

# END OF THE TEMESCAL NICKELODEON

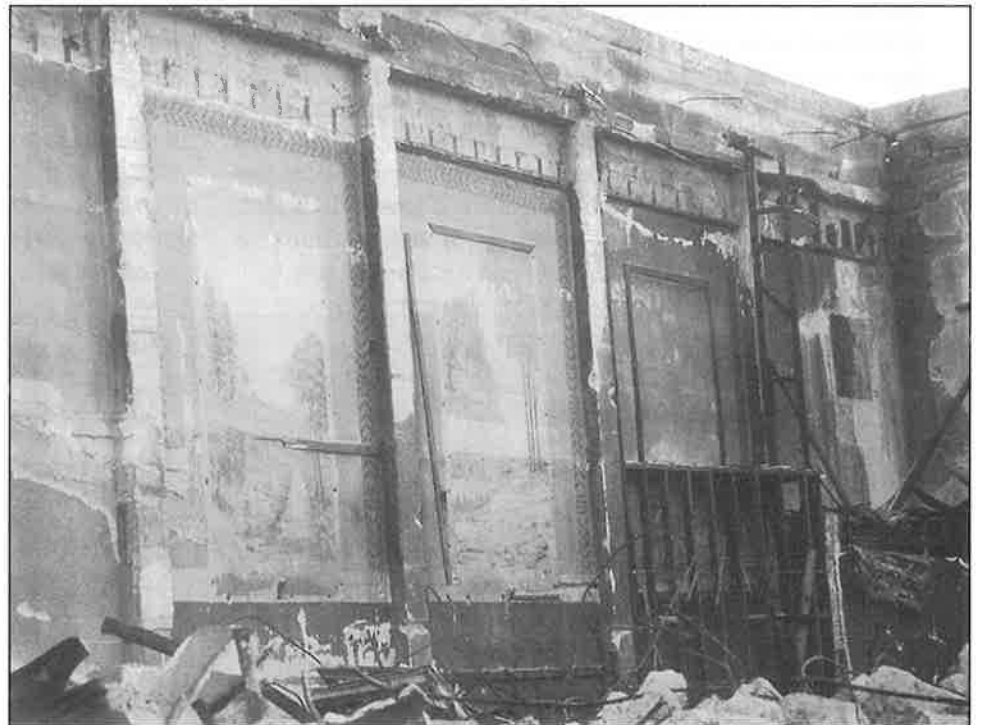
Many in the Temescal neighborhood welcomed the demolition last December of the 85-year-old theater at 51st Street and Telegraph Avenue. "Goodbye, good riddance" declared a Montclairion headline referring to the theater last known as the Pussycat. Though stripped of its seats, lighting, and decorative elements, and damaged by a recent fire, during its final dismantling the theater revealed long-hidden murals that hinted of a forgotten past. People were drawn to the demolition site, wanting to know the building's story.

The LD Purdy, as the theater was first christened, represented the second generation of moving-picture theaters. The earliest movie theaters in Oakland were located downtown in converted storefronts. These nickelodeons (a term derived from the typical five-cent admission charge) tended to be unappealing spaces, without the ventilation needed in an auditorium and with seating on level floors. But it was inexpensive for independent operators to enter the business and no special qualifications or connections were needed. Often, family members were involved in the operation. Adding to the handful of employees was a musician. To avoid the cost of renting scores, musical accompaniment was often improvised as the film rolled. A how-to book published in 1912 encouraged entry into the business: "Today the Motion Pictures present an opportunity for money-making on a proportionate scale seldom encountered in legitimate business." However, at the same time,

opinion leaders were denouncing nickelodeons. "Suppress Dirty and Dangerous Nickelodeons" declared the *Oakland Tribune* in a September 1911 editorial. "All sorts of old structures are being utilized for cheap picture shows without slight regard for the safety of patrons." An investigation in 1911 by the Board of Fire Underwriters of the Pacific led to the issuance of many notices of violation. The report charged that many were violating the ordinance

The original murals were concealed in 1939 when the building was lined with new walls to prevent echo off of the reinforced concrete.

The murals were painted on plaster that had been applied to the concrete. Here they are seen one last time during demolition in December 1998. (Jennifer Dowling)





regarding projectors by using motor instead of hand power. Not only did the theaters lack proper fire exits and ventilation, more ominously the *Tribune* editorial declared, "They pander to the tastes of the vulgar and licentious." In Dec. 1912, the City of Oakland passed an ordinance making it unlawful to present "any obscene, indecent, immoral, impure or crime- depicting picture in such a manner or detail as to corrupt public morals." Filmed prize fights were also specifically prohibited.

Rather than continue to locate in the much-denounced converted retail stores, by 1910 new structures were going up in Oakland designed specifically for showing moving pictures. Forty-five of these theaters were constructed in Oakland during the teens. In 1912, the peak building year, 14 permits were issued. Theaters were going up in many neighborhoods. North Oakland had the Mosswood (1911) on Telegraph near 37th, the Idora Park (1911), the Rockridge Photoplay (1912), the Princess (1913) at San Pablo near Stanford, the Heber/Piedmont (1914), the Santa Fe (1914) at Grove and 56th, and the Colonial (1914) at Telegraph near Alcatraz. Unfortunately, only one theater built prior to 1920 still operates, the New Piedmont (1917). Other surviving theater buildings have been converted to churches, dwellings, and stores.

But even before the advent of World War I, theater building was coming to a near halt. In many cities, the market had become saturated. Most of the silent movie houses didn't operate beyond the mid-1920s. Inexperienced operators and owners wanting to keep their property up-to-date went out of business. In 1925, as theater chains began consolidating ownership, another smaller building boom occurred, adding a new crop of quality theaters to compete with the nickelodeons.

The site of what was to become the LD Purdy, later the Claremont Theater, is in the heart of the Temescal district, a community laid out in 1868 by Solomon Alden, a

prosperous farmer and former restaurateur who made his home at the location of today's Children's Hospital. The establishment of an Oakland Railway car barn at Temescal in 1870 spurred growth, and before the community was annexed to Oakland in 1897, Temescal earned a reputation as a destination for the boisterous and rowdy who patronized its many saloons.

By the early teens, when the nickelodeon craze swept the nation, a thriving business district had developed on Telegraph Ave. between 46th and 51st Streets, with mostly working-class homes in the surrounding residential district. As the third moving picture show in Temescal, the LD Purdy was to be built on a block which had originally been the site of Babcock's Hotel and Resort, dating from about 1870. Two store buildings which had replaced Babcock's were razed to make way for the new theater. Just one block southwest, on opposite sides of Telegraph, stood two other theaters. The Portola, occupying a converted store, was in the space now temporarily housing the Temescal Branch Library (#4920), and the Navajo, constructed in 1912, is now gone. A fourth theater, built in 1915, still stands at 4115 Telegraph. It operated under the names New Central, Circle and Crystal until 1926.

The building permit for the LD Purdy theater, issued Dec. 10, 1913, describes the structure as a reinforced concrete nickelodeon, with stores, to cost \$9000. According to the permit, F. Armanino owned the property, Jones Bros. was the builder, and A.W. Smith was the theater's architect. It was the second nickelodeon in Oakland to be designed by Alfred W. Smith, a locally educated architect who created dwellings and stores in every style prevalent between the 1890s and the 1930s. The artist who created the recently uncovered murals remains unknown.

The theater at 51st and Telegraph was first listed in city directories under the name of its manager, Lawrence Dorman (LD) Purdy, a Berkeley resident who had





previously appeared in the city directory as a salesman for the Franklin Motor Car Co. The theater continued under his name until 1916 when it became the Claremont. During the time Purdy was the manager, the property and building remained under the ownership of Frank Armanino and Bernardo Ferro. The Armanino family also owned several other stores and dwellings in Rockridge and Temescal. At the time the theater was constructed, Armanino was a saloon proprietor and wine seller at 5100 Telegraph, located in a building next to the theater. (A building later demolished when 51st Street was widened.) In 1921, the Armaninos worked again with the architect A.W. Smith on the two combination store and apartment buildings that still flank Armanino Court off College Avenue.

Very little written history about the LD Purdy Theater survives. Often neighborhood nickelodeons didn't even advertise in local newspapers. The potential audience lived close by and could find out what was playing on the posters and sandwich-board advertising at the theater. Ed Hansen, a stagehand in Oakland for more than 50 years, says the theater did not originally have a candy counter. However, as was the practice at that time, confections could be purchased and consumed at a small store at the entrance. A meat market occupied the other storefront. Hansen adds that the theater bathrooms were originally upstairs above the storefronts. He added that the balcony was later removed as a fire hazard when buildings on either side prevented the installation of second-floor fire exits.

The Claremont was apparently closed for several years during the Depression. There is little doubt that the theater had lost customers to the stylish Fox Senator on Telegraph Ave. just south of 40th Street, which opened in 1926 with a parade of floats and decorated cars. On April 28, 1939, a permit for remodeling of the Claremont was obtained by Joseph Blumenfeld, a well-known and successful theater entrepreneur, who as a sixteen-year-old had begun his

theater career by working as an usher and organist at his father's theater in San Francisco. He eventually ran theaters throughout the state. The architect for the remodeling was Alfred J. Hopper, listed in city directories as a carpenter. Hopper was involved in other theater remodels, including earlier work on the Mission in San Francisco (1932) and the Uptown in Rockridge (1930). He later worked on the New Fruitvale (1941).

For the Claremont remodel, a Moderne theater was built, essentially inside the old movie house. The new theater had smooth, curved walls and coved ceilings, horizontal lines, and porthole shapes. The stores were removed, making space for an expanded lobby and first floor restrooms. The *Oakland Enquirer* reported "nothing remains of the old playhouse except the ceiling and the walls." The remodeled building featured the latest air conditioning system, the most modern sound equipment, and a new screen. A neon sign wrapping around the marquee displayed a new name on its three sides: Tower. In its new guise, the theater operated as part of the Fox West Coast chain offering family entertainment. The evening admission price was 25 cents, while downtown theaters were charging 40 cents.

Inevitably though, with television's growing popularity in the 1950s, movie-theater going declined. In an effort to draw audiences by offering a unique alternative, the Tower began featuring art-house films, specializing in British fare. It advertised itself as "Oakland's fine arts" theater. Later, a switch was made to R-rated fare, and then, in 1976, the Tower became a Pussycat theater. That chain, which had already taken over several other Bay Area theaters, featured adults-only and X-rated material. As the Pussycat, the theater acquired an interior coat of red paint, red carpet, red light bulbs, and red flocked wallpaper.

At the time of the theater's final remodel, the Temescal neighborhood was recovering from the construction of Highway 24, which had resulted in the loss of businesses and hundreds of homes in North Oakland. The community emphatically did not want an X-rated theater in its neighborhood commercial center. Temescal Neighbors Together (TNT) organized to improve the neighborhood as a place to live, work, and shop, and played a key role in closing the Pussycat. As reported in *TNT News and Views*, with the strengthening of zoning ordinances, the Pussycat was found to be operating too close to residences, schools, and the library. No doubt the theater's popularity was also adversely affected by the increasing availability of adult



As seen on the far left, the theater originally sat between a store and apartment buildings, a row of bare bulbs lining the arcaded entrance. The building on its right was later demolished when 51st Street was widened. (Collection of Vernon J. Sappers) Middle left: After its Moderne remodel, the Tower in the early 1940s. (Collection of Vernon J. Sappers.) The Pussycat as it appeared just after shutting down in 1991. (Donald Hausler) Left: December 17, 1998. Demolition begins. (Jennifer Dowling)

material on video.

In early 1991, the theater, the last adult movie theater in Oakland, shut down permanently. Several years later, control of the building transferred to Beverly Hills-based Walnut Properties, identified by the *Montclarion* as a subsidiary of the estate of George Tate, one of the Pussycat founders. The building, emptied of its furnishings and bereft of ornament, sat vacant for years. The *Montclarion* reported, "According to Bob Hollis, a building code compliance officer, the city declared the site a public nuisance in 1996, and made plans to demolish the theater."

In January 1998, a permit to create a marketplace inside the theater shell was being sought when a fire occurred. The retail center did not go forward and for months the fire debris was not even cleared. Nine months later, the City of Oakland posted an application for permission to demolish the building. Thomas D. Eychner Co., hired by the city, began demolition of the building on Dec. 17, 1998. The final frustration after years of inaction by the city and the owner was that those who wanted to document the building had only a day to photograph the murals from behind a yellow-tape barrier. -- *Jennifer Dowling*

## SAVING THE FOX THEATER

There are no visible signs of life yet, but behind-the-scenes efforts to revitalize the Oakland Fox Theater appear to be gaining momentum. This eye-catching architectural treasure, designated an Oakland City Landmark and listed on the National Register, is now owned by the City of Oakland, which has begun grappling with how to proceed with renovation and reuse of the structure.

The long-neglected and mostly vacant building was once Oakland's premiere theater. Opening in 1928, the Fox thrived for its first few years on first-run films and top vaudeville acts. Through the years the lavishly ornamented stage, flanked by two massive gold Hindu figures, has been graced by the likes of Ginger Rogers, Frank Sinatra with the Jimmy Dorsey Band, and Bing Crosby. The exotic Hindu-influenced design is attributed to the architectural firm of Weeks and Day, who also designed the now-demolished Orpheum and Roxie theaters in Oakland, as well as both the Mark Hopkins and Sir Francis Drake hotels in San Francisco.

Located within Oakland's proposed "uptown district," the future of the Fox is both dependent upon and crucial to the revitalization of that neighborhood. According to Jennifer Cooper of the City of Oakland Community and Economic

Development Agency, the City is currently exploring strategies for restoration of the Fox. A new roof is definitely in the works, sorely needed as current roof leaks have begun to damage the ornamental plaster in the theater. Beyond that, discussions include ideas ranging from ways to spiff up the exterior until a long-range plan is in place, to issuing an RFQ for a team of consultants to develop a master plan for the project. Factors include whether a restoration would extend only to the original design, or would also include elements of a later remodeling, and most importantly, what the ultimate use will be.

As always, funding is a major issue. The amount of money available for the Fox is expected to be \$2.9 million, but it will not be assured until the City budget is finalized. One good sign is that the Fox seems to have caught the attention of Mayor Jerry Brown, who mentioned the City's desire to renovate the complex in his recent "State of the City" speech. He also indicated that Oakland would not be able to accomplish this without outside help.

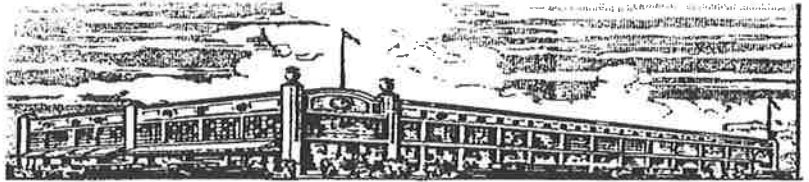
An advocacy group formed recently to assist and influence the City's efforts to restore the Fox. The group, which has already toured both the Fox and Paramount Theaters, meets every first and third Thursday from 6:00 to 7:30 pm at the Camron-Stanford House, 1418 Lakeside Drive, Oakland. For more information, call the OHA office at (510) 763-9218. -- *Pat Dedekian*



( *The San Francisco Examiner* )

# Swan's Market

## A Labor of Love



Swan's Market is gutted, a frame of white glazed-tile legs with polychrome decoration supporting an enormous truss roof, in preparation for a new life. A sign announcing the restoration proclaims "Swan's Market: A labor of love." Once a bustling market filling the block between 9th and 10th and Washington and Clay, large sections of the building are gone. Swan's rebirth as a mixed-use project, the brainchild of East Bay Asian Local Development Corp. (EBALDC), began in September 1998 and is expected to be finished this year. The complex will consist of three parts: 20 co-housing condominiums (Oakland's first); 18 one- or two-bedroom affordable housing units; and retail space around a fountained courtyard (including a new home for the neighboring Housewives' Market). This is the second new housing project in Old Oakland in recent years--Phase One of Old Town Square by Keating Corporation, at 10th and Jefferson, was recently completed, and Phase Two, at the Housewives' site, is soon to begin--and is just part of the rapidly changing face of this neighborhood.

In 1868 the transcontinental railroad terminus on 4th Street (now Mi Rancho) created a busy neighborhood of restaurants, shops and markets that served the community and travelers. Oakland Free Market started there, at Clay Street between Fourth and Fifth Streets, with Jacob Pantosky (who appears in city directories as early as 1881, variously as poultry dealer, broker, speculator, junk dealer, and hotel manager) as superintendent by 1894.

In 1917, the market moved to 10th and Washington Streets, into a building constructed by Charles Heyer with architects Oliver & Knowles. A tall, one-story complex in the Beaux Arts style, the new building occupied the north half of the block (except for a 50' x 75' interior parcel on Washington Street). A steel-framed building with unreinforced masonry, it had white-glazed brick facing and polychrome terra cotta tile ornament. The canted main entrance at 10th and Washington streets had show windows and above, on the roof ledge, blue terra cotta urns with polychromed terra cotta garlands of fruit that spilled down the entrance wall corners. A colorful tile plaque announced "Free Market, 1917."

From that point on, the building grew, in stages, to fill the block. In 1921, the business changed its name to Sanitary Free Market, and additions were made by A. W. Smith, an architect already famous for his residential work

in the high Craftsman style on both sides of the Bay.

Sherwood Swan and Co. took over the business in 1927, listing it as the 10th Street Market. Further additions to the building were made in 1925-27 by W. Knowles, who also did important residential work, as well as the Claremont Hotel. The final expansion came in the 1940s when Swan and Co. added a second story and included a department store. This new addition was designed by Edward T. Foulkes, best known for his work on the Tribune Tower. All of these later additions match the design of the 1917 building, even though the subsequent architects were better known than the original team.

Each section of the Swan's building has white glazed tile and polychrome ornamentation in the cornice section. Large windows in upper part walls, with twenty-five fixed glazed panes in metal sash and with a central hopper window, face on Ninth Street with a long band of windows facing onto Washington. Only the different heights and breaks in the walls indicate different phases of construction. The terra cotta ornamentation elegantly announces the wares formerly available inside: crabs holding fish and fowl in rectangular panels, alternating with rondels of a ram's head holding a basket of produce, while steer heads top the piers on the 10th Street side. These colorful plaques "constitute a thematic program of ornament that serves as advertising for the market" said Chris Buckley of the City Planning Department. A tall convex metal sign marking the entrance announces "Swans Market" and was probably a 1940s addition.

A letter in the *Oakland Tribune* from Sherwood Swan thanks "Mr and Mrs Metropolitan Oakland" for their patience during construction and welcomes them to the October 25th opening of the greatly enlarged market. A busy group of over 100 merchants retained the flavor of an old time public market with stalls including a cheese maker, sausage maker, baker, and candy maker. Business thrived and the market had grown rapidly. Kessler's Deli was one example of its success. Started at the old Fifth Street location as a single stand by two brothers straight out of high school, Kessler's grew to four departments at Swan's and boasted of "the most varied line of provisions handled in Northern California" (1980, *Oakland Post*). Well-heeled people came from all over the Bay Area to

spend their Saturday in what was both a social hub and a "one-stop shopping center," that rivaled the L.A. Farmer's Market in its fame.

In its heyday during the 1960s, the department store accounted for two-thirds of the market's sales volume, but it later began losing money; in 1979 it lost \$800,000. After the mid 1960s, with the encroachment of large chain stores, the 980 freeway cutting off customers from West Oakland, and continued migration from urban centers into the suburbs, the market and the neighborhood began to decline. When construction on the Hyatt Hotel and Convention Center blocked off Washington Street in the early 1980s, it further isolated Swan's, Housewives' and the "Old Town." A 1983 article in the *Montclairion* noted that the whole market had "taken a dive toward extinction." The department store laid off its last employee in January, 1983, and its space was filled by smaller vendors struggling to survive. Swan's closed in April 1984. It had been the oldest continuously operated store in Northern California.

Housewives' Market has a similar history. A series of vendors in individual stalls, the market has been at Ninth and Jefferson Streets since 1953, but has operated in Oakland since 1908. Its original location on Sixth Street was torn down for the Eastshore Freeway extension. When it moved to its present location in 1953 it still had 32 vending areas, but by 1983 the city Redevelopment Agency had bought it. This marked the first time the city had purchased a retail operation; it did so to keep shopping available in the neighborhood and to keep the market tradition alive. The site is now slated to be home for Phase Two of "Old Town Square."

Revitalization attempts began in "Old Oakland" in the 1980s, when Storek and Storek renovated two full blocks of commercial Victorians between Eighth and Tenth Streets on Broadway. There were even news accounts of development plans for Swan's by Alice Waters, but the subsequent financial woes of Storek and Storek, and the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake intervened. In 1992, the Redevelopment Agency took over Swan's and a nearby parking lot. What had been a thriving neighborhood during the first half of the century had lost its customers, and now

its businesses. The city realized that revitalization efforts for the neighborhood depended on people living downtown for retail businesses to succeed.

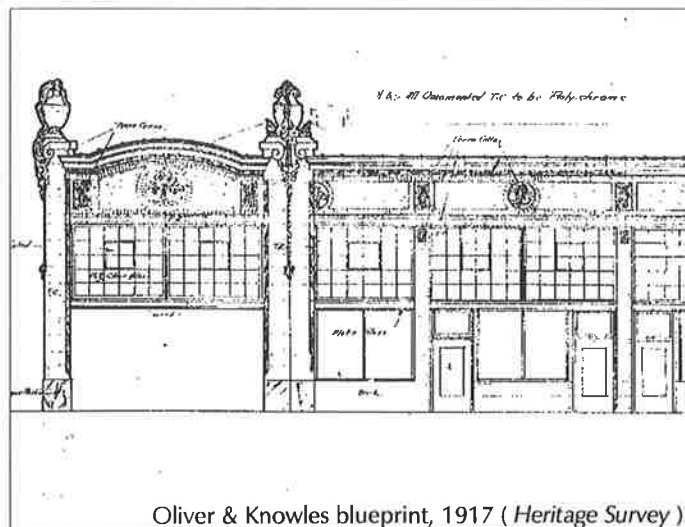
EBALDC, founded by a group of UC students in 1975, was one of three developers to propose a plan for the Swan's site; its proposal was accepted in 1996. According to Joshua Simon, project manager for Swan's, "The present building with its terra cotta detail was too expensive for most developers." But EBALDC wanted to keep the historic structure, which is rated B+ by the city's Cultural Heritage Survey. The building is also eligible for the National Register, both as an individual structure and as a major contributor to the historic fabric of the neighborhood. With "unique partnerships," EBALDC financed the \$16.3 million development using historic tax credits and loans from Wells Fargo, the Oakland Redevelopment Agency, federal and state government agencies, Fannie Mae grants, and individual donors.

Collaborative development is a prime focus for EBALDC, founded originally to promote economic development in the East Bay by turning a run-down Chinatown warehouse into a community facility. Finished in 1981, that revitalized Gothic building at Eighth and Harrison Streets is now the Asian Resource Center, a home to non-profits, EBALDC's offices, and community service organizations.

EBALDC has since moved beyond its target area of Chinatown to work in other neighborhoods developing partnerships with community-based groups, churches, schools and other non-profits with the intent of "working its development from the inside out." Most projects include jobs, affordable housing, neighborhood-serving retail and office space, child-care centers, management training for residents and revolving micro-loan funds for small businesses.

Other EBALDC preservation-based projects have included the Madrone Hotel (a revitalized hotel in Old Oakland which is now a single resident occupancy residence) and the Madison

Park apartments. The Madison Park, on the edge of Chinatown, had been bought by BART at auction, but then scheduled for demolition when it proved inadequate for planned office space. It was saved from the wrecking ball



in 1992 by EBALDC, preservation groups, and the Oakland Housing Organization (OHO) in order to provide much needed affordable housing in Chinatown.

The Swan's project, with its combination of imaginative funding, a preservation focus, collaboration, and the creation of affordable housing in a mixed use project, is typical EBALDC. In a 1996 article, *The Oakland Business Review* called the Swan's project a multi-use "urban village." Months of meetings were held with interested parties and prospective residents to ensure success for the project. In return for their investment, Emeryville Co-housing Group won approval rights over the design and amenities in its space (each of the units has its own entrance and kitchen, around a common house space with a communal kitchen). Eighteen affordable housing units, including four for people with AIDS, will allow some current residents of the neighborhood to stay.

The planned retail section on the Washington Street side occupies the largest piece of the project and will be the new home of both the historic Housewives' Market, and MOCHA, a children's art museum. A bakery and restaurants are also planned, and a fountained courtyard will face on Ninth Street to take advantage of Friday Farmer's Market. Groundbreaking with Barbara Lee was in May of 1998. The pressure is now on to have the project finished before the Housewives' building is demolished for the second stage of Old Town Square.

There is also a million-dollar restoration of nearby Lafayette Park in progress, so local residents and workers will have a place to relax, perhaps have lunch. The park was where Mother Wright fed the homeless for many Saturdays and where the local residents, mostly poor and homeless, relaxed and met.

The area, definitely "in transition," is now an interesting mix of old and new, with long term businesses such as Ratto's, Housewives', the recently renovated Doan's Tailors, and Gulf Coast Seafood, rubbing shoulders with the Oakland Peniel Mission (now CityTeam) and the Salvation Army. New galleries (including the Center for Visual Arts, ProArts, and Expressions), bookstores (Bookmark and Key Books, displaced for the new administration building), and eateries (817 and OakTown Grill) are bringing a more upscale flavor. Between the Swan's project and Old Town



Declaring "Pressure of present business is literally pushing us into the street," Sherwood Swan undertook an expansion of his business in 1940. The top photo shows the 10th Street Market as it looked at the time, indicating the proposed expansion with an area on the left outlined by dotted lines. The photo to the right shows the "outworn" building which was torn down to



make room for the expanded market. Official response to the announcement was reported in the *Oakland Tribune*, "Fire Marshall Fred Carlson said, 'Removal of those old buildings around the Tenth Street Market is an important contribution to the safety of the city as a whole. I heartily approve of progressive effort of this sort.' Ernest Roussell, city building inspector, joined the fire marshall by saying: 'This is good news, indeed. What to do with old buildings is a problem faced by all cities.'"

Squares One and Two, the city hopes to bring enough residents to the neighborhood to support more retail and return downtown Oakland to the bustling metropolis it once was.

Current loans for the Swan's project will cover construction costs, but EBALDC has started a capital recognition campaign to raise money to provide and replace historic elements to the project. Money can be donated for items such as historic street lights, tree grilles, brick paving stones, and glazed brick tiles. Donor generosity will be recognized in a variety of ways; for more information contact Margaret Gee, EBALDC, at (510) 287-5353 ext. 627. -- Pamela Magnuson-Peddle



# RETROFITTING: The Historic First Baptist Church of Oakland

Historic masonry buildings often have dismal futures in seismically active areas. For many such buildings, the cost of adequately strengthening them using conventional methods is simply not feasible. The First Baptist Church of Oakland, with an interior of finely-crafted wood beams and Tudor-arched paneling designed by Julia Morgan, and an enormous span of beautifully crafted stained glass windows, faces this problem. In response, the church has commissioned an innovative retrofit design that will demonstrate an important advance in preserving historic buildings threatened by earthquakes.

The First Baptist Church of Oakland was organized on December 7th, 1854, just six months after Oakland was incorporated as a city. Its first house of worship, erected at the southeast corner of Fifth and Jefferson Streets, was dedicated ten days later as the first Protestant church erected in Oakland. The small church had only six members (including two carpenters), but with a little crowding two hundred persons could be seated in the building. It was often used for town meetings, lectures, and concerts. The church soon outgrew this first building and, in the early part of 1868,

a 100' x 200' lot was purchased at the southeast corner of 14th and Brush Streets. Work on the new house of worship, seating 750 members, was begun in July 1868 under the supervision of Benjamin Malson. During construction, N.J. Thompson (the first deacon and one of the original six organizers in 1854) was at work near the top of the steeple when the great earthquake of 1868 took place. Not realizing it was an earthquake, he threw his arms about the spire and shouted to the man below, "Hey, what are you doing down there? Stop that shaking!" The building, completed in March 1869 at a cost of \$32,000, was formally dedicated on the 30th of the same month.

In 1902, the church burned with all its contents. A hall in the Masonic Temple at 12th and Washington Streets was rented, and services held there until a new building could be erected. The congregation made the decision to make a daring move to the present location at what was then the outskirts of the city and construction of a Romanesque Revival building was started in 1903.

The octagonal masonry church with sandstone exterior appears to be based on the design of the ancient cathedral of Charlemagne in Aachen, Germany, built in the 8th century according to a design put forward by Charlemagne himself, inspired by writings in the Bible. Study of the cathedral has revealed a system of measurements which points to a vision described in the 21st chapter of the Revelation of St. John: "And there came unto me one of the

The First Baptist Church auditorium designed by Julia Morgan in 1906 features an open-timbered roof made of redwood. ( Sara Holmes Boutelle )





seven angels which... shewed me that... the holy Jerusalem... had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates.... On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations.... And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city.... And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, a hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measurement of a man, that is, of the angel."

So Charlemagne based his design on measurements using the numbers 7, 12, and 144 and his own foot size--about 13 inches. The cathedral's height, breadth and depth are all equal, and the key measurement is 84 (7 x 12) Carolingian feet. The sanctuary of the First Baptist Church is 84' wide and 84' deep. The height from floor to ceiling is 76', but when we add the ornamentation at the peak of the roof and the height of the floor above the ground, the total is probably also 84'. The perimeter of the church appears to be just a bit shy of 288' (2 x 144), the perimeter of the Aachen Cathedral. Both the local sanctuary and the Aachen Cathedral are octagonal; the number eight referring to the Completion, the Last Judgment, and the harmony of the Second Coming with the Heavenly Jerusalem. In addition, First Baptist has three windows on the north, three on the east, and three on the south, though none on the west. The length of 144' in the Aachen cathedral is on axis from the Western entrance to the apse, while the west-east dimensions of the First Baptist building are just shy of 144' (because of lot size).

The First Baptist church, with the exception of the sanctuary, was finished in time for Easter services in 1904. The auditorium portion of the building had not been completed, being delayed until the members could afford

a really fine sanctuary. It was to be the first large scale commission for the now famous architect, Julia Morgan, who had grown up in the First Baptist Church. The Morgan family home lay just one block from the church's previous

location at 14th and Brush. Though born Episcopalian, the young Julia became a regular pupil and later teacher in the First Baptist Church Sunday School. Following graduation from the engineering school at the University of California, Berkeley, she studied

Julia Morgan, architect for the auditorium of the First Baptist Church of Oakland. The photo is from the book "Julia Morgan, Architect," a groundbreaking biography of Morgan's life and work by Sara Holmes Boutelle. Her award-winning 1988 book was inspired by a visit to Hearst Castle, where the retired history teacher first learned of Morgan's work. An honorary AIA member and advocate for young female architects, Boutelle died in May at the age of 90.



architecture in Paris at the École des Beaux Arts. Just before the 14th and Brush church burned to the ground in 1902, Morgan had returned to the Bay Area to start her personal practice in San Francisco. She had already designed the bell tower and the library at Mills College and, as she was well known to the trustees, Morgan was hired on January 21, 1906 to design the auditorium for the church. Historically, Baptist meeting houses have been plain and simple, with an absolute minimum of symbolism. Morgan boldly offered a design of a modified old English type with an open timbered redwood roof, a use of redwood that would be characteristic of much of her later work. Her plans for the auditorium had been approved by the trustees of the church and were to be presented to the membership for approval on April 18, 1906, a meeting that never occurred.

On that day of the great earthquake, the First Baptist Church was the most severely damaged building in the East Bay. The destruction seemed to completely dash the hopes of the members, but aid poured in from the East, so that the church could be rebuilt and completed. The trustees again showed their faith in Morgan by hiring her to direct the reconstruction of the heavily damaged church.

As was characteristic of her practice, she was fully involved in all aspects of the work, climbing all over the structure to make sure that tradesmen did their work correctly. She even saw to it that the baptistry was properly painted and with the right color. The fine craftsmanship is the product of Swedish carpenters. Their extensive carvings, including trefoils representing the trinity and quatrefoils representing the four evangelists, can be seen throughout the church.

Stained glass windows were given as memorials through the years up to 1925. Each window is enclosed in a framework of living and sometimes fruit-bearing grape vines. Large circles were used as a symbol of God, the One without beginning or end, while lettered scrolls describe the central theme.

Five different forms of crosses are represented: Passion Cross (sharp point), Cross Patee (broad footed), Greek Cross (arms of equal length), St. Andrews Cross (national cross of Scotland), and Budded Cross (ends terminating in trefoil design). Another representation is the Nimbus (cloud) used only for the Deity. Six different stars with four to nine points are also used, each having its own symbolic meaning.

The stained glass in the towers and the periphery design of the main windows was crafted by the California Art Glass Company of San Francisco. The proprietor and president was William Schroeder, born in New Orleans in 1851, who had studied art glass work under the best artists in Hamburg, Berlin, Dresden and Vienna. His twenty-five workers created windows for buildings all over the Pacific Rim (Japan, China, Hawaii) and in the United States, using materials imported from abroad. The company had been awarded a gold medal for their "superior work over all others" at the 1894 Midwinter Fair, and had also received a gold medal at the 1900 Paris exhibition for "The Chinese Dragon" and "Cupid and Psyche," works wrought in glass.

Shortly before the building at 14th and Brush burned to the ground, the Murray Harris organ company of Los Angeles had installed a magnificent pipe organ. The trustees called upon that company to build a new organ for the new church, with Mr. Andrew Carnegie contributing

\$2,500. Murray Harris had built a number of notable organs, including one for the St. Louis Exposition, which was to become the famous Wanamaker organ of Philadelphia, the largest operating pipe organ in the world.

The new First Baptist organ, a sister to one in the Memorial Church at Stanford University at the time, is recognized as one of the finest in the United States and one of the very few remaining Harris organs. It was electrified around 1924 and further remodeled in 1944, with the console being moved to its present location, at a cost of \$6000. A new Austin all-electric console was installed in 1959. The organ was recently renovated and revoiced by the McManus Organ Company of Kansas. Charles McManus, a relative of members of the Church at the time, installed a new state trumpet stop in memory of his late wife.



First Baptist Church, 534 22nd Street, Oakland

The growth of Oakland has now placed the church in the downtown area. It has become a well-recognized landmark as a particularly noteworthy and locally rare example of the Romanesque Revival architecture style, and one of only two such remaining sandstone buildings in Oakland, a third having been lost as a result of the Loma Prieta earthquake. The First Unitarian Church of Oakland, built in 1891 at 14th and Castro Streets, was damaged in the Loma Prieta quake, but has recently completed the first phase of its restoration. Of the First Baptist Church, a Historic Resources Inventory done by the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey in 1982 declared, "The building is notable for its impressive character of permanence and stability, expressed in its simple but handsome stonework and its massing of geometric forms punctured by deep-cut window and door openings. The grey sandstone exterior is Oakland's most conspicuous unaltered example of this surface material. The distinctive design and monumental quality of the building and its location on Telegraph Avenue, a major thoroughfare, makes the structure an especially conspicuous and familiar element in Oakland. It appears eligible for individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places."

Although it escaped serious damage in the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, the church, by law, must be

strengthened against future earthquakes. In preparing to meet the requirements of the City, the Church approached Professor Gary Black of the University of California, Berkeley, joint program in architecture and civil & environmental engineering. He was asked to help find innovative ways to strengthen the building with minimal visual impact on both the sandstone exterior and the Julia Morgan interior, as well as the interior acoustics. To keep costs down, the west wing was not included; it will be brought up only to the city's mandatory standards.

Two graduate students, David Schnee, a licensed architect in the state of New York, and David Galbraith, an engineer, were assigned the first task, which was to carefully measure all parts of the church and make drawings of the building, as the original drawings have never been found. A retrofit plan was developed and costed, and all aspects of the design checked by computer with a Structural Analysis Program. The plans have also been reviewed by city seismic engineers.

There are a number of ways to reinforce massive masonry walls, but most of these are incompatible with a historic building. External steel structures can do the job, but are ugly and expensive. An example of such a retrofit is visible from the church in the former Breuners building. Methods involving drilling vertical cores at intervals along the walls, and then filling them with reinforcing steel and epoxy under pressure have been successfully used in a number of buildings. However, in the case of the First Baptist Church, much of the top of the surface of the walls is not accessible without removing large portions of the slate roof. Moreover, the strength of the present foundation is not known and would require extensive and expensive testing. As part of her restoration of the building following the 1906 earthquake, Julia Morgan had installed numerous steel rods connecting arms of the massive steel trusses supporting the roof. The brick in the present walls is quite strong with regard to compressive loads. The weakness of a brick structure, though, is its poor ability to resist tensile forces. The present retrofit proposes to extend the methods of Morgan by placing steel saddles at the top of each end

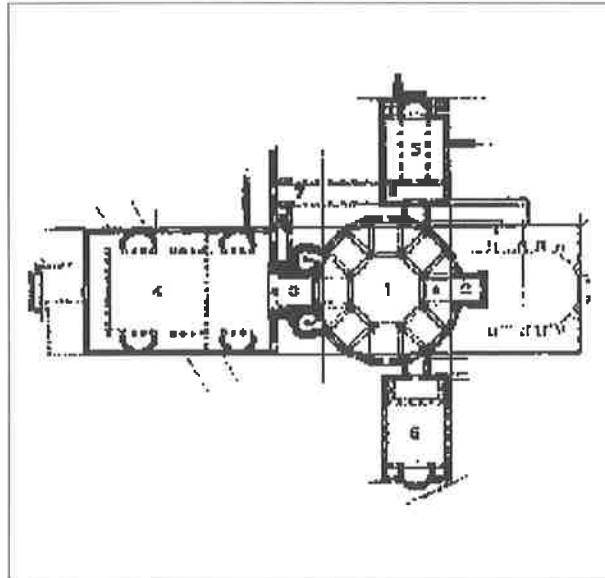
of every shear wall section. These would be connected to anchors at the ground by 1.25" diameter steel rods. The anchors, steel helices manufactured by the Chance Corp., would be driven into the ground until the specified resistive torque is reached. This method provides for a secure and

permanent anchor that does not involve the present foundation, and the rods would be under tension, thereby providing the missing strength component of masonry walls. As is the case for the rods installed by Julia Morgan, the new rods would be visible, but integrated so as not to detract from the overall design.

It is important for heavy sections of the building and towers to move as a unit during any quake, not independently with differing frequencies. (Such relative motion of the towers and the octagonal auditorium structure was the cause of most of the damage suffered during the 1989 earthquake.) The Black

group proposes to tie all portions of the building together with a series of inexpensive reinforced concrete beams. One set of such beams at the level of the roof will not be visible from either inside or outside. The other set will be around the periphery of the balcony, roughly at the midpoint of the walls. This set will not be visible from the outside, nor from the main floor, and will not be intrusive from the balcony level owing to the small cross section and their placement. Professor Black and his team believe the methods developed are applicable to many other historic buildings, providing a means of preserving them at perhaps half the cost of more intrusive conventional methods.

The anticipated cost of the retrofit for the auditorium portion of the church is \$550,000, and it is hoped that work can be completed in one year once funding is assured. The church invites concerned individuals and foundations to support the execution of this work that will both preserve the beautiful work of Julia Morgan, and demonstrate a new approach to earthquake retrofitting that can be applied to many other threatened buildings. The church office is open weekdays from 9-4 and members of the public are invited to view the church, particularly the auditorium, at their convenience. Further information and images of the church can also be found at the Church web site: [www.best.com/~snc/](http://www.best.com/~snc/). -- Philip Meads, Jr.



Floor plan of the cathedral at Aachen.

## BEHIND THE SCENES: IN VIRGINIA



Oakland is blessed with wonderful house museums: Cohen House, Dunsmuir House, and Pardee House come to mind. Recently, I spent a week in Fredericksburg, Virginia, at Kenmore, one of the nation's first house museums, and Ferry Farm, site of George Washington's

childhood home, working as a volunteer with Elderhostel. Kenmore (shown above) was home to George's only sister, Betty. She and her husband, Fielding Lewis, completed the house on the eve of the American Revolution. The mansion, built by indentured servants and slaves, crowned a 1200 acre tobacco farm. When the widowed Betty died in 1797, the house was sold out of the family.

Remember the cherry tree and the dollar hurled across the river? Well, Ferry Farm is where that all happened... or didn't happen. It's hard to verify such legends 250 years later. It is known that in 1738 George Washington's father, Augustine, bought 600 acres for farming along the Rappahannock River, just above a Fredericksburg ferry crossing. Eventually the site came to be known as Ferry Farm. Campaigns to turn Ferry Farm site into a national memorial have failed over the years, but in the spring of 1996 an impending sale to WalMart spurred the trustees of Kenmore House to join in the effort, adding a substantial amount of money. After the smoke cleared, Kenmore was the owner of 71 acres of Ferry Farm. Work began immediately and the blackened foundations of Augustine's first house, which burned in 1740, have been discovered through archaeological excavation. Research is currently underway to find the site of a second house.

The Ferry Farm dig was eagerly anticipated locally and we even found ourselves featured in the local news. Under the watchful eye of the head archaeologist at Ferry Farm, elderhostlers measured off five 2' x 2' pits and, after removing the top soil, began carefully scraping the dirt away. Each small bucket of soil was carried to screening boxes, where we sifted for artifacts. In the first bucket, my partner and I found a ceramic shard with a blue and cream transfer design, probably 19th century. Others found rusty square-headed nails, a confederate bullet, and chips from

arrowhead production. During our third day the most significant find was the outline of a fence post hole. We completed five test pits and proudly displayed our blistered hands and aching backs.

At Kenmore the tasks were generally less strenuous but no less interesting. Each volunteer spent two to three hours reading original and facsimile 18th and 19th century documents, entering key words on a worksheet to be used for eventual computer documentation. The documents, coded successively by two volunteers to increase accuracy, included letters from George Washington, Fielding Lewis' will, and supply inventories. Volunteers also reorganized ten 3' x 5' drawers used for the storage of archaeological and architectural drawings, art prints, and other items that must be stored flat.

Other volunteers polished silver. Kenmore uses a special museum polish and after a piece is sparkling, only white-gloved hands are allowed to touch it on its way to tarnish-proof bags. While we worked, a curator explained hallmarks and origins for the colonial candlesticks, flat silver, pitchers and other items in various stages of tarnish.

In the basement at Kenmore is an archaeological laboratory, full of artifacts to clean and label before entering descriptions into the computer. Elderhostlers sat amidst microscopes, lab trays and other esoteric paraphernalia, cleaning and washing artifacts unearthed at both Kenmore and Ferry Farm. Though purchased for restoration over seventy years ago, the Kenmore house undergoes continuing restoration as the result of new findings in historical research and restoration techniques.

On the Kenmore grounds, the goal is to keep all four acres, including lush green lawns and an area of native plants called "The Wilderness," looking wonderful, while at the same time restoring the gardens to historical accuracy. For instance, the house as pictured in the brochure is nestled behind box hedges. Early saviours of Kenmore had grown what they thought looked nice, but it is now known that colonial homeowners considered plantings next to the house unhealthy and dangerous to the drainage and foundations of the house. The box hedge has all been removed. Neither did colonial gardens have stakes, either wooden or metal. Instead, large branches from brush cuttings were fashioned into cages, with uprights and cross beams tied together with vines. In making some of these "rose cages," we sharpened the ends of branches and drove them into the ground around the falling plants, which grow

around these branching stakes and hide them from view. Some cages are five or six feet tall for the thriving and gloriously scented old roses. We also took cuttings of various plants and potted them for the gift shop or to take home. We were privileged one evening to hear a lecture by a garden historian from the nearby Stratford Hall house museum where Robert E. Lee was born.

It is hard to go anywhere in Virginia without bumping into history, from the early colonies through the Civil War, and it is rewarding to see that these places are visited not only by tourists, but also by excited school children. Kenmore has an entire program of children's activities for each month during the school year.

Kenmore and Ferry Farm, saved from the developers' clutches in the 1920s and 1990s respectively, illustrate several trends in the world of historical research and restoration. First is a rising national consciousness of the value of our historical legacy. Valuable sites are still too often lost, but more are being saved with the help of enthusiastic volunteers in cooperation with historical societies, cities, and counties. Second, the lives of ordinary people are receiving at least some of the attention they deserve. Visiting historic sites today, you will hear about the craftsmen, housewives, indentured servants, and slaves.



Their homes and quarters, the kitchens, barns, stables, stores, and taverns are now lovingly restored and staffed with interpretive guides.

A third current, new technological advancements, is giving archaeologists and restoration technicians exciting new windows into the past. It is possible to visit rooms at Kenmore and know

that the paint color, the textiles, the furniture, the room arrangement, and even the food on the table, are all historically accurate. It is wondrous to be able to walk into the past. -- Gaye Lenahan (Images courtesy of Kenmore Plantation and Gardens)

## A SHORT HISTORY OF FERRY FARM

Parson Weems, author of *The Life of Washington* (1800), passed Ferry Farm often, and described the Washington house as a low frame building, painted dark red. General Hugh Mercer later bought the house from George Washington, but the family never lived there as Washington's friend had intended. After Mercer was killed at the Battle of Princeton in 1777, his widow preferred to remain in Fredericksburg. Despite its fame, the Washington house was leased to a series of tenants. In 1790 a delegation of Creek Indian chiefs on their way to negotiate a treaty with President Washington stopped to visit the scene of his early life at Ferry Farm and to call on his sister, Betty Lewis, at



Kenmore.

The Washington house may have been standing as late as 1833, when the artist John Gadsby Chapman painted "Fredericksburg from the Old Mansion of the Washington Family." A reputed Chapman sketch of the house itself has not been found, but it may have been the source for the painting, "The Boyhood of Washington" (1844) by Henry Inman, and for an engraving by Benson Lossing published in his *Pictorial Field Book of the American Revolution* (1850-52). The Inman and Lossing views both show a simple, story-and-a-half house.

The building described by Parson Weems and sketched by Chapman was gone by the time of the Civil War. Union soldiers occupied Ferry Farm during the battles of Fredericksburg, some writing home that they were camped on the old Washington farm. One soldier reported that the Washington house had been torn down for fuel. He may have mistaken a later building for the Washington house. Certainly it did not survive the battles of Fredericksburg. A new house was built at Ferry Farm after the war, and another in 1914.

Interest in preserving Ferry Farm as a memorial to George Washington grew with the approach of the 1932 bicentennial of his birth. The National Park Service considered undertaking its preservation and restoration, but decided to focus its efforts on Washington's birthplace at Pope's Creek, on the Potomac River. Not until 1996, when a developer's proposal to build a shopping center on the site sparked a national campaign to "Save the Farm," was it possible for an established historic preservation organization, Kenmore Plantation & Gardens, to buy the property and secure Ferry Farm. -- Kenmore Plantation and Gardens

## 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, (510) 763-9218.

### ■ "MOST ENDANGERED" UPDATE

The imminent demolition of the Rubino building on Lakeshore, approved by the City Council on February 2, may signal the fate of the other 10,000 buildings rated C by the Cultural Heritage Survey. These buildings were promised to come under some form of protection during the discussions over revisions to the Historic Preservation Element. The promised protections included the possibility of placing endangered C properties in a "Heritage Property" category or coverage by design review guidelines.

The issues that were raised at the City Council meeting go to the heart of historic preservation and economic development issues. While the council members mostly dismissed our arguments out of hand, board members have been grappling with such issues as what is the difference between replacement architecture with an historic flavor versus the real thing, and what is the importance of C buildings, particularly when such A or B icons as the Montgomery Ward building or Cox Cadillac are still threatened? And how lightly does OHA tread when the leaders, if not all the members, of neighborhood groups support the short-term fix of demolition (for blight abatement or new store glitz), as opposed to long-term quality and sustainability?

The Montgomery Ward court decision has given the most visible buildings like Cox Cadillac and Montgomery Ward the time luxury afforded by the Environmental Impact Review (EIR) process. Since keeping a building standing is Preservation Lesson #1, the year or so involved in EIR preparation and hearings may allow time for a consensus to emerge to keep the building, or for a better use or developer to arrive on the scene. And legal challenges can delay matters even further.

One interesting aspect of the Rubino battle has been the

necessity for advocates, adversaries, and the just plain curious to go out into the field and inspect the building. Most that we've talked to who have checked out the Rubino building have come away impressed with what they've seen, if dismayed by ground floor alterations. Such controversies can only be good for letting "ordinary people" into the discussion about architecture, culture, and history. Many people feel too daunted by such Preservation Pillars as City Hall or the Broadway Building to even dare personal, contrary responses, but an unfamiliar candidate like the Rubino Building allows everyone to be an aficionado or a critic. It's a bit like discovering a good little restaurant somewhere before the critics have told you to go there.

A worrisome aspect of the Rubino battle, though, has been the quickening pace of development, and the implications for buildings that don't lend themselves to easy reuse. Such is the case with the Cox Cadillac, where Rite-Aid is trying to impose their cookie-cutter, big-box-formula format with a standard entrance off the

parking lot rather than streetside. The existing buildings would obviously better lend themselves to mixed-use offices, galleries and shops, or living spaces.

The City Council seems content to support preservation for themselves in their official environs: City Hall, Broadway Building, Rotunda, Tribune Tower. The more enlightened may see some benefit in tax credits. But retention/reuse of churches, neighborhood commercial, and industrial spaces has little support from our elected officials. Important neighborhood-defining churches such as Sacred Heart and De Salles Cathedral have come down with little interference from, or at times even the active support of, City Hall. In cities like Paris and Rome, the churches, not supermarkets, are the "anchors" of their neighborhoods, and the draw for tourists.

In a meeting with OHA board members, the Oakland Community and Economic Development Agency (CEDA) director, William Claggett, matter-of-factly told us that the only cities where historic preservation is viable are those where abundant revenues can support such luxury (he cited Pasadena), or where the rents and revenues can justify the extra expense. "Oakland is a poor city," he said. Yet Lakeshore drains from both Piedmont and Crocker Highlands and it would certainly seem it should be capable of drawing shoppers who prefer a dollop of ambience with their purchase.

*Decisive moments nearing on some landmarks,  
C buildings - all 10,000 -  
likely candidates for updated list!*



(Al Croft)

**Updates: Consolidated Car Barn -- New Owner in Sight?** The author and friend were disinvited from a meeting with the owner in February. The building is on the same demolition track that resulted in the Pussycat Theater demise, with the same code compliance city official. In fact, we walked in off the street through an open doorway to photograph the interior. Obviously no serious effort is being made by either the building owner or the City to secure the building. (That opening has since been boarded up.) The owner has told city staff that she has found a buyer, but the identity, if real, has yet to be revealed. Peggy Baxter of nearby Children's Hospital denies they are pursuing the site. That is welcome news, if true, since after purchasing another parcel several years ago, CHO knocked down the powerhouse that was historically connected with the car barn.

**Cox Cadillac Update.** The good news is that Rite-Aid is no longer the applicant to develop the site. The bad news is that Rite-Aid is no longer the applicant...

The Shephard Trust that controls the Cox Cadillac site chose not to extend their option with the Rite-Aid Corp. This occurred despite completion of the Draft EIR document and numerous public hearings before the Landmarks Advisory Board and the Planning Commission, and Rite-Aid's grudging agreement to a compromise to include somewhat more of the existing structure in their project. Rumor has it that the trust and Rite-Aid were squabbling over who would foot the bill for the EIR.

According to Planner Katrina Koh, this doesn't mean we're necessarily back to square one. A project similar to Rite-Aid could dove-tail with the EIR work already completed. The City and the Trust are also aware that a project that reused the existing buildings might not require an EIR at all. Evidently it was also made clear to the Trust that they are responsible for maintenance of their property in the meantime, in a better fashion than they have manifested to date.

**Loft District.** The fiercely active group of neighbors in the Loft District -- a newly-coined moniker -- are pursuing National Register designation for their area. Many of their arguments for observing height limits and forcing infill housing to respect the existing fabric have been based upon their stated desire to keep National Register eligibility for

the district. OHA is excited by the group's determination to tame wildfire development pressures threatening the character of the area.

#### **Montgomery Ward: Can Brown Deliver?**

The long-awaited Draft EIR has as yet to be released, although the School District is suggesting mid-May as a likely date, with a 45-day comment period. But we shouldn't hold our breaths--the District originally announced the document would be out in late December. (The latest delay has been blamed on the discovery of more toxics



Oakland Mayor Jerry Brown addressed an OHA meeting held at the downtown YWCA in October. (Yorkman Lowe)

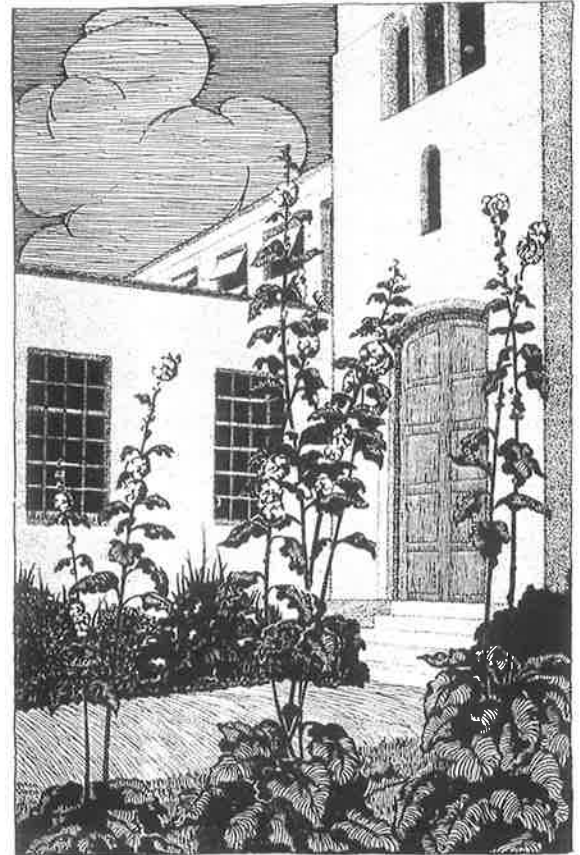
at the site.) The overarching question is whether Jerry Brown can deliver on his public pledge to save the building. State Senator Don Perata has introduced legislation to reduce the School District's contribution to finance the new school, allowing the district to deduct the appraised value of the site from their 50% funding obligation. (The state kicks in the other half.)

Meanwhile, behind the scenes and discussed in closed session, the City is preparing to buy out the Montgomery Ward Co. -- reimbursing them for the aborted demolition and other costs. \$3 million is rumored to be the amount. The Ward Co. had allowed the site to be transferred to the City before any buyout -- assuming they would partner with the City in a retail development deal that would include a new and smaller Ward outlet. Now that the City is pursuing a school at the location, Ward's lawyers may sue over being shut out, with or without the \$3 million. And the lawyer for the League for the Protection of Oakland's Architectural and Historic Resource, Susan Brandt-Hawley, has also threatened to sue to stop the buyout, prior to completion of the EIR. A court date is set for June 25.

Another potential complication for the City and school district is the selection of a former auto repair shop located at East 15th and Miller Avenue for a new charter school. The City's stated justification for passing up the \$55 million development proposal offered by the the Emerald Fund for reuse of the Ward building has been school overcrowding in the area. With this new charter school relieving some of that pressure, what excuse will they have now?



Dear Sirs: April 1998  
 It is very frustrating to University High School Alums to hear our beloved school always referred to as "Old Merritt." It was Uni Hi from 1925-1946 and Merritt for maybe five years. Please make a note next time you write about the campus. We are very interested in preserving the site and have applauded the efforts of Children's Hospital to reconstruct the site. The City of Oakland neglected the site for so long. I can't understand why they don't sell it now. Irene Cordes, Lafayette, CA



**UNIVERSITY HIGH  
 OAKLAND**





*Old Merritt--Chainsaws and "Monument Signs."* In the few months since Children's Hospital Oakland (CHO) assumed control of all but a few City-owned outposts on the site, the North Oakland Voters Alliance (NOVA) has learned that any gratitude CHO may have felt for their discounted purchase price doesn't mean that the neighborhood will be involved in a timely and proactive way in the remaining design issues. CHO has opted not to continue with the design committee that the City instituted in the Hensel-Phelps/VBN Architects period.

CHO went forward with landscaping plans that would have, if approved, removed 24 trees in the inner courtyards. (Because CHO chose to remain in the tax credit program, even if ultimately they do not take the credits, their plans will still have to be reviewed by both the State Historic Preservation Office and the National Park Service.)

The proposed removals included not only the large ginkgo we fretted about in the Spring 1998 newsletter, but also two mature loquats, a cherry, a magnolia upon which rests a mature arbutus (although that supposedly stays), and four large sycamores in the north courtyard. While a case could have been made for thinning the sycamores, the fine-tuning displayed by Patillo and Garrett in their culling of mature trees on the outside of the building is not in evidence with this plan.

*Updated Update:* The tree reviewer assigned to the case spared two of the large sycamores and the loquats. A neighbor's appeal of the proposed removal of the ginkgo and magnolia allowed a deal to be brokered with CHO that also spared these venerable trees.

NOVA has also commented on plans by CHO for two 11.5' L x 4.5' H "internally illuminated monument signs" with stucco posts to be installed at the former main entrance on MLK Jr. Way. We suggested that they be scaled down and moved to corners of the site, if used at all. Since the Children's Hospital Research Institute isn't attracting customers off the street, such obvious and overblown signage seems unnecessary.

Meanwhile, we have learned from a trustworthy source that Mayor Brown is interested in regaining the boarded-up, deteriorating- from-neglect- gymnasium for

community use as a gym. Whether CHO would share a small piece of their newest acquisition is a big question. One scenario has CHO, the community, and seniors sharing the facility.



Eternal vigilance is the price of preservation. ( Hugh Bridgeford )

***Newly Upgraded Temescal Library Reopens!*** While never on the most endangered list, Oakland's Carnegie libraries endured periods of physical decline and uncertainty over their future. The Charles W. Dickey-designed Miller Avenue Branch--the most lavish--suffered the most deterioration and is no longer in use as a library. But the good news is that the Temescal (historically Arden) branch at 5205 Telegraph has reopened. The Golden Gate and Melrose branches are next. All three are being seismically reinforced and upgraded to include ADA access, thanks to the Measure 1 bond.

Noll and Tam Architects are to be congratulated for the restoration features they managed, with some community prompting, to squeeze into a no-frills, bare-bones budget. The hideous fluorescent light fixtures are gone, replaced with replicas according to Dickey's designs, as with the handsome new oak front doors. The elevator shaft at the rear and ADA-mandated ramp in the lower-level meeting room are tasteful, and long-overdue plumbing and drainage problems were taken care of at the same time. Time for another bond measure, citizens, for other neglected local treasures? -- Robert Brokl



# OAKLAND HERITAGE ALLIANCE UPDATE

## PATRON MEMBERSHIP (\$250)

G. Pete Encinas  
Earl & Bonnie Hamlin  
John & Tina Monaco-Glynn

## SPONSOR MEMBERSHIP (\$100)

Sally Freedman  
Les & Linda Hausrath  
Arthur Levy  
Stoner Lichty  
Jon Norman  
Helen Rogers  
Sarah (Sally) Shaver  
Myron Zimmerman

## BENEFACTOR MEMBERSHIP (\$50)

Steve Aron  
C. Michael Bradley  
Edward Clausen  
Deborah Cooper  
East Bay Asian Local Development Corp  
Fred Hertz & Randolph Langenbach  
Richard Jenevein  
Harlan Kessel  
Mary Manning / California College  
of Arts and Crafts  
Susanne Manson / Preservation Park  
Mountain View Cemetery Association  
Ortrun Niesar  
Norma Smith  
Howard & Dorothy Stein  
John Sutter  
Joseph Ware & Don Wilkinson  
Janet Zampieri

## DONORS

Nancy Bardach	Betty Marvin
Yvonne Barsballe	John Nages
(BoFA Matching Grant)	Anita Pender
Jerry Bowling &	Victor Rosen
Libby Jacobsohm	Bruce & Martha
Renate Coombs	Smyser
Katherine Evans	Judy Weiss &
Sharon Hayden	Stuart Swiedler
Kathryn Hughes	John Wagers
Bonnie Killip	G.M. Will
Kevin & Meghan Leader	

*In memory of Helen Rogers*

Joanne Rankin

*Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey*  
Annalee Allen

## ■ PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am pleased to be writing my first President's message for the OHA News. There have been a number of changes in the organization at OHA over the last few months, most related in one way or another to a lawsuit that we filed against the City of Oakland regarding the Rubino building at 3277 Lakeshore. The decision to file the first lawsuit in OHA's nineteen-year history came only after lengthy discussions and consideration of differing opinions. It was a difficult decision, but we decided to take this route because of the precedent-setting nature of the City's actions.

In early April, I was elected President of the Board, and I am honored to assume this position. I succeed Steve Lavoie, who recently resigned from the Board. Pamela Magnuson-Peddle has assumed the role of Vice-President. Also stepping down from the Board are Bill Coburn, our President for the last four years, and Betty Marvin, long-time Board member, OHA News Editor, and Planner with the City's Cultural Heritage Survey. Their expertise and skills have been invaluable over the years. We appreciate all the time, effort, and service they have given to OHA and the preservation community, and we wish them all the best.

We are now looking for new board members. A commitment to preservation is the main requirement. If you would like to volunteer, or you know someone you think would be interested, contact Pamela Magnuson-Peddle at (510) 532-8911 or PROSIE3@earthlink.net.

We continue to move forward as an organization. The Summer Walking Tours are being planned right now, and brochures should be going out in early June. Highlights include Churches of San Antonio and Bungalows of Rockridge, as well as old favorites. We are working hard on the third Arts and Crafts House Tour, to take place on September 26, which we are co-sponsoring again this year with the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association. The Revolving Loan Fund Committee is going strong, and we are including neighborhood outreach in all our activities. A website is in the works. We are continuing to work on issues related to the blight ordinance, a law which, though well-intentioned, seems to be leading to the wholesale demolition of historic buildings (150 buildings have been demolished so far, many of them historic). If you'd like to be involved with any of these efforts, please call the office at (510) 763-9218. (And if you volunteered before and were never contacted, please call again.)

On the administrative side of OHA, Administrative Director Shawna Brekke-Read has resigned. Our retired Administrative Director, Helen Lore, has graciously agreed to fill in at the office until we find someone permanent. She will be in the office Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday afternoons.

Finally, I'd like to ask all of you to become more involved. Join a



committee, give us your ideas, be our eyes and ears in your neighborhood. Let us know about development proposals, blighted buildings, or the good news about buildings being restored. Talk your friends and neighbors into joining OHA. Lobby your City Council person on preservation issues. Volunteer your expertise if you have it, and your time and energy if you don't feel you have expertise. Most of all, look around you. Oakland is a beautiful city with beautiful buildings, though sometimes you have to look beyond peeling paint to see that. These buildings are a valuable resource which shouldn't be thrown away in the pursuit of short-term profits, not when they can be restored and re-used for long-term economic gain and a more livable city. Preservation isn't always popular, but it's usually worthwhile. --  
*Jane Powell, President*

#### ■ INTO THE GAP

A good deal of misinformation has been circulating regarding OHA's lawsuit against the City over the proposed demolition of the Rubino building at 3277 Lakeshore. We filed the lawsuit only after a great deal of thought and discussion, and we did so reluctantly, after having exhausted all other avenues of appeal. The Rubino building was the first Potential Designated Historic Property (PDHP) to come through the city since revisions to and strengthening (we thought) of the Historic Preservation Element, and yet this project was given so little review prior to approval for demolition that we realized all our neighborhood commercial districts could be threatened. Indeed, if the City had followed the agreed-upon procedures for PDHPs, including proper notification and opportunity for comment, all of this could have been avoided.

We seriously considered the risks and the possible consequences of a lawsuit. Though we were aware that neighborhood organizations supported demolition, we regret that they apparently received inaccurate information regarding our position and the reasons for our opposition to the demolition decision. On April 19, we met with the same Lakeshore neighbors who picketed our meeting at the YWCA. Though there was misunderstanding and even anger on all sides, we were able to listen to each other and find a common concern for saving Oakland's neighborhood commercial districts. We met again the next week, and continue to work toward a better relationship.

About several common misconceptions. One: our position is not one of opposition to the GAP--we just want the GAP to open in the existing building if possible, or for the building owner to be held to the standard of offering credible evidence to the City and other interested parties as to why that it is not feasible in the case of this PDHP. Two: We are in favor of economic development--Oakland deserves to thrive. But the idea that preservation is a hindrance to economic development is hopelessly outdated. In many cities, people come in droves to shop in districts filled with charming restored buildings. Oakland could be one of those cities, if only the City (including our Mayor) could be made to see historic buildings as an opportunity, not an impediment. Three: Contrary to popular belief, OHA was not involved in the lawsuit over the Montgomery Ward building, whatever its merits.

#### NEW MEMBERS (OCTOBER-MAY)

Rose Barquist	Mary Manning
Diana Bartoe	/CCAC
Judy Belcher	A.L. Mariposa
Edward Bell	Pete May &
Realty	Diana Biondo
Kathleen Bik	Donna Mehrten
David Blackburn	Marsha Matthews
Charles E. Brown	John & Tina
Kathleen Chan	Monaco-Glynn
Cynthia Chin	Kate Nicol
Jason Cohen	Ortrun Niesar
Dorothy Cronin	Julie & Jack
Michael Davis	O'Hara
Steve Engle	Neal Parish
Kevin Flynn	& Carla Koran
Creighton Fong	Lois Politzer
Dan Fontes	DeeAnn Schuttish
Jim Groom &	Deborah Sharp
Katherine Marvin	Josie Sommer
Jerry Harrity	& Tom Wenzel
Sharon Hayden	Louise Stone
Heinold's First	Sandra Strehlou
and Last Chance	Don Strongman
Abby Heydman	Phil Tagami/CCI
Ward Hill	Chad Thompson
Matthew Janiga	& Naomi Hatkin
Stuart Johnson	Corrine & Joe
Keating Housing	Trent
Initiatives	Victoria Ware
Kim Kellogg	Wilda White
William Keys	Susan Wilder
Philip Laing	& Natalie Robb
Mrs. Allan	Shirley Woodfin
MacDonald	J.W. Yager
Ginger Magnussen	Harry Yaglijian
Katherine Mann	Caroline & Gary Yee

*The officers and directors of Oakland Heritage Alliance want to thank all those who have shown their support to OHA and their interest in helping to preserve Oakland's history and heritage through their membership, financial contributions, and volunteer efforts.*



Though some view the Rubino lawsuit as a radical and dangerous gesture, OHA is far from the first preservation organization to file such a suit. In fact, before taking this step we consulted with several local organizations as to their experience with lawsuits, including both the strategic effectiveness of such suits in the battle to preserve historic buildings, and the effect on the organization and its relationship with other groups and the City. While all agreed that filing suit is never an easy course, there was also agreement that it can be an effective tool in the effort to prevent destruction of our collective heritage. It is unfortunate (and ultimately self-defeating) that the City Council, rather than responding to our concerns regarding the PDHP review process, chose to use bullying tactics, threatening important planning tools such as the Preservation Element, the Landmarks Board, and the Cultural Heritage Survey in an attempt to frighten and dissuade us.

To those who say we have to "choose our battles," we can only respond: We have chosen our battle, and our battle is preservation. Many are those who will stand up for the trophy buildings. But who will stand up for our charming neighborhood commercial districts, or our streets of modest Victorians and bungalows, if not for us? These are the very fabric of our city and our neighborhoods, these are what make Oakland special, and we will continue to defend them. -- *Jane Powell and Jeanette Sayre*

#### ■ ANOTHER REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT

A new committee is forming under Oakland Heritage Alliance to set up a Revolving Fund which will make available loans to persons wanting to restore, repair, and rehabilitate their properties. This fund will also enable OHA to purchase properties for the purpose of restoring, rehabbing, and repairing them. OHA will then rent or sell the restored properties and the Fund will grow.

At the present time, the committee consists of board member Xandra Grube (Chair); OHA President Jane Powell, who has her own restoration business; Pat Dedekian, another board member who may agree to be our realty representative; and Madeline Wells, of the Brockhurst neighborhood. We are looking for other committee members. Expertise in tax law, banking, real estate, or restoration would be a plus but is certainly not required. We also hope to have a representative from the City's Code Compliance team. Please call Xandy at (510) 532-3010 if you are interested in being on the committee.

Once the legal entity (either a non-profit or a for-profit corporation under OHA) is formed, ways for members and others to contribute or invest will be outlined and announced in the newsletter. In the meantime, let the

office know of any rundown or inexpensive properties for sale in your neighborhood that could be restored. We are also starting a list of low-income persons who are employed and need housing so that we will be able to fill the properties with renters or purchasers when they are ready. -- *Xandra Grube*

#### ■ FALL ARTS & CRAFTS HOME TOUR SCHEDULED

Our third Arts and Crafts home tour will be held from noon to five on Sunday, September 26. The self-guided tour, co-sponsored by Oakland Heritage Alliance and Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association (BAHA), will feature homes in North Oakland and Berkeley that were built on land formerly part of the historic Amasa D. Colby ranch. This ranch later became the Fairview Park subdivision in Oakland and the Elmwood neighborhood in Berkeley.

As these two neighborhoods are adjacent to one another, tour houses in both communities are an easy walk from one another. Tour participants can park once and walk the entire route. Tickets will be \$30, or \$25 for OHA and BAHA members. The cost includes an illustrated tour catalog and refreshments served in the back yard of one of the homes on the tour.

The homes featured on our 1999 Arts and Crafts tour were built between 1905 and 1920. Some were built by architects, while others are classic "plan book" bungalows, built from designs sold by Sears Roebuck and other mail order companies in the early years of the century. Architectural details that were popular during the era include beamed ceilings, large windows, inglenooks, built-in hutches, and fireplaces with tile hearths and clinker brick chimneys. Some of the houses on the tour will be in original condition, others will be restored, and yet others will have just begun restoration projects.

Local antique dealers and individual collectors will be loaning Arts and Crafts furniture, textiles, and artwork to display inside some of the houses. This tour will provide a unique opportunity to see interiors that are furnished similarly to the way they were in the days when the electric interurban train ran to the new suburbs of Fairview Park and Elmwood. For more information call Anthony Bruce at BAHA, (510) 841-2242. -- *Peggy King*

#### ■ PRESERVATION WEEK

*A presentation made to the Oakland City Council by OHA President Jane Powell on the occasion of Preservation Week: Oakland has a wealth of historic structures which would be the envy of many other cities. We have some of the finest Art Deco buildings to be found anywhere, and our neighborhoods are filled with charming Victorians, Craftsman bungalows, and period revival style houses. Our*

neighborhood commercial districts still retain many of their original brick and tiled storefronts. These buildings give Oakland a unique character, and the Council has had the vision to protect that character by including the Historic Preservation Element in the General Plan, and setting up the Cultural Heritage Survey, which is unique to Oakland.

When people talk about cities, London, Paris, and San Francisco are often held up as examples of desirability. These cities are seen as having charm, a human scale, art and culture, history, and good restaurants (well, except London). As we all know, Oakland has all these things, and better weather, too.

Why should historic buildings be preserved? To give us a sense of history, of place: the style and quality of construction that distinguishes these structures is difficult to replicate today. And to conserve the irreplaceable resources that went into them: even a modest bungalow in this city is framed with old growth Douglas fir. We no longer have the luxury of wasting these resources by sending them to the landfill. Restoration of historic buildings also provides well-paid jobs for local residents, increases the tax base, and has a snowball effect: when one house or building is restored, neighboring property owners are inspired to fix theirs up as well.

Here at the end of this century, we have discovered that progress is a two-edged sword: it gave us e-mail, but it also gave us spam mail. The rise of the Internet has yet to cause the demise of newspapers or books, or even retail. In the same way, there is no need to jettison the past in a rush to embrace the future. The past and the future can peacefully coexist.

#### ■ OHA SUMMER WALKING TOURS

Our Summer Walking Tour series begins this year on Sunday, July 11 at 10 a.m. with a perennial favorite, Mountain View Cemetery with guides Michael Crowe and Barbara Smith. There are 16 tours in all, covering a range of Oakland neighborhoods - Temescal, Rockridge, Golden Gate, OakCenter in West Oakland, Brooklyn/San Antonio, and Jingletown. New tours this year will include the Upper Fruitvale residential area (with a visit to the Peralta Hacienda as a starting point), and "New Era/New Politics," a tour of downtown co-developed with the African American Museum and Library which will feature sites associated with African American contributions to Oakland and the world.

We are always looking for new ideas, new tour leaders, new neighborhood histories, and volunteers who would like to help out. Please give us a call at the OHA office if you are interested in becoming involved in the walking tour program. -- Pamela Magnuson-Peddle

## THE EMERYVILLE MUDFLAT SCULPTURES: 1962 - 1998

Whimsical and bizarre, the Emeryville mudflat sculptures delighted, amazed, and confounded viewers for nearly thirty years. Created out of driftwood and sundry found objects, the ever-changing sculptures stood on the Emeryville shoreline east of Powell Street, visible to many a startled driver on the San Francisco-bound freeway curve. Now a wildlife sanctuary, the area's colorful past is celebrated in an exhibit at the Public Library's Oakland History Room. Co-sponsored by the Emeryville History Society and the Oakland Public Library, the exhibit "Emeryville Mudflat Sculpture: 1962-1998" features over 70 photographs depicting the bewildering variety of sculptures, including views of the sculptors at work.

The exhibit can be seen at the Oakland Public Library's Oakland History Room, 125 14th Street, through June 15. Hours of the History Room are M/Tu/Sat, 10am to 5:30pm; W/Th, noon to 8pm; Fri, noon to 5:30pm; and Sun, 1pm to 5pm. For more info: call (510) 238-3222. -- Oakland Public Library Oakland History Room

(Miguel Buchwald)





## UPDATE ON THE PERALTA HOUSE

The Peralta House in Fruitvale, site of the first non-native settlement in Oakland and nearby cities in 1820, is now entering its final phase of restoration. With \$800,000 in Measure I funds, the non-profit Friends of Peralta Hacienda Historical Park is on its way to restore both the exterior facade and, as much as possible, the interior of this 1870 Victorian home, built to house Antonio Maria Peralta's family after an 1868 earthquake destroyed the family adobes. This is the only Peralta structure left standing in Oakland from an 1820 land grant to Luis Peralta, who eventually divided the 44,000 acre property among his four sons, with Antonio receiving the original hacienda..

Although the house is owned by the City of Oakland, restoration is being managed by Friends of Peralta Hacienda Historical Park, a volunteer-based non-profit organization. The group has a contract with the City to manage the house, much as the city's other historic homes have. Restoration construction is expected to start in June, with a March 2000 completion date. Architects are William Coburn and Kirk Peterson, with Hank Dunlop as special consultant on the interiors. Historians Holly Alonso and Mary-Jo Wainwright have been searching for pictures and records that would help in recreating the house, which is a city, state, and national landmark.

Beyond the restoration of the house itself is the rich history of the Peralta family, the Californios (early Spanish colonists), and the Fruitvale district, which Friends of Peralta will interpret through cultural and historical

programs, exhibits in the house and grounds, and through the work of film makers documenting local history. Friends of Peralta encourages those with old photos and memories, or furnishings that would help reveal the site's history, to contact Holly Alonso at (510) 527-2759.

Friends of Peralta has held meetings and workshops with neighbors, historians, school representatives, and other members of the community, looking for ideas on how to make the house and park an important cultural resource.

As envisioned, Peralta Hacienda Historical park will have four primary components: Peralta House itself; the historic area, containing footprints of the original adobe structures and an outdoor stage; an open space area near Coolidge Avenue and a play area near Peralta Creek; and a community center. The Fruitvale Community Development District Council is awarding Friends of Peralta a grant to explore ideas for this much-needed center.

The board is looking for board and committee members who would like to be part of this exciting celebration of Oakland history. Call Holly Alonso at (510) 527-2759 or Helen Lore at (510) 569-7023 for more information.

A restoration kick-off, "Welcome to the Peralta Hacienda," was held May 23 at Peralta Park. In the spirit of Antonio Peralta and his first wife, Maria Antonia Galindo, who were known for their abundant hospitality and lively celebrations, the public was invited to join in a special afternoon recapturing the history of Fruitvale, Oakland and California. -- *Helen Lore*



Claudia Albano, Chair of the Friends of Peralta Hacienda Historical Park stands on the porch of the Peralta House at 2465 34th Avenue and Paxton, on the occasion of the presentation of a bench and plaque by the Alameda County Historical Society.

## KITCHENS OF DISTINCTION

As noted in the last newsletter, new Board President Jane Powell is our resident expert on Arts and Crafts houses, with a particular interest in period kitchens. Due to the success of her article published in last November's *Old House Journal* (which is still available on the Web at [oldhousejournal.com](http://oldhousejournal.com)), she is now engaged in writing a book on the subject, called *Bungalow Kitchens*, to be published by Gibbs-Smith Publishers and due out next spring. She and photographer Linda Svendsen are looking for homes with original, mostly original, or redone period style kitchens to photograph for the book. Kitchens in bungalows, brownshingles, Colonial Revivals, Romantic Revivals, late Victorians, or vintage apartment buildings are all likely candidates. It doesn't need to be fancy -- kitchens of that era usually weren't. If you have such a kitchen, or know of one (it doesn't even have to be in Oakland -- could be your mother's house in Modesto or your neighbor's house), please contact Jane at (510) 895-9841 or e-mail: [hshedressng@aol.com](mailto:hshedressng@aol.com).

## TOUR OAKLAND & CITY HALL

Spring means walking tours! Free city-sponsored Oakland Walking Tours will continue through October on Wednesdays and Saturdays; the starting time for all tours is promptly at 10 a.m.

*Downtown Historic:* Tribune Tower, the Broadway Building, and early 20th century commercial landmarks. Meet at City Hall entrance, 1 Frank Ogawa Plaza. June 19, July 21, Sept 15, Oct 2 & 27.

*Old Oakland:* A commercial district with restored hotels, galleries, and eateries. Meet in front of Ratto's Grocery, Washington & 9th. Jun 26, Jul 28, Aug 21, Sep 22, Oct 16.

*City Center:* Turn-of-the-century landmarks alongside modern highrises. July 10, Aug 11, Sept 4, Oct 6.

*Uptown to the Lake:* Art Deco emphasis, Paramount Theatre, Fox Theatre, Kaiser Center roof garden, and Lake Merritt. Meet in front of the Paramount, 2025 Broadway. July 14, Aug 14, Sept 8, Oct 9.

*Chinatown:* Fifth largest Chinatown in the U.S. Meet at Pacific Renaissance Plaza Fountain, 9th & Webster. June 30, July 24, Aug 25, Sept 18, Oct 20.

*Jack London Waterfront:* Jack London Museum, a turn-of-the-century produce district, and restored presidential yacht, the USS Potomac. Meet in front of Overland Bar & Grill, 101 Broadway. July 7 & 31, Sept 1 & 25, Oct 30.

*Preservation Park:* Sites include the Fist Unitarian Church, Greene Library, Pardee home, and elegantly restored 19th

## GRAND AVENUE AS YOU'VE NEVER SEEN IT BEFORE: A CD Photo Album

Grand Avenue, a metaphor for every main street, is changing. *The Grand Lake Theatre And The Grand Avenue*, a newly released photo CD featuring photographs by Oakland artist Miron Murcury, offers a complete tour of both the movie palace and the business district, faithfully recording the pedestrian-friendly scale of a neighborhood and its historic movie palace before it is lost to us forever.

The Grand Lake Theatre is showcased with over three hundred photos. All four of the magnificent theatres and the inspired French baroque interior, America's largest outdoor rotary sign, the vaudeville-era stage, and even dressing rooms are presented in vivid detail.

The CD, arranged like a coffee table book with folders instead of chapters, features color photos in a file format compatible with both Macintosh and Windows. *The Grand Lake Theatre And The Grand Avenue* documents every building along Grand Avenue from I-580 to the Piedmont border. The Oakland Rose Garden and Frank Rowicki's mural "The Grand Experience" are also included.

Copies of the CD were presented to the City on May 4, the occasion of Oakland's 147th birthday, accompanied by a special card that had been signed by the many neighbors and businesses who made the CD possible. Your purchase will help further the photographic preservation of history. Signed and numbered first editions sell for \$20, and are available at Walden Pond Books, 3316 Grand Ave. (832-4438) or from the artist. -- *Miron Murcury*

century homes. Meet at park entrance, 13th & MLK Way. July 3, Aug 4 & 28, Sept 29, Oct 23.

*Churches & Temples:* Visit three historic places of worship and learn about their role in the development of Oakland. Meet in front of First Presbyterian Church, Broadway at 27th. June 23, Aug 18, Sep 11, Oct 13.

There are also tours of the magnificently restored City Hall and Frank Ogawa Plaza on the first Tuesday of every month, year round, also at 10am.

For a small fee, groups of 5 or more can arrange for a special tour at a date and time convenient for the group. Call (510) 238-3234 to make a reservation or for further information. -- *Annalee Allen*

# 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 131 landmarks have been designated since the Board was created in 1973. Members of the Board are George Lythcott (chair), Annalee Allen, Janet Benson, Andrew Carpentier, Carolyn Douthat, Una Gilmartin, and Norman Hooks. Secretary is Helaine Kaplan Prentice.*

## DECEMBER

Board reviewed and approved the resolution recommending landmark designation for the **Chapel of the Chimes** at 4499 Piedmont Avenue. Also approved, with conditions, were designs by architect Don Dommer to replace, with a new structure, the existing events pavilion at 3960 Peralta Oaks Court (**Dunsmuir House and Gardens**), an Oakland landmark.

Issues relating to the implementation of the city's Historic Preservation Element were discussed by the Board, with a focus on revised legislation for the demolition ordinance with regard to CEQA. Additional concern was raised about the discrepancy between existing State legislation and the proposed local code in the definition of a historic resource. At the request of the Planning Director, comment on the draft Historic Preservation Incentives and Regulations was put over to a future date.

A resolution presented by Drelsbach Enterprises, Inc., owner, to nominate 299 3rd Street (**American Bag Company Building**) as an Oakland landmark was adopted by the Board. Notice of Intent to nominate 305 Vernon Street (**McKee House**) as an Oakland landmark was filed by Lowell Moorecroft, tenant. Board continued the hearing on this proposal until the regular February hearing. Board discussed a Request For Proposal for re-use of 1707 Wood Street (**Southern Pacific Train Station**), an Oakland landmark and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

George Lythcott reported on an action by the State Historic Resources Commission on November 13, 1998, regarding National Register nomination of **Montgomery**

**Ward**, and also on the Board's letter and associated meetings on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for **San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge**. Allen reported on a community meeting on November 14, 1998, at which options for structural and accessibility improvements to **Studio One** were discussed. Board noted the screening, on December 9, 1998, of "Lifeline," a documentary on the **Oakland Naval Supply Center**, produced by the Port of Oakland. A Board Ad Hoc Subcommittee, Una Gilmartin, Janet Benson, and Norman Hooks, reported on a meeting with City staff on November 12, 1998, regarding Vacant/Blighted Buildings.

## JANUARY

Board visited the **Ninth Avenue Terminal**, being nominated for landmark status, in a tour hosted by the Port of Oakland.

At the regular meeting, Interim Planning Director Leslie Gould reported that work was in progress on revisions to the Zoning Regulations to implement the Preservation Element. Board asked about the Environmental Review regulations. Gould also reported on upcoming hearings on the **Estuary Policy Plan**: language on the Ninth Avenue Terminal had been revised. She reported on the **Lakeshore Gap** project and OHA's appeal to the City Council. Board minutes state "She has issued a new directive to staff to consult with the Survey and OHA on cases involving PDHPs (Potentially Designated Historic Properties)." Douthat reiterated the need for staff training.

In Open Forum, Karl Diaz-Hoffman presented a senior housing proposal for the landmark **Safeway complex** at 57th Avenue and International Boulevard (Reed & Corlett, architects, 1928). Betty Marvin commented on demolition of the **Pussycat Theater** at Claremont and Telegraph and asked for better provision for "common sense documentation" of unexpected historic fabric that surfaces during demolition or remodeling.

Board presented a resolution of appreciation to Celia Rivero for 13 years of outstanding administrative support.

Board reviewed and approved an addition for accessible restrooms at the **Paramount Theatre**.

Bill Coburn and Kirk Peterson presented plans for work at the **Peralta Hacienda**. Lengthy discussion focused on the design for a ramp and the degree of conjecture involved in the plans for a back porch and roof cresting.

Board commented on the draft EIR for the Port's Berth 55-58 project, which involves demolition of the **North Training Wall** (1874). They were particularly concerned about the adequacy of mitigations -- documentation and reconstruction of a 150' section of wall in the proposed Vision 2000 Park. They also discussed the landscape



feature to reflect the size and shape of the warehouses at the Naval Supply Center.

Antoinette Holloway of Code Compliance reported on the



A simulation of the view facing south as it would look after completion of the proposed Lake Merritt Apartments at 17th and Lakeside Drive. The historic Lake Merritt Hotel is shown on the right. (Draft Environmental Impact Report)

**Calou House and Fruitvale Hotel** at the Board's request. Board asked about liens and penalties that could make it too costly to rehabilitate the buildings.

Norman Hooks reported on continuing meetings of the Residential Design Review Working Group; Board wanted to be sure PDHPs got proper consideration.

In answer to a Board question, Celia McCarthy of the Port said proposals to move the **Flag Officers' Houses** from the Naval Supply Center appeared to have fallen through.

Annalee Allen asked about the status of the **African American Museum and Library at Oakland** once seismic work at the **Golden Gate Library** begins.

## FEBRUARY

Leslie Gould reported on the City Council's rejection of OHA's appeal of the **Gap Project**: they said it was necessary to send a message that "Oakland is open for business." Gould said design review guidelines for residential PDHPs would be developed as part of the general Residential Design Review work going on; "there is no budget yet to develop the design guidelines for commercial PDHPs." Gould told Board they would be receiving draft EIRs for two projects in potential historic districts: City Lofts in the **Waterfront Warehouse District**

and the **apartments at 17th Street and Lakeside Drive** in the Lake Merritt District.

In Open Forum, Leal Charonnat proposed that serious consideration be given to Frank Lloyd Wright's Butterfly Bridge for the **Bay Bridge East Span**: he has a web site, [www.thewrightbridge.com](http://www.thewrightbridge.com). Shawna Brekke-Read announced OHA's **Fox Theater** committee (see page 4) and discussed the need for revising regulations to make it easy to move into an old building, especially parking requirements.

Board discussed at length an application for Design Review by C & H Development and the RiteAid Corporation to rehabilitate the historic automobile showroom, demolish the automotive repair shop, and build a 9500 square foot addition at 216 Bay Place/2500-42 Harrison Street (**Don Lee Cadillac Building; Consolidated Piedmont Cable Co. Building**), a historic building rated B+ and nominated for landmark designation in 1996 (see Briefing). Board and local community members voiced many

concerns: use of RiteAid's suburban prototype square plan in an urban area; safety issues, including lack of pedestrian access; retention of existing historic features; impact on National Register eligibility. Board approved the appointment of an ad hoc subcommittee to review the final list of recommended design revisions and establish priorities on behalf of the full Board. Board deferred landmark nomination to the March meeting.

Bill Coburn presented historic models for porch and kitchen design at **Peralta Hacienda**. Andrew Carpentier advised that the addition should reflect differentiation between historic and new if there is not adequate evidence for an exact reproduction. Board approved the three-bay porch in concept, with the architect continuing to work with staff.

Board adopted the preliminary rating sheet to nominate 305 Vernon Street (**McKee House**) as an Oakland landmark and directed the applicant, Lowell Moorecroft, to prepare the full nomination form.

Carolyn Douthat, in discussion on draft amendments to the Oakland Zoning Code pertaining to landmark designation procedures, questioned separating Heritage Properties, which are DHPs, from the Landmarks and Preservation Districts, also noting that incentives pertaining



to landmark designation procedures should be in the Zoning Code. She observed that there is currently no procedures section for Heritage properties. Leslie Gould will provide information on these issues.

In response to a request from Temescal historian Jeff Norman for a letter supporting a grant application to chronicle the history of the **Claremont Theater**, formerly located at 5110-14 Telegraph Avenue (demolished December 1998), Board approved a letter of support.

Board and Secretary's reports covered meetings relating to the **San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge** with CalTrans on Feb. 2 and City Council Public Works Committee, also on Feb. 2, the **Residential Design Review Working Group** meeting on Jan. 25, Notice of Intent to nominate 101 Tenth Street (**Ninth Avenue Transit Shed**), rescheduled to March Landmarks Board meeting; Planning Commission action recommending landmark nominations of **Chapel of the Chimes** and the **American Bag Company Building** to the City Council; potential landmark nomination of 525 Bellevue Avenue (**Women's Athletic Club**), as a contributor to the S-7 Bellevue-Staten Apartment District Preservation Zone.

### MARCH

Leslie Gould reported that a letter dated February 18, 1999, from OHA to the Board, requesting that 3277 Lakeshore Avenue (the **GAP Project**) be placed on the Preservation Study List, was received by staff several days



The Rubino Building at 3277 Lakeshore Avenue, proposed site for the GAP Project and source of OHA lawsuit.

after this item was before the City Council (February 23 and March 2). Gould consulted with the City Attorney, who reviewed the resolution adopted by Council. As the



A photo simulation showing the Third Street facade, as seen from the northwest, of the City Lofts / Paper Company Lofts proposed for 300 Harrison Street and 283 Fourth Street. (Draft Environmental Impact Report)

subsequent letter from the Zoning Administrator to OHA stated, "placement of a property on the Study List to stay demolition would be contrary to Council's unanimous final action in the matter."

Annalee Allen stated that she had many questions, and requested that the City Attorney be present to respond. Other Board members expressed concerns about the process for C-rated buildings and about the fact that the project did not come before the Board for recommendation or advice. Gould will bring back a report for the April Board meeting and will ask the City Attorney to attend. Asked about design review status of the Lakeshore building, Gould replied "the demolition design review for the replacement structure was approved by the Planning Commission; the appeal of the Commission's decision was denied by Council."

In Open Forum, Board presented a Resolution of Appreciation to **Dan Fontes, muralist**, for celebrating Oakland's landmarks on inaugural banners for Mayor Jerry Brown. Board continued consideration of the project proposal and landmark nomination of 216-30 Bay Place / 2500-42 Harrison Street (**Don Lee Cadillac Building; Consolidated Piedmont Cable Company Building**). Gould reported that the Planning Commission will consider both the landmark nomination and the project on April 7, and that applicant is working to revise the floor plan in response to Board comments. Gregory Lythcott observed that, since the applicant is considering modifications, the revised design should come back for Board review. The Board approved a motion to hold a special meeting on March 29, before the Planning Commission's April 7 meeting, to review project revisions and to make a recommendation to the Planning Commission on the



landmark nomination, including changes, if any, to the eligibility rating sheet.

Notice of Intent was submitted by Friends of Ninth Avenue Terminal to nominate 101 Tenth Avenue (**Ninth Avenue Transit Shed**) as an Oakland Landmark. Board heard comments from Richard Sinkoff Port of Oakland; Robin Bartoo, area resident, Dan Fontes, Oakland muralist; Sandra Threlfall, Oakland resident; Slobodan "Dan" Paich, Artship and International Peace University; Leal Charonnat, Oakland architect and applicant; and Hemid Malek-Madani, Alameda County Social Services. Board voted to accept the preliminary rating sheet and to ask the applicant to prepare the full landmark nomination.

Board heard comments on the Draft EIR for **City Lofts/Paper Company Lofts Project** at 300 Harrison Street and 283 Fourth Street (**Allied Paper Company**) from Joyce Roy, Oakland architect; Marianne Dreisbach, owner, American Bag Building and member, Jack London Neighborhood Association (JLNA); and Wilda White, JLNA, all of whom questioned the height of the proposed building and its impact on the area's National Register District eligibility. Dreisbach noted that the project is 2½ times as tall as the American Bag Building, and proposed that mitigations addressing the height and setbacks be explored. Gilmartin, who shared many concerns of the speakers, was also disturbed by the minimal open space compared to the required 20,000 square feet. Douthat found the DEIR's cumulative impact discussion incomplete: there are no photo simulations showing whether the project fits in with existing buildings, and the impact on small buildings is not stated. Lythcott asked staff to determine what modifications, irrespective of economics, could preserve District eligibility.



Top: Chapel of the Chimes (4499 Piedmont Avenue ) has been designated an Oakland landmark. Center: The Women's Athletic Club (525 Bellevue) is being considered for landmark nomination. Bottom: The American Bag Company Bldg. (299 3rd St.), across Third Street from the proposed City Lofts / Paper Company Lofts, has been designated an Oakland landmark. (Photos: Jeanette Sayre)



Board critiqued the DEIR for the **Lake Merritt Apartments Project** at Lakeside Drive and 17th Street, noting that, while the architectural quality of the Lake Merritt Historic District is described, the architectural quality of the new building is not. The project was also described by Board Members as too large, out of scale, and "quite uninspired for the site." Prentice suggested the Board include comments on the failure to discuss building material for the facade in any detail, and the impact of the base of the building on the street, especially for pedestrians.

Phil Tagami, developer, gave a status report on the **Rotunda Building** (historic name **Kahn's Department Store**) at 1501-39 Broadway / 1500 San Pablo Avenue, **Kahn's Alley** and **Latham Square**, reporting that Kahn's Alley entrance is the only significant change on the exterior, and that his project is also taking responsibility for Latham Square.

#### APRIL

Leslie Gould, Interim Planning Director, reported that the Planning Commission, at their April 7 meeting, held a public hearing on the **Lakeshore Drive Apartments**, and the Final EIR for the project will be considered at a subsequent hearing in May.

A high quality design for replacement contributed to community support for demolition of a C-rated building at 5330 College Avenue, near Lake Merritt.

Lynn Warner, of Strategic Planning, reported that there will be 46 units of live-work space plus parking in the old **Safeway Building** in the Jack London neighborhood, with 4500 square feet of retail space on the first floor -- a 9000 square foot addition will add an additional floor. The property (rated B+) is in the **Waterfront Warehouse District**.

Mark Wald, representing the City Attorney's Office, advised the Board that the lawsuit filed by OHA on the **Gap Project** should not be discussed in open session, as it will go to Council the following Tuesday in a duly noticed closed session.

In Open Forum, Pamela Magnusson-Peddle, representing

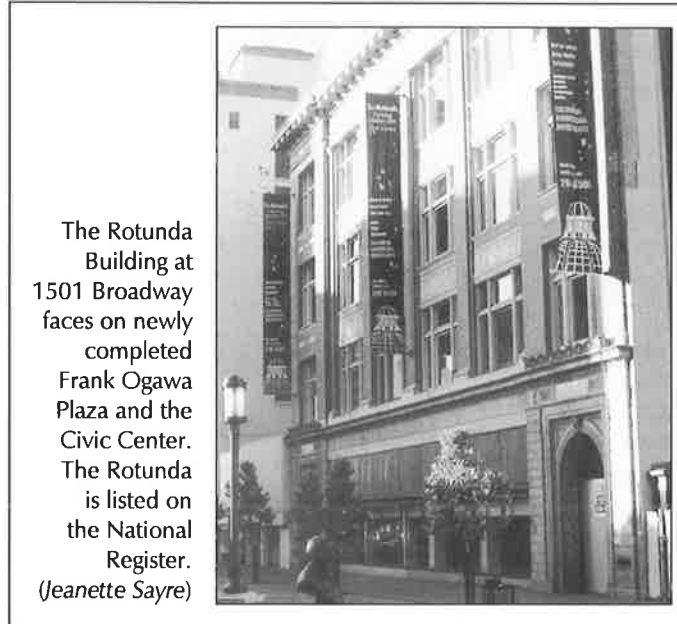
OHA, reported that she is concerned about funding for the **Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey**. Also, the **African American Museum and Library** is currently without a home because **Golden Gate Library** is closed for seismic retrofitting, and construction has not yet begun at **Charles Greene Library** (their future home). She is seeking ideas for temporary quarters.

Betty Marvin, representing CEDA and the Cultural Heritage Survey, suggested that a regularly scheduled update be listed on the Board's agenda. She announced that the Certified Local Government grant application is due June 1; the maximum grant is \$15,000 with City match; this year's bonus point will be awarded for archaeology, and she is seeking the Board's input on the

application. Lythcott and Allen formed an ad hoc committee to work with Marvin on ideas.

Celia McCarthy, representing the Port of Oakland, explained mitigations they are pursuing at the Vision 2000 park site for the demolition of both FISCO (Fleet Industrial Supply Center Oakland) and the **North Training Wall** along the Estuary. The Port is seeking a landscape element to communicate the scale of a 190,000 square foot warehouse (Building 122) slated for removal, and an application will be submitted to the State to designate State Historic Points of Interest on the site; a small part of the Training Wall will be replicated with interpretive signage for these elements. Included in the plan is reconstruction of two 150' long segments of the Training Wall as a waterfront feature with the cross-section of the wall wider than the original in order to allow pedestrians to walk on top behind guard rails. Board discussion centered on designation of the rail along the reconstructed wall and overlapping of the footprint of the original building, which winds directly through the middle of a parking lot. Allen suggested a kiosk with brochures. The Board voted to find the mitigation proposals in accord with the mitigation agreement between the Port and the Board.

Gary Knecht, representing CEDA Strategic Planning, summarized a written report on the Historic Preservation Element Implementation Action and Mitigation Monitoring



The Rotunda Building at 1501 Broadway faces on newly completed Frank Ogawa Plaza and the Civic Center. The Rotunda is listed on the National Register. (Jeanette Sayre)



Program. Douthat observed that references to C-rated buildings implied they are throwaway buildings even though they may have neighborhood significance.

Phil Tagami, developer, gave a presentation on a preliminary design concept for **Kahn's Alley** and the south wall of the **Rotunda** (1501-39 Broadway / 1500 San Pablo Avenue), a historic URM (unreinforced masonry building) listed on the National Register. Tagami plans to rededicate the building with the original historic plaque. He is working with CEDA on a lighting plan for the whole Historic District. Board cited problems with vandalism, the use of black granite, the need for more information about retail signage, and door and window systems for the south wall. Tagami offered to work with staff and bring Board comments to the design team (see May).

Prentice asked for input on the Draft Landmarks Board 1998 Report. She plans to add a statement in the final section about Board visibility, recognizing Allen's weekly column in the *Sunday Oakland Tribune*. Hooks said Allen should also be recognized for her presentation to Oakland business groups at Swan's Market.

Prentice announced that the City Council has designated the **American Bag Company Building** (299 3rd Street) and the **Chapel of the Chimes** (4499 Piedmont Avenue) as Oakland landmarks.

## MAY

Interim Planning Director Leslie Gould reported that, since the Final EIR is not complete, there is no final official word on the designation of the **Don Lee Cadillac Building**; the landmark nomination should move forward in June. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the **Southern Pacific Train Station** has expired.

Clark Gertner, CEDA, provided a status report on the **Fruitvale Hotel** (3221 San Leandro Street) on the Preservation Study List. The building is not protected from the weather; the City placed boards over windows and secured the roof, but work is not complete. Carpentier questioned the fact that permission must be granted to repair a building but not to demolish it.

In Open Forum, Jane Powell, representing OHA, gave an account of the lengthy and cumbersome process required for obtaining information about PDHP-2s.

Allen Dreyfus, architect, presented updated plans for seismic upgrade and redesign of the south wall at the **Rotunda Building / Kahn's Department Store** at 1501-39 Broadway / 1500 San Pablo Avenue. Board voted to accept the eligibility rating sheet. The design of the south wall has been revised: materials are to match the new storefront materials; details of lighting and signage are to be given to the Board Secretary for approval; the cast iron storefront

on the corner is to be restored; paving pattern will be kept as simple as possible as there are no photos available; and design will be reviewed by the State.

Betty Marvin, head of Oakland's Cultural Heritage Survey, reported that the Certified Local Government 1998 Annual Report has been prepared. The Heritage Survey is now twenty years old, and the Downtown Historic District designation is one of its proudest achievements. Marvin asked Board Members to contact her about projects for the coming year: **Oak Center neighborhood** was suggested; Carpentier observed that **Picardy Drive** has been surveyed collectively rather than individually; **Uptown District** was also suggested for consideration.

A member of **Friends of Studio One** (365 45th Street) reported that their task force has concluded its work. The Friends voted that the City go forward with renovation and asked staff to research some options, such as National Register application, application for tax credits, sale and lease-back option. Allen asked if landmark designation would be helpful. It was decided that fundraising should be a Citywide program.

Carpentier and Gilmartin reported on a request by the owner of the **Grand Lake Theater** (3200 Grand Avenue) to paint marquees with historic colors. They are repainting using primary colors and white, orange will be added.

Board voted to recommend nomination of the **American Bag Company Building** (299 3rd Street) for placement on the National Register following a previous action by the State Historic Resources Commission on April 3, 1999.

Board Secretary reported that Dan Peterson, preservation architect, has design plans for an elevator at the **Melrose Library** (4805 Foothill Boulevard), an Oakland landmark and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Secretary and North Oakland Voters Alliance (NOVA) shared concerns about signage at **Martin Luther King Jr. Plaza**; those concerns have now been resolved. The ginkgo tree in the courtyard will be kept for the present. -- *Kathy Walsh (a special thanks to Kathy Olson for providing meeting notes)*

A ginkgo saved.





## OHA CALENDAR

The OHA Calendar lists events, activities, and meetings related to history and preservation that may be of interest to our members. To submit items contact OHA at (510) 763-9218, or send information to oaklandheritage@california.com, to the attention of the newsletter editor.

### CURRENT EXHIBITS

**"100 Years of Artists in Berkeley"**  
Berkeley Historical Society, 1931 Center Street, Berkeley, Th/F/Sat 1-4. For more info call (510) 848-0181.

**"Emeryville Mudflat Sculpture: 1962-1998,"** History Room, Oakland Public Library, 125 14th Street, thu June 15, M/Tu/Sat, 10-5:30; W/Th, noon-8; Fri, noon-5:30; Sun, 1-5, (510) 238-3222.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

**June 16, 7pm, Japanese Style Gardens of the Pacific West Coast**, slide show by art historian Kendall Brown. Includes gardens in Golden Gate Park, San Mateo, and Hayward, Builders Booksource, 1817 Fourth Street, Berkeley, (510) 845-6874.

**June 23, 7pm, The Not So Big House**, slide show and talk by architect Sarah Susanka on small houses, very pertinent to Bay Area lots. Builders Booksource, 1817 Fourth Street, Berkeley, (510) 845-6874.

**June 24, 7:30pm, Books of the Century Club**, exploring Oakland's past through the century's finest writers, every last Thurs, thru Oct, co-sponsored by OHA and Barnes & Noble. Please call ahead to confirm. Barnes & Noble, Jack London Square, Oakland, 272-9237 (ask for Paris).

**July 1, 7pm, Code Check Electrical**, Oakland building inspector Redwood (Woody) Kardon on the quandaries of the electrical code. Kardon also owns and maintains www.codecheck.com, a web site devoted to the Code Check manuals. Builders Booksource, 1817 Fourth Street, Berkeley, (510) 845-6874.

**July 8, 7pm, Albert Frey Houses 1 + 2**, a slide show and talk by Los Angeles author Jennifer Golub on her recent book about Albert Frey's two Palm Spring houses. Builders Booksource, 1817 Fourth Street, Berkeley, (510) 845-6874.

**July 29, 7:30pm, Books of the Century Club**, exploring Oakland's past through the century's finest writers, every last Thurs, thru Oct, co-sponsored by OHA and Barnes & Noble. Please call ahead to confirm. Barnes & Noble, Jack London Square, (510) 272-9237 (ask for Paris).

**August 10-15, Arts and Crafts Week**, a Bay Area-wide event featuring lectures, walking tours, study sessions, and exhibits. Info at: theSimpleHome.com or call (707) 865-1576.

**August 14&15, Arts and Crafts Sale and Show**, Sat. 10-6; Sun. 11-5, Concourse Exhibition Center, 8th and Brannan, San Francisco. Call (707) 865-1576.

**August 26, 7:30pm, Books of the Century Club**, exploring Oakland's past through the century's finest writers, every last Thurs, thru Oct, co-sponsored by OHA and Barnes&Noble. Call ahead to confirm. Barnes & Noble, Jack London Square, Oakland, (510) 272-9237 (ask for Paris).

**September 12, 2pm-sunset, A Gatsby Summer Afternoon**, a celebration of the Jazz Era co-sponsored by Dunsmuir House and the Art Deco Society of California. Pack a picnic, help recreate a summer afternoon circa 1925 by dressing in period clothing. Vintage cars and live jazz. Dunsmuir House, 2960 Peralta Oaks Court, Oakland, (510) 615-5555.

**September 12, 11am-5pm, Homes of Distinction House Tour**, sponsored by the Alameda Museum and the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society, call (510) 986-9232.

**Sept. 23, 7:30pm, Books of the Century Club**, explore Oakland's past through the century's finest writers, every last Thurs, thru Oct, sponsored by OHA and Barnes&Noble. Call ahead to confirm. Barnes & Noble, Jack London Square, Oakland, 272-9237 (ask for Paris).

**Fall 1999, tba, Douglas Keister** on his new book *Outside the Bungalow* Builders Booksource, 1817 Fourth Street, Berkeley, (510) 845-6874.

### TOURS & EXHIBITS

**Oakland Tours**, rotating series of free public walking tours, Wed/Sat, 10am, May thru Oct; Tours Hotline, (510) 238-3234. Also school & special tours.

**City Hall & Civic Center**, walking tours, 1st Tues, 10am, City Hall main entrance.

**African American Museum & Library at Oakland**, currently located at Oakland Main Library, for info call (510) 597-5053.

**Cohen-Bray House**, an 1884 Stick Eastlake with original interiors, 1440 29th Avenue, 4th Sunday, 2pm and by appt., \$5; Victorian Preservation Center of Oakland, (510) 532-0704.

**Camron-Stanford House**, an 1876 Italianate house museum on Lake Merritt, Wed 11-4, Sun 1-5, \$4/\$2 (free first Sun), 1418 Lakeside Drive, (510) 836-1976.

**Dunsmuir House & Gardens**, Colonial Revival mansion, April-Sept., 1st & 3rd Sun, 1 & 2pm, Wed, 11 & noon; \$5/\$4; grounds open Tues-Fri, 10-4, free, 2960 Peralta Oaks Court, Oakland, 615-5555.

**Mountain View Cemetery**, free docent tours, 2nd Sat, 10am, 5000 Piedmont Avenue, Oakland, (510) 658-2588.

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

**Pardee Home Museum**, an 1868 Italianate villa, Fri/Sat, noon, reservations recommended; schools and private groups (6 or more) by reservation. \$4 / \$3, 672 11th Street, Oakland, (510) 444-2187.

### MEETINGS OF INTEREST

**OHA Board of Directors**, usually first Monday of the month, 7pm.; for agenda and location, (510) 763-9218.

**OHA Preservation Action Committee**, monthly; for agenda, time and location, call (510) 763-9218.

**Fox Committee**, 1st and 3rd Thurs, 5:30-7pm, Camron-Stanford House, 1418 Lakeside Drive, Oakland. For more information, call (510) 763-9218.

**Neighborhoods, Schools, and Program Committees**: for info call (510) 763-9218.

**Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board**, 2nd Mon, 4-8pm (Open Forum, 4pm), City Hall, Hearing Rm 1. Call (510) 238-3941 for agenda.

**City Planning Commission**, alternate Wednesdays, time varies, City Hall. Call (510) 238-3941 for agenda.

**City Council**, every Tues 7:30pm, City Hall, Council Chambers. Call (510) 238-3941 for information.

# OAKLAND HERITAGE ALLIANCE

P.O. Box 12425 ♦ Oakland CA 94604 ♦ (510) 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.

*Donor Opportunity!*  
*Did you know you can designate Oakland Heritage Alliance as the recipient of your United Way contribution? Just write it in!*

## OFFICERS 1998-99

*President*, Jane Powell  
*Vice-President*, Pamela Magnuson-Peddle  
*Secretary*, Mary MacDonald  
*Treasurer*, Pat Dedekian

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Robert Brokl (1998-2000)	655-3841
Pat Dedekian (1998-2000)	420-1610
Xandra Grube (1997-1999)	532-3010
Willie Keyes (1998-2000)	601-0928
Mary MacDonald (1998-2000)	652-2696
Pamela Magnuson-Peddle (1998-2000)	532-8911
Jane Powell (1997-1999)	895-9841
Joyce Roy (1998-2000)	655-7508
Don Tyler (1997-1999)	530-6840

## OHA NEWS

CONTRIBUTORS: Annalee Allen, Robert Brokl, Pat Dedekian, Jennifer Dowling, Xandra Grube, Peggy King, Gaye Lenahan, Helen Lore, Pamela Magnuson-Peddle, Philip Meads, Jr., Miron Murcury, Kathy Olson, Jane Powell, William Sturm, Kathy Walsh

EDITOR/PRODUCTION: Jeanette Sayre

OHA NEWS welcomes contributions -- research projects large or small, historic photos, and reports on preservation issues or events. Submissions on disk should be in Wordperfect or Word for PC. Submissions by e-mail may be sent to oaklandheritage@california.com.

© 1999, Oakland Heritage Alliance

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.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Membership: ( ) New ( ) Renewal  
 ( ) \$15 Limited Income  
 ( ) \$25 Individual  
 ( ) \$35 Family  
 ( ) \$50 Organization/Benefactor  
 ( ) \$100 Sponsor  
 ( ) \$250 Patron  
 ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Additional contribution

I would like to help with: ( ) Programs ( ) OHA News  
 ( ) Development/Fundraising ( ) Membership ( ) Preservation Action  
 ( ) Tours ( ) Schools ( ) Neighborhoods ( ) Other? \_\_\_\_\_  
 I call my neighborhood \_\_\_\_\_

Oakland Heritage Alliance ■ PO Box 12425, Oakland 94604 ■ (510) 763-9218 ■ oaklandheritage@california.com



## OAKLAND HISTORY NOTES

### W.N. Jenkins' Jewelry Store

When Mr. W.N. Jenkins first began his business on the east side of Broadway between 12th and 13th Streets in 1899, the city's downtown boasted twenty-eight jewelry stores. Arriving in Oakland in 1899 from Pennsylvania, Mr. Jenkins worked in a number of jewelry stores before establishing his own enterprise. He prospered, and in 1900 he moved his business to the west side of Broadway near 12th Street. In 1909 he opened a branch store on Broadway near 13th Street, and in 1915 the jeweler consolidated his two outlets, inaugurating a resplendent new store on the northwest corner of 13th and Washington Streets.

His various moves reflected the general northward shift of retail business along Washington and Broadway. Noted the *Observer* in 1915, "The shopping district is gradually but surely wending its way north of Twelfth Street. The latest of the local merchants to take cognizance of this shifting of the retail center is W.N. Jenkins, who has just moved into his new store at Washington and 13th Streets. His new establishment has seventy-eight feet of show windows finished in mahogany with a base of Alaskan marble - a fitting place for his display of precious stones, of which he is constantly receiving new shipments of the latest designs."

In 1925 Mr. Jenkins made a final move to the new Alameda County Title Insurance building at the northeast corner of Franklin and 14th

Streets. Completed in 1924, the seven-story structure was designed by Charles W. McCall, prolific architect of many of the City's commercial buildings. Mr. Jenkins could well boast that his new store "with its very fine stock, beautifully displayed, is one of the show places of Oakland, and is classed with some of the very finest jewelry stores on the Pacific Coast."

After the jeweler's demise in 1937, his business remained in the building until 1940, after which a succession of jewelry stores occupied the space: Farber, Herbert's, and Hudson jewelers. Today a copying machine supply shop occupies the former site of W.N. Jenkins, jeweler par excellence to generations of Oaklanders. - *William W. Sturm*

(Oakland History Room, Public Library)



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

Address Correction Requested



Nonprofit Organization  
 U.S. POSTAGE  
 P A I D  
 Oakland, California  
 Permit No. 31