesses, and open space. EBALDC plans fundraising for historic and aesthetic extras. (Carolyn Douthat)

■ MEET YOUR BOARD MEMBERS

The OHA Board of Directors is a working board. Officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer) review policy-oriented correspondence and make other decisions between meetings. Some Board members chair committees; all have distinctive and complementary areas of expertise and activity.

Bill Coburn, architect, West Oakland resident, has been serving as President of the Board, makes presentations, writes letters, and chairs the new committee to fund acquisition and rehabilitation of historic properties.

Xandra Grube, planner, San Antonio resident, has been serving as Vice President, is involved in neighborhood activities, speaks at public meetings, served on the House Tour selection committee, helps manage the Hotel Oakland facade easement, and is committed to funding historic preservation.

Steve Lavoie, librarian and poet, as Treasurer prepares the budget, reviews expenditures, and handles banking, and also attends meetings, chairs the new Neighborhoods Committee, and co-chairs the Walking Tours Committee.

Bob Brokl, artist, North Oakland, makes presentations, writes letters, monitors projects such as the Fox Theater and Temescal Library, prepared the Candidates' Questionnaire, and coordinated the Most Endangered Buildings list and events.

Pamela Magnuson-Peddle, graphic artist, is involved with the Unity Council's Fruitvale Main Street Program and the Friends of the Fruitvale Hotel, coordinated the Stanley Lowe lecture last November, and co-chairs the Walking Tours.

Betty Marvin, historian with the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey, produces the OHA News, attends public meetings, gives technical assistance for correspondence, represents OHA at neighborhood events, and co-chairs the Walking Tours.

Jane Powell, contractor, represents OHA at public meetings and in the Arts and Crafts world, co-chaired the Adams Point House Tour, and is spearheading the Calou House cause and related issues of Code Compliance and housing rehabilitation.

Joyce Roy, architect, represents OHA at public meetings, offers architectural expertise, and in Preservation Action is particularly involved with the Estuary Plan, Friends of JJ's, and articulating the economic value of preservation.

Don Tyler, Oakland High School teacher and community educator, chairs the House Tour committee, coordinates the entire range of House Tour events, and is an outspoken Board conscience and upholder of Oakland's good name.

Three new Board members were elected at the Annual Meeting in October and will be adding their talents to the mix:

Pat Dedekian, real estate agent and marketing director for Pacific Union's Oakland office, lives in the Richmond Boulevard neighborhood where she has led tours. She has produced a postcard series of landmark buildings and is interested in fundraising to benefit preservation efforts.

Willie Keyes, West Oakland community activist, has worked for the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency and as a carpenter/cabinetmaker. His concerns include environmental justice, deteriorated buildings, homelessness, air quality, land use on the Army Base, youth, drugs, and crime.

Mary MacDonald, attorney, is former chair and board member of the Rockridge Community Planning Council which

she has represented before the Planning Commission and City Council. She was OHA's representative on the steering committee for the 1998 state preservation conference.

Finally, profound thanks and recognition go to these outgoing - and outstanding - Board members:

David Nicolai served as Secretary, kept minutes of Board meetings, attended meetings and made public presentations, offered his professional expertise as historian and curator, and chaired the Landmarks and Districts Nominations Committee.

Joe Ware has coordinated most of OHA's events, including the holiday parties, the receptions at House Tours and for Stanley Lowe, the Jane Spangler memorial, and the Annual Meetings, as well as speaking at public hearings.

Please call any of the Board members with input, or if you would be interested in working with their respective programs.

--Shawna Brekke-Read & Betty Marvin

■ VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

Oakland Heritage Alliance has always relied on volunteers to make the organization work. The board and staff wish to thank those members and friends who have contributed time and energy to turn OHA's preservation activities into successes.

Rita Cummings volunteered in the office three days a week from February through June, until she left Oakland. Rita learned of our needs at the 1997 Annual Meeting, and helped with everything from picking up mail, updating memberships, making phone calls and copies to being an upbeat presence in the office.

OHA members receive mail ranging from flyers about the house tour to candidate questionnaires to the newsletter. Leading the mailing volunteers is **Jerry Bowling**. Jerry has been known to rearrange his schedule to accommodate the moving target of mailing dates. He manages the ZIP codes and moves boxes and mailbags. The task would still take hours without the help of **Bonnie Killip, Rita Cummings, Marilyn McAndrews, Sue Wong, Jeanne Porter, Betty Thomas, and Dawn Muller**.

The California Preservation Foundation's annual State Preservation Conference was held in Berkeley in May, hosted by Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association. **Mary MacDonald** volunteered for OHA to ensure Oakland had a presence in planning the event. To be sure, it was Berkeley's opportunity to shine; still, Mary made sure Oakland was remembered as a neighboring city with a rich heritage of its own.

The Planning Commission has been having a multitude of meetings dealing with amendments to the Preservation Element, and more recently with the Estuary Plan and Biff's-JJ's. A small group of volunteers have given invaluable reinforcement to the OHA Board in presentations to the Commission and other public bodies. **Chris Roberts** helps with phone calls to elected and appointed officials and makes presentations. **Valerie Winemiller** does research, writing, and presentations. **Frederick Hertz and Leal Charonnat** have also represented OHA. **Naomi Schiff** helped create an organized approach to all these public meetings. **Naomi** has also made presentations, pounded the pavement to find staff reports, checked for accuracy, called Planning Commissioners, and rearranged her schedule to attend meetings.

As proprietor of **Seventeenth Street Studios**, **Naomi** has also donated design and production of many OHA publications. In

the past year she and Valerie Winemiller have produced flyers, tickets, and brochures for the Stanley Lowe lecture, Rose Garden and Adams Point house tours, and candidate questionnaire.

Ted Savetnick is OHA's accountant. **Ted** donates his time to the crucial work of keeping OHA's books and providing accounting advice on non-profit status and activities.

Regular contributors to the **OHA News** include **Carolyn Douthat** and **Annalee Allen** for the preservation action column, **Kathy Olson** with the Landmarks Board report, and **Bill Sturm** with the ever-erudite Oakland History Notes.

The Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey, a Planning Department project co-sponsored by OHA and the Landmarks Board, benefits from the continuing aid of researchers, photographers, and information handlers par excellence **Beth Armstrong**, **Gaye Lenahan**, **Cecile Litherland**, **Fred Reichman**, and (beyond the call of duty as a board member) **Pamela Magnuson-Peddle**.

OHA always welcomes volunteers. It is important to have members to speak at public meetings. The 1999 Claremont Pines House Tour committee is at work now and needs people for house selection, publicity, research, and photos. It is not too early to begin developing next year's walking tours. The Preservation Action committee meets monthly to discuss issues and strategies, and often has interesting presentations and site visits. The Program, Schools, and Neighborhoods committees have begun meeting. If you have a talent to share or a project you want to spearhead, call Shawna Brekke-Read at 763-9218.



1999 house tour will visit the fabulous 1930s Period Revivals of Claremont Pines adjoining the Claremont Country Club. The neighborhood also has some notable post-fire houses. Call OHA to volunteer now!

■ ADAMS POINT HOUSE TOUR A SUCCESS

OHA thanks the homeowners and residents of Adams Point for their help with the 1998 House Tour, and thanks all the volunteers who helped with the event. Special thanks to the residents and staff of Clausen House for allowing us to enjoy their home, the former Earl Warren house, for the reception.

June 7 was a cool, drizzly day, and attendance suffered a bit. We still had 200 paid admissions, and 60 or so volunteers enjoyed the tour. The managers of the Park View Apartments

invited us to bring the ticket table in from the rain to the lobby, and it was a fine venue. Lots of people said they came on the tour because they had always wanted to get into the Park View. And seeing one of the beautiful apartments was a great bonus.

The tour highlighted the great architecture to be found in Adams Point, including works of Beaux Arts trained Bakewell & Brown and Oakland High School alumnus A.W. Smith. Details like the Bay of Naples stained glass window and the fountain at the Graystone help us appreciate Oakland's varied riches. One house even had a fresh paintjob completed just the day before the tour. It is important to celebrate the victory of preserving neighborhoods - and recognize the homeowners and occupants who are committed to preservation and improvement. Thanks to all who helped make the tour a success. --Shawna Brekke-Read

■ ARTS & CRAFTS HOUSE TOUR, OCTOBER 1999

The next Arts and Crafts House Tour has been tentatively scheduled for October 3, 1999. This tour takes place every three years, and like the 1996 tour, will be a joint effort of **Oakland Heritage Alliance** and Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association. We are beginning house selection now, and trying to concentrate on the Rockridge/Elmwood neighborhoods on the Oakland-Berkeley border. If you own or know of a pristine Arts and Crafts house in that area, please call Jane Powell at 482-1717 or email her at hshedressng@aol.com. Anything from a Maybeck to a plain old bungalow will be considered: Tudor, Mission, Prairie, brownshingle, what have you. Arts and Crafts furnishings are a bonus but not absolutely necessary.

We hope that by starting early we will be able to get regional and national publicity for the tour. If you are interested in being on the committee, or volunteering later on, please call Marlene Wilson at 655-3210 or email makitsew@aol.com. --Jane Powell

■ ARTS AND CRAFTS: OHA STEALS THE SHOW

In conjunction with the August Arts and Crafts Sale and Show in San Francisco, the Arts and Crafts community in the East Bay put together an educational program of tours, lectures and seminars at locations including the Thorsen house in Berkeley, the Swedenborgian Church in San Francisco, and private homes. OHA's Jane Powell led a seminar on Arts and Crafts kitchens. According to Lee Jester at The Craftsman Home, which handled tickets, there were more inquiries about this seminar than any of the others. Twenty-two people attended and had a lively discussion about cabinets, subway tile, linoleum, light fixtures, and islands vs. tables. If you missed the seminar, see Jane's article on kitchens in the November/December *Old House Journal*.

OHA also had a booth at the Arts and Crafts Show, passing out literature, signing up new members, selling Anthony Holdsworth postcards (plein-air paintings in the fine Arts and Crafts tradition), and generally promoting Oakland and its buildings. We talked to many new Oaklanders (mostly real estate refugees from San Francisco) and found they were all very taken with Oakland and didn't ever want to go back. Proceeds were divided among the participating organizations, including OHA, BAHA, the Thorsen House, and the Swedenborgian Church. OHA received a \$400 contribution. --Jane Powell

■ CULTURAL HERITAGE SURVEY UPDATE

The Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey recently completed its 1997-98 grant project, and is beginning a new project for 1998-99. With a \$15,000 matching grant from the State Office of Historic Preservation under the Certified Local Government program, the Survey had two projects this past year: Citywide Reconnaissance Phase 5, preliminary documentation (photo and description) for several hundred notable buildings and districts in areas not likely to be researched in the near future, and a survey of the East Lake Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization (NCR) area. Products of these surveys will soon appear at the Oakland History Room and elsewhere. The East Lake survey was particularly timely because the NCR program has received Redevelopment and Block Grant funding for a major facade improvement program, with City-sponsored design assistance and matching grants of up to \$10,000 per building. Survey information about the buildings' original appearance and significant design features can have practical, visible value.

In East Lake, partly on the strength of Survey information, plywood cladding was removed from La Estrellita at 5th Avenue and East 12th Street, revealing three more bays of a 1920s decorative brick commercial building, complete with tapestry brick parapet and mullioned transom. The Fruitvale NCR survey several years ago was instrumental in Fruitvale's achieving Main Street status, and is frequently consulted for facade projects, tours, and other uses. The San Antonio Community Development Corporation uses information from the 23rd Avenue Commercial District survey on its Web site. So for 1998-99, the Survey decided to focus on ten smaller NCR facade program areas around the city: Golden Gate, Temescal, 5300-5800 blocks of Martin Luther King, Foothill-Seminary, Fairfax, Dimond, Laurel, Foothill-Fruitvale, 7300-7700 blocks of MacArthur, and the Foothill Square area. The State Office of Historic Preservation agreed that this was a timely proposal that implemented important actions in Oakland's Historic Preservation Element, and awarded it the maximum grant of \$15,000.

The Survey relies greatly on community volunteers to produce spectacular products on minimal budgets. Your research could make a visible, physical difference in Oakland's neighborhood commercial districts. You will also learn some unique skills and



Six-pointed intersection of Foothill, Seminary, and Walnut was known as "The Hub" of East Oakland in the 1920s, distinguished by its own flatiron building (left), banking temple (right), and movie palace. New Survey project will gather information for possible restoration of these buildings.

have a lot of fun. Most current volunteers work one afternoon a week, but time is negotiable to fit your schedule. Call Betty Marvin, 238-6879, or Gail Lombardi, 238-3797. --Betty Marvin

■ LANDMARKS BOARD OPPORTUNITY

The Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board seeks expressions of interest for an upcoming vacancy. Applicants should have a strong interest in Oakland's future and in historic preservation. Professional experience in architecture, landscape architecture, planning, or design is required for the current opening, but we welcome inquiries from all potential applicants for future seats. This is an exciting and meaningful way to be involved in Oakland's rich architectural and cultural heritage.

The Landmarks Board meets on the second Monday of each month in City Hall. Members prepare for these meetings by studying plans and reports, visiting historic properties, and working on subcommittees. Terms are three years, renewable once. For additional information please contact Helaine Kaplan Prentice, Landmarks Board secretary, 238-2978/fax 238-4730.

■ HOLIDAY EVENTS AT THE PARDEE HOME

The Pardee Home Museum will be hosting two holiday events this year. On Sunday afternoon, December 6, from 1 to 4, we will have our annual holiday reception, featuring carolling by the Choir of the historic First Unitarian Church, extraordinary holiday refreshments from *Chez Nicolai*, a fresh look at historic holiday cards, and decorating highlighted by seasonal offerings from the Pardee Home yard and traditions from one hundred years ago. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children twelve or younger, and free to Friends of the Pardee Home. Reservations recommended; call 444-2187.

On Wednesday evening, December 16, will be a candlelit tour of the decorated house. Join us for the first ever nighttime tour of this well-known Oakland landmark. The evening will conclude with light refreshments inside the charming coach house. Admission is \$7 for adults, \$3 for children twelve or younger, and free for Friends of the Pardee Home. Reservations recommended; call 444-2187. --David Nicolai



With its shoe repair shop, hardware store, and Sputnik-topped cocktail lounge, the Laurel is the archetypal neighborhood Main Street. Survey noted it as a district in last year's reconnaissance, returns to research its history and architecture for facade program in 1998-99. You can help.

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 George Lythcott (chair), Annalee Allen, Janet Benson, Andrew Carpentier, Carolyn Douthat, Una Gilmartin, and Norman Hooks. Secretary is Helaine Kaplan Prentice.

Applications are solicited for upcoming vacancies: see p. 17.

MAY

National Historic Preservation Week, May 9-15, was noted. Board spoke in remembrance of Jane Spangler, Oakland preservation advocate. In Open Forum, four Piedmont Pines residents spoke in favor of the landmark nomination for the eucalyptus colonnade on Castle Drive.

Robert Bobb, City Manager, addressed the Board on his vision for historic resources in Oakland. He noted the Theater Row project in his former city of Richmond, Virginia, as an example of preservation as economic development. Richmond has used eminent domain to preserve important properties.

In design review, Board heard an application by Phil Tagami, developer, for work on 1501 Broadway (**Kahn's-The Rotunda**), a historic URM building on the National Register and the Preservation Study List. The application was a "preliminary draft"; Board commented especially on the treatment of Kahn's Alley, and asked to review specifics as the plans evolve.

Board reviewed designs by Kirk Peterson for 5006-10 Telegraph (**Cattaneo Block; G&G Hardware**). Jennifer Cooper of the Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization (NCR) program said this was the first Facade Improvement Program project on a landmark. There are grants of up to \$10,000 for construction, and the City pays for architectural services. Board suggested ways to achieve disabled access without replacing the double front doors - a power assist or State Historical Building Code. A possible Temescal Commercial historic district was mentioned.



Landmark Cattaneo Block, far left, joins Temescal NCR facade program. Survey will be working with NCR program in the coming year. (Survey)

Board reviewed Eric Saijo's design for a new front porch and accessible entry at 1218 East 21st Street (the **Ellen Kenna House**, now the Center for Third World Organizing), an Oakland landmark, and approved it subject to saving several plants and using a different siding on the base.

The landmark nomination by John and Russell Moran for 2101 Telegraph Avenue (**YMCA-Hamilton Hotel**) was scheduled for final eligibility rating and consideration of owner's comments. The owner, Mercy Charities Housing, agreed to consult with the Board but did not want designation. Board confirmed eligibility but did not recommend designation.

Andrew Thomas of the planning department presented the latest on the amendments to the **Historic Preservation Element**. Treatment of contingency A and B ratings was discussed, such as the need for exploratory demolition on altered properties. Board noted the need for training for staff who review applications affecting historic buildings, and the need for improved notification on demolitions. Zoning text for Heritage Property and landmark designation was discussed.

CEDA Director Bill Claggett reported on maintenance and weatherization at the **Fox Theater**, and on the status of work on the **Plaza Building**; both should be weathertight by winter.

Board and Secretary's reports covered a Rotary Forum on preservation and development on April 30; rededication of the landmark St. Paul's Church, 114 Montecito, following seismic improvements, including a speech by Helaine Prentice; and a meeting with Caltrans regarding redesign of the Bay Bridge.

JUNE

Board discussed proposed zoning text amendments to implement the **Historic Preservation Element**, dealing with designation of landmarks, districts, and the new category of Heritage Properties. Particular concerns were definition of "substantive merit" of an owner's objection, and that the 30 days delay under CEQA was not enough time to designate a property.

Planning Director Andy Altman introduced the draft **Oakland Estuary Plan** for the Board's comment. Preservation issues included the future of the Produce Market, Ninth Avenue Terminal, and low-rise buildings along lower Broadway. Board members commented on the lack of reference to preservation, Survey ratings, or the way other cities have used their historic waterfronts as assets. Patty St. Louis of Fifth Avenue described how the plan jeopardized wildlife habitat, and Robin Bartoo spoke about reuse opportunities at the Ninth Avenue Terminal.

Andy Altman provided an update on ownership of the **16th Street Southern Pacific Station**. Carolyn Douthat proposed a roundtable discussion on reuse of the station with developers of comparable projects: the remainder of the 1993-94 ISTE A grant might support this. Board noted that the previous ISTE A studies had never been publicly presented, and asked for a report.

JULY

In Open Forum, Leal Charonnat announced that Friends of **Ninth Avenue Terminal** would be filing a Notice of Intent to landmark the terminal; Andrew Carpentier noted that when the Grove Street Terminal was demolished, part of the Port's justification was that we still had Ninth Avenue.

Architect Dan Peterson presented landscape plans for the area



"Code Compliance is proceeding with the condemnation process and demolition of the following vacant and substandard building(s):" Landmarks Board receives several such inquiries a month. Fruitvale Hotel and Calou House were placed on the Study List as an emergency measure, while the Board pursues deeper solutions. 3927 West Street, left, is now being repaired; 1417 11th Street, in the Oakland Point District, is also back in use. Call OHA if you want to get involved. (Landmarks Board files)



AUGUST

In Open Forum, Carpentier asked about the status of waiving design review fees in S-7 districts: when the waiver is in place, he would speak with Picardy Drive residents about a district designation. Lythcott had attended a hearing on the Estuary Plan with Carol Brookman of the **First and Last Chance Saloon**: they made it clear that moving the structure was unacceptable.

Board heard a report by Charles Bryant, Secretary to the Planning Commission, on interim controls for implementing the **Oakland General Plan** until zoning regulations are updated, if the new Land Use Plan and the existing zoning regulations conflict. The Preservation Element is also part of the General Plan, so Element policies take precedence over zoning if there is a conflict. Lythcott said when the General Plan is published in several languages, that must include the **Preservation Element**.

Review of Rite Aid's application to demolish the service buildings and rear wall of the showroom of **Cox Cadillac** was postponed at the request of CEDA staff and the applicant.

David Ralph, CEDA Project Manager, reported on the status of roof repairs at the **Fox Oakland Theater**. The plan was to clean it out (youth crew had filled 30 dumpsters so far), fix the roof (estimated at \$500,000 to \$600,000), and "mothball it like a ship." He hoped to get the illuminated sign and marquee working, as a "dramatic sign of life." Board requested regular updates, and offered to help in any way they could.

Board was informed of a declaration of immediate hazard and scheduled demolition for the house at 1101 Martin Luther King Jr. Way in the Preservation Park S-7 Zone next to the Pardee house ("**Preservation Park III**"). This Colonial Revival house was moved from Pill Hill with a bigger Queen Anne in 1986 and has been on blocks ever since, abandoned after the Queen Anne burned. Board discussed future uses of the site.

Board was informed of another determination of immediate hazard and pending demolition at 1110 Broadway, the **Key System building annex**. It was proposed for demolition as part of the Keystone Hotel conversion of 1100 Broadway, but now required immediate removal because of the adjoining easement from the U.C. President's Office building to Broadway.

Chris Buckley, Design Review Supervisor, reported on revisions to the **Residential Design Review Guidelines** being drafted between now and next April. He suggested that the

around the carriage house at **Dunsmuir House**, and summarized future work to be done with Measure I funds. Board approved the landscaping, with the condition that it more closely approximate the historic photo that Peterson showed.

Andrew Thomas of CEDA reported on the ISTEA-funded studies on the **16th Street Station**. Toxics and structural reports were prepared about a year ago. Then the project went on hold because Union Pacific decided to sell the site. Douthat and Prentice noted that the primary purpose of the grant was to identify a reuse for the station, but this had not happened yet; there is another round of ISTEA grants coming up, but the City cannot expect to get one if it has not yet completed the first project. Monsa Nitoto of CWOR (Committee for West Oakland Revitalization) said the station could promote the history of the Pullman Porters. Peter Smith said it is one of the sites being considered by the wholesale produce merchants.

Gary Knecht presented a report requested by the Board on demolitions by **Code Compliance** in 1996-98. Board raised questions about receivership, fires, early intervention, urban homesteading, the Blight Task Force, and the need to implement Policy 3.12 in the Preservation Element that promotes rehabilitation rather than demolition of vacant and substandard buildings.

Jenny Kassin of the Unity Council reported on the **Fruitvale Hotel** (placed on the Study List after Code Compliance put it on the demolition track). It could enhance the BART station area of Fruitvale Main Street; a dispute between the owners has left it vacant and unmaintained. Kirk Peterson's estimate to stabilize it was only \$4300. Eminent domain and receivership were mentioned. Receivership requires a project to be financially feasible: feasibility might be improved by use of State Historical Building Code, federal rehabilitation tax credits, and redevelopment funding. Carpentier requested quarterly updates on the Hotel.

George Lythcott was elected chair and Norman Hooks vice chair for 1998-99.

SEPTEMBER

Landmarks Board appoint a liaison to the working group. Board members pointed out the relation to the **Preservation Element** and its amendments which shifted protection for many properties from environmental review to design review.

Prentice, Benson, Carpentier, and Douthat reported on the **National Alliance of Preservation Commissions Conference** in Denver. The State Office of Historic Preservation provided a grant to every Certified Local Government to send representatives. It was the first national conference for preservation commissioners and staff; over 400 people attended. Topics included demolition by neglect, design guidelines for historic districts, working with elected officials, training for new commissioners, and more. Carpentier noted that problems with EIFS (the styrofoam product used for decorative features like the new arches on Rite Aid at 14th and Broadway) were discussed.

Board continued discussion of **Code Compliance** demolitions: why are there funds to demolish but not to fix? What is wrong with the buildings that get demolished? Aren't people desperate for housing? Some buildings do get fixed up - what makes those successes possible? Hooks noted that his experience working with Code Compliance staff on the **Calou House** had been encouraging: they seemed open to alternatives.

Lythcott reported on City Council adoption of the **Preservation Element** revisions on July 21, and on continuing meetings on the new **Bay Bridge**. Gilmartin reported on a tour of the electric substation at the base of the bridge, a rare surviving component of the Key System railway. Allen reported concern for **Studio One**, 365 45th Street. Prentice mentioned a proposed World Wall of Peace tile installation at the landmark Grand Lake Theater. Carpentier noted that the apartment building at 130 Montecito had been demolished for St. Paul's School.



Board is concerned about appropriate period signs and awnings on the unusual high glass base of the Plaza Building next to City Hall. (Survey)

Before the meeting, members who attended the National Association of Preservation Commissions conference presented an extended report as a **workshop** for the rest of the board.

Leslie Gould, Acting Planning Director, was introduced. Gilmartin informed her of the Board's concern with housing rehabilitation and related policies in the Element. Board passed a resolution of appreciation for outgoing member Rene Dymond.

Jack Young, Public Works, reported on changed plans for the **Plaza Building**: because of increased costs, the artists displaced from the Pardee Building years ago would be offered a different location, and the Plaza Building would be privately developed as offices. Board reiterated requirements for period signage and awnings, and asked for window covering during construction.

Board commented on the draft EIR for the McChevron which would replace **Biff's (JJ's Diner)**, determined eligible for landmark status. Board and public said the EIR failed to address a preservation alternative or the impacts of a fast-food and the loss of a historic building in the shadow of the Paramount Theater. Friends of JJ's showed a video on the economic benefits of reviving similar "Googie" coffee shops in Southern California, and neighbor Charles Brown described the dazzling impression Biff's made on him when he first came to Oakland in 1967.

Ed Cheng updated the Board on restoration of the **Greene Library**, an Oakland landmark and on the National Register, for the African American Museum and Library. The glass floors of the stacks may be reused elsewhere in the building as finishes. Discussion continued about screening the "Eurocentric" murals.

Board commented on the draft RFP for a reuse study of the **Southern Pacific Station**: they asked for a more favorable description of the building and wide circulation of the RFP.

Gary Knecht reported on the work program for **Historic Preservation Element** implementation actions and mitigations.

Jim Putz, Port of Oakland, reported on an RFP for relocating three officers' houses from the **Oakland Naval Supply Center**, part of the mitigation program for demolition of the determined-eligible National Register Historic District. The houses are large 1940s Colonials; the Port was offering \$25,000 in assistance, the estimated cost of demolition. Only non-profits were eligible, and there was little time and extensive code and toxic requirements. Board asked about a salvage program (Putz said it was up to the demolition contractor) and how widely the Port had circulated the RFP; they said the requirements seemed overly restrictive.

Douthat, Hooks, and Benson reported on the Port video on the Naval Supply Center, a mitigation for demolition of the National Register-eligible district. They felt it should focus more on the Oakland base and less on World War II in general.

Hooks reported on the **Residential Design Review** Working Group; Board discussed incorporating *Rehab Right* principles.

The City's new fee schedule at long last includes **waiver of design review fees in the S-7 Preservation Zone**: this implements Action 2.6.9 of the Historic Preservation Element and offers an incentive for historic district designations.

Code Compliance referrals and the receivership program were discussed: Board members were concerned that the current war on blight might go against the intent of the Preservation Element, and again asked why there is money to demolish houses but not to fix them. A subcommittee formed.



Officers' houses at Naval Supply Center are to be moved or demolished. Board offered suggestions to make moving more likely. (Betty Marvin)

OCTOBER

Friends of **Studio One** requested that the building (originally the Ladies' Relief Society Children's Home, 365 45th Street) be placed on the Study List, and the Board concurred; Douthat noted that the Preservation Element says the City should be seeking historic designation for its own properties.

Board commented on the **Bay Bridge** draft EIS and continuing concerns about the design of the east span, and endorsed the **Montgomery Ward** National Register nomination.

Architect Lucia Howard and director Nancy Stark presented plans for ADA and other modifications at **Children's Fairyland** in Lakeside Park: Board voted to have staff and a subcommittee work with the applicants and to recommend that a goal be to preserve the National Register eligibility of Fairyland.

Board continued discussions with Port on the **Naval Supply Center** video and the RFP for moving the officers' houses. The RFP had been reissued and opened up to other than non-profits.

Douthat and Allen were appointed to a subcommittee on the **Mills Act** which provides tax relief for historic properties.

Board discussed identifying properties as candidates for landmark designation, where owners may want recognition or buildings may need protection. Allen asked for regular updates on **pending landmark nominations**: in particular there was concern about Cox Cadillac, which was apparently being held up to go to the Planning Commission at the same time as the Rite Aid project that would partly demolish the building.

Allen noted to the historic exhibit in the windows of the downtown Rite Aid in the Central Building, 14th and Broadway.

NOVEMBER

KTOP staff gave the Board a workshop on presentation skills for television: the best ways to address the microphone and "look like you're doing business" on camera.

Acting Planning Director Leslie Gould reported on Planning Commission discussion of the **Sears** building, 2633 Telegraph Avenue: StorAmerica proposed to add ground floor retail, and was looking into the possibility of uncovering the facade.

Jennifer Cooper, Uptown Coordinator, reported on facade work about to begin at the **Floral Depot and Sweet's Ballroom**, with design assistance by Sally Cole of Kirk Peterson's office. Board members asked about a possible Uptown historic district.

Status of **Cox Cadillac** nomination was discussed. Planning staff reported that the applicant was doing a focused EIR on the historic aspects, and recommended that the nomination go to Planning Commission at the same time as the project. Board said that ideally designations should be on the property's merits and unrelated to a project, and asked that the EIR consider a serious preservation alternative with solid facts and figures.

Board continued consideration of Demolition Ordinance, Environmental Review, and Zoning amendments, to go to Council in the spring as a package with the Mills Act. Discussion of the definition of "historic resource," mitigations, and the relation of the Local Register to the California Register continued.

Planning staff presented the **Estuary Policy Plan**. Board asked for mention of historic resources outside the Jack London Square area, and George Lythcott noted small boats as a vital part of the historic character of the area, now being displaced.

Betty Marvin presented the **Cultural Heritage Survey's** 1997-98 final project report, and announced the 1998-99 grant. She noted the need to recognize resources from the recent past.

David Ralph of CEDA reported on the **Fox**: roof repair would begin soon using the "Chicago method" of working in one-day segments during rainy weather. The building has many and complex roofs. An enthusiastic weekend youth crew has filled 73 debris boxes to date in cleaning up the interior.

Brief updates were given on Studio One, Ward's, and the Naval Supply Center video. Kathy Hirsch of EBALDC appears to be moving the three **officers' houses** to Mandela Parkway in Oakland Point. The Code Compliance subcommittee felt inter-department meetings had been productive: "people were saying Let's Talk." Prentice reported that several landmark nominations had been submitted, and that St. Mary's Church was exploring repair of its fire-damaged school building (622 7th Street).

--Kathy Olson, Betty Marvin, & Landmarks Board Minutes



Merry Miller set at Fairyland, under construction c.1950. Besides being in landmarked Lakeside Park, Fairyland exemplifies postwar glorification of childhood and reputedly inspired Disneyland. Robert Schultz of Fifth Avenue Point was one of the creators of early Fairyland sets. (OHR)

OHA Calendar

The OHA Calendar lists events, activities, and meetings related to history and preservation that may be of interest to OHA members. Practical deadlines for entries occur at each solstice and equinox. To submit items for listings, contact Betty Marvin at 849-1959, 238-6879 or BetMarv@aol.com, or OHA, 763-9218.

Current Exhibits

- "The Paramount Theatre," through Nov. 25; followed by "Oakland's Christmas Pageant," Dec. 4-Jan. 30, Oakland History Room, 125 14th St., 238-3222, M Tu 10-5:30, W Th 12-8, F 12-5:30, Sat 10-5:30, Sun 1-5:30
- "Urban Footprints: The Photographs of Lewis Watts" (West Oakland), through February 28, Oakland Museum, 1000 Oak St., 238-2200. Tu-Sun 10-5, Fri to 9pm
- "The Discovery of Gold in California: Paintings by Henry Fonseca," through January 3, Oakland Museum, 1000 Oak St., 238-2200. Tu-Sun 10-5, Fri to 9pm
- "Berkeley Burning: the Fire of 1923," 75th anniversary exhibit, through March 1999, Berkeley Historical Society, 1931 Center Street, Berkeley, 848-0181. Th F Sat 1-4.
- "California Photography at Mills," work from permanent collection, Mills College Art Museum, 5000 MacArthur Blvd., 430-2164.

Upcoming Events

- Dec. 4-6, 11-13, 18-20, Fri, Sat, Sun, 11:00-5:00: "Christmas at Dunsmuir," Dunsmuir House & Gardens, 2960 Peralta Oaks Court; holiday teas, tours, entertainment, children's activities, gift shop; \$10/\$9 sr/\$6 jr, reservations/box office, 925-275-9490, M-F 10-4
- Dec. 6, Sun., 1-4 pm, Pardee Home Museum annual holiday reception, caroling, decorations, food; \$10/\$5, reservations recommended; call 444-2187.
- Dec. 6, Sun., 5:45-9 pm, Heritage Homes of Petaluma Tenth Annual Christmas Parlour Tour: "dress warmly, wear soft soled shoes and bring a flashlight", \$10, tickets at Petaluma Museum, 20 4th St., 707-762-3456
- Dec. 9, Wed., 6:30 pm (reception 6:00), "Building Ecology Forum: Reclaiming the Commons," Karl Linn, PG&E Energy Center, 851 Howard St., San Francisco; ADPSR (Architects Designers & Planners for Social Responsibility) 510-273-2428
- Dec. 11, Fri., 6-10 pm, & Dec. 12, Sat., 12-5 pm, Santa Clara Historic Home Tour, \$15, 408-984-6127.
- Dec. 12, Sat., 10 am-12 noon, A Holiday Stroll Through Preservation Park, Oakland Tours Program and Pardee Home Museum, free, 238-3234
- Dec. 16, Wed. evening, Pardee Home Museum, candlelit tour of decorated house, refreshments in coach house; \$7/\$3, reservations recommended; call 444-2187.
- Dec. 27, Sun., time TBA, KQED, Channel 9, broadcast of "Lifeline," documentary on Oakland Naval Supply Center (see Landmarks Board report)

Jan. 10, Sun., 2-5 pm, Jack London's 123rd Birthday Celebration and History Walk, Barnes & Noble, Jack London Square, free; 814-6000

February, TBA, OHA-EBALDC benefit for Swan's Market restoration; OHA 763-9218 or EBALDC 287-5353. (see OHA Update, page 14)

March 21, Sun., 3 pm, Berkeley History Film Program, Berkeley Historical Society, Veterans Building, 1931 Center St., details TBA, 848-0181

spring, TBA, Oakland Heritage Alliance house tour, Claremont Pines: for info. or to volunteer, OHA, 763-9218

Regularly Scheduled Tours & Exhibits

- Oakland Tours Program**, rotating series of free public tours Wed and Sat, 10 am, May through October; 24-Hour Tours Hotline, 238-3234, for school & special tours
- City Hall & Civic Center**: first Tuesday of every month: meet at City Hall main entrance, 10 am.
- African American Museum & Library at Oakland**, 5606 San Pablo Av., Tu 11:30-7, W Th Sat 10-5:30, Fri 12-5:30; 597-5053.
- Cohen-Bray House**, 1884 Stick Eastlake with original interiors, 1440 29th Avenue, 4th Sunday, 2 pm and by appt., \$5; Victorian Preservation Center of Oakland, 532-0704.
- Camron-Stanford House**, 1876 Italianate house museum on Lake Merritt, Wed. 11-4, Sun. 1-5, 1418 Lakeside Dr., \$4/\$2, free first Sun., 836-1976.
- Dunsmuir House & Gardens**, Colonial Revival mansion, April-Sept., 1st & 3rd Sun., noon-1-2; Wed. 11 & noon; \$5/\$4; 2960 Peralta Oaks Court, Oakland, 615-5555.
- Mountain View Cemetery**, second Saturday, 10 am, docent tours, free; 658-2588.
- Paramount Theatre**, Art Deco movie palace, tours 1st & 3rd Sat., 10 am, 2025 Broadway, \$1, 893-2300.
- Pardee Home Museum**, 1868 Italianate villa, Pardee residence 1868-1981, guided tours Friday and Saturday at noon (except major holidays), reservations recommended; tours for schools and private groups (of 6 or more) by reservation. \$4/\$3; 672 11th St., Oakland, 444-2187.

Regularly Scheduled Meetings

- OHA Board of Directors**, usually last Monday of the month, 7 pm; for agenda and location, 763-9218
- OHA Preservation Action Committee**, monthly; for agenda, time, and location, 763-9218
- Neighborhoods, Schools, and Program Committees**: for agenda, time, and location, 763-9218
- Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board**, 2nd Monday, 4 to 8 pm (Open Forum at 4), City Hall Hearing Room 1.
- City Planning Commission**, alternate Wednesdays, time varies.
- City Council**, every Tuesday evening, 7:30, Council Chambers. City meetings are at City Hall. Contact CEDA, 238-3941, for Landmarks & 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 (June through September) are:

Naomi Horowitz, James W. Blaine III, Patricia McKinnon, Kristofer Brekke, Mary Wool Jenevein, Rachel Spalding, Peggy Martin, Edith Robertson, Julia Schwartz, Garnet Hyder, Barbara Gaerlan, Mary Sharman, M. Paula Mezynki, Gordon McBride, K. Decorah, Frances Hui, Margaret Hollender, Gary Pound, Robert D. Groom, Judith Henderson, Ann Steppan, Frances & Richard Burrell, Queen Thurston, Janet Mangini, JoAnne Baca, Damon Hill, Shirley Guevara, Karen Hata, Lamar St. John, Katherine A. Evans, Dawn Meader McCausland, Marilyn Ambra, Tracy Fitzgerald.

Donors

Special thanks to the owners and residents of the homes featured in the **1998 Adams Point House Tour**. Complimentary memberships were awarded to: Clausen House, Jim & Marti Buxton, Andrew Roy, Julia Eckert, Valerie Fahnestock, Graystone Apartments, Linda Root, Steve Gelb, Frank Nijenkamp & Gaby Diskin, Jeanette Sayre, David Nesmith, Henry & Gloria Hitz, Charlie Ma. And special thanks to the leaders of the **1998 Summer Walking Tours**. Complimentary memberships were awarded to Robin Bartoo and Jacqueline Beggs.

Special thanks to those joining/renewing as:

PATRON (\$250): Arthur Levy.
SPONSOR (\$100): Stephen & Terry Beck, Earl & Bonnie Hamlin.
ORGANIZATION/BENEFACTOR (\$50): Frances Gay Roy, Thomas & Winifred Watters, Bruce Ballentine, Heritage Design Group, Judith & Barry Bloom, Children's Hospital Research Institute, Steve Weinberg.

DONATIONS: Stephen & Terry Beck, Willard Spencer, BankAmerica Foundation on behalf of Matthew A. Gabel.

Donor Opportunity!

Did you know? You can designate **Oakland Heritage Alliance** as the recipient of your **United Way** contribution: just write it in.

Oakland Heritage Alliance News

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 OHA NEWS welcomes contributions - research projects large or small, historic photos, reports on preservation issues or events. *Submissions on disk or by email work best in plain TXT format.* Contact Betty Marvin, 849-1959 or BetMarv@aol.com, or OHA, 763-9218. Back issues \$2. © 1998, Oakland Heritage Alliance.

Oakland Heritage Alliance

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

Oakland Heritage Alliance, a California nonprofit corporation since 1980, was formed to bring together community groups and individuals sharing an interest in the history of Oakland, and in the preservation and conservation of the city's archaeological, architectural, cultural, environmental, and historical resources. Membership dues and contributions are tax deductible.

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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 Heritage Alliance ■ Box 12425, Oakland 94604 ■ 763-9218 ■ oaklandheritage@california.com

Oakland History Notes

The Park Street Bridge

Today three bridges span the estuary between Oakland and Alameda. The water over which they stretch was once land, and Alameda, now an island, was formerly a peninsula. The severance of Alameda from Oakland started in 1874 when the federal government provided funds for the creation of a tidal canal, dredged eastward from Park Street to San Leandro Bay. The object of the tidal canal was to reduce shoaling in the estuary, thereby improving the harbors of Alameda and Oakland. Further federal funds were provided for the construction of three drawbridges to span the canal.

The first bridge, extending from the foot of Oakland's 23rd Avenue to Alameda's Park Street, was planned in 1890. The new bridge was designed as an iron-truss swing bridge, 383 feet in length, with a roadway 25 feet wide and a six-foot sidewalk on either side of the roadway. Built by the King Iron Bridge Company of San Francisco at a cost of \$31,000, the bridge was dedicated, with great aplomb, on January 23, 1892.

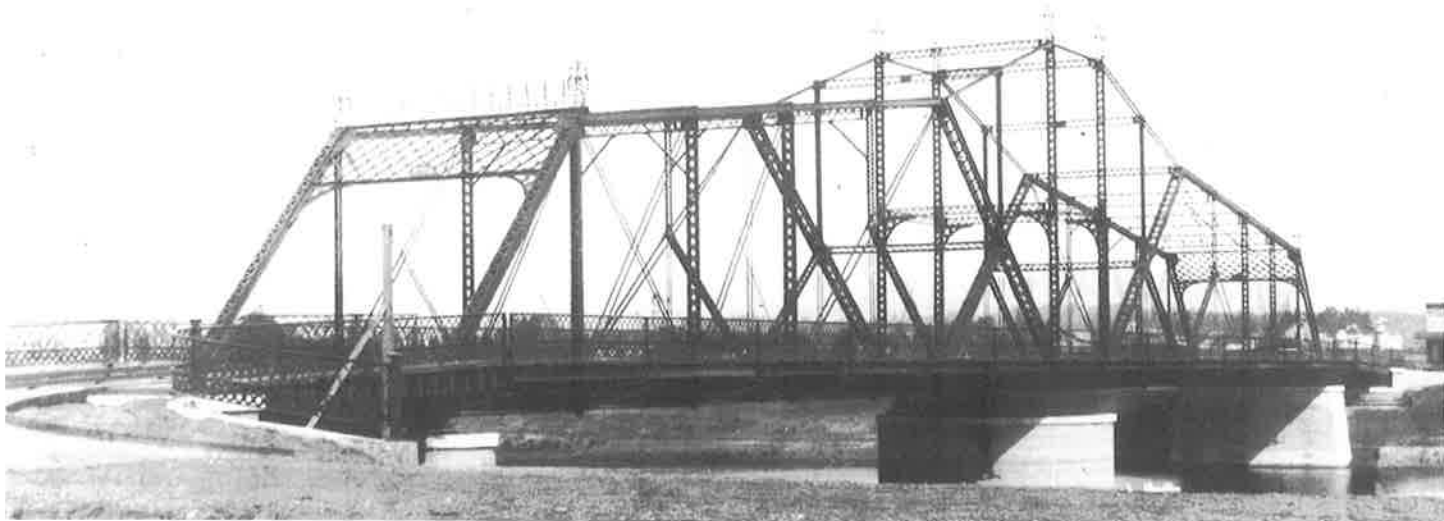
Reported the *Oakland Tribune*, "In the weird twilight of the gathering fog that came drifting in from the bay, thousands of

people were wending their way towards the elegant structure, crossing the new canal on foot or in vehicles of all sorts; a seemingly endless string of human beings ... passed like a caravan of pilgrims, along the broad Park Street from either side of the bridge ... And the scene which attracted their attention was well worth beholding. The slender framework of the bridge was lit up with colored lamps and displayed in the red glare of a bon fire from either end."

As an emblem of incipient regional government, the bridge celebration committee was esteemed for its unity of purpose. "It will be the first time that a joint committee from Oakland and Alameda has organized with one end in view, the mutual benefit of both towns," noted the *Tribune*. The bridge was a sign that city concerns did not stop at city boundaries.

The year 1901 saw the opening of the Fruitvale and High Street bridges, also of iron-truss swing design. All three were eventually replaced by modern bascule drawbridges. The new Park Street bridge, recently retrofitted, opened on October 5, 1935. The Fruitvale bridge, last of the pioneer swing bridges, was replaced in 1973. --William W. Sturm

Victorian Park Street bridge had graceful iron railings, finials, and cresting. (Oakland History Room)



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