

PRESERVATION PARK: City Project Makes Progress

At press time, the City was in the process of negotiating a contract to prepare a master plan for the Preservation Park project. The City-selected design team, headed by an as-yet-unnamed landscape arch-

itecture firm, will prepare landscape design and street improvement proposals as well as a subdivision site plan. If all plans are approved, approximately \$1 million in public improvements could be underway by the end of the year, and a proposal first made by the Landmark's Preservation Advisory Board six years ago will be much closer to becoming a reality.



House at 682-13th Street is on its original site, and is included in the City's Preservation Park project area. The First Unitarian Church (left, rear) is also part of the soon-to-be-developed Preservation Park.

Preservation Park is the three blocks immediately east of the Grove-Shafter Freeway, between 11th and 14th Streets. Half of the south block (between 11th and 12th Streets) is occupied by the Governor George C. Pardee House (1868) and its fine landscaped grounds. The middle block has been cleared and is currently the site of seven moved-on Victorian houses set on temporary foundations. The north block (between 13th and 14th Streets) contains seven

buildings on their original sites including the First Unitarian Church (1890, Walter J. Mathews), the Charles S. Greene Library (1902, Bliss & Faville), and five late 19th century houses. Except for the Pardee House and the First Unitarian Church, all of the properties in Preservation Park are City-owned. This three block area is the western part of the Redevelopment Agency's City Center Project, which covers a rectangular area bounded by the Grove-Shafter Freeway, Broadway, and 11th and 14th Streets.

From 1969 to 1979, the City's Central District Urban Renewal Plan (including the City Center Project) designated this three-block area as the "Grove/Castro Access Area". The plan called for the site to accommodate two elevated ramps connecting the freeway with a massive 3,000 car garage to be located between Grove and Jefferson Streets. The plan also required that the area be devoted to open space, such as parks and playgrounds. While permitting the retention of the Pardee House, the First Unitarian Church, and the Greene Library, these requirements virtually assured the demolition of all other building on the site.

In August, 1976 the Landmarks Preserva-▶
Continued on page 7

BRIEFING...

● In a widely publicized action, the Oakland City Council has initiated a complicated sale/lease-back financial plan to rehabilitate the OAKLAND AUDITORIUM. The plan involves selling the Oakland Museum to private investors for \$22 million, using part of the proceeds as collateral for up to \$13 million in revenue bonds to rehabilitate the Auditorium.▶

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OHA CALENDAR

Oakland Heritage Alliance 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.

OFFICERS 1981-82

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OHA was incorporated in 1980 as a California non-profit corporation. Membership dues and contributions are tax deductible.

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 Design: Blair Prentice; Production: Gary Knecht;
 Contributors: Gary Knecht, Bill Sturm, Charles B. Oakland, Dean Yabuki, Pam Morton, Sheila McCune.

The OHA Calendar lists events, meetings, and activities related to history and preservation that may be of interest to OHA members. To submit items for listing, contact Dean M. Yabuki, 842 Grosvenor Place, Oakland, California 94610, (415) 893-1278. The deadline for the March-April calendar is Friday, February 5.

OHA is looking for a person to take over the preparation of the calendar. Those interested, please contact Dean Yabuki.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

- Fri 29 Jan Exhibit ends.
Key Systems. Oakland History Room Main Library, 125-14th Street, Oakland. Contact History Room (415) 273-3222. Closed Sat., Sun. & Mon.
- Tues 2 Feb or Sat 6 Feb
Camron-Stanford Guide Training. 12 Week training course begins. Two alternative classes. Vista College credit available. Camron-Stanford House, 1418 Lakeside Dr. at 14th Street, Oakland. Contact Pam Morton (415) 836-1976. (see related article)
- Thurs 4 Feb-June 12:30-2:30 pm
Oakland History Class. Tom Wolf, Oakland Historian. Laney College Class. Lakeview Branch Library, 550 El Embarcadero, Oakland. Registration at first class meeting. Free. Contact Laney College (415) 834-5740.
- Thurs 4 Feb-10 June 7-10 pm
The Thirsty State: California Water Issues, Past, Present and Future. Chuck Wollenberg Historian, Vista College class, St. John's Presbyterian Church, 2727 College Ave., Berkeley. Registration at first class meeting. Free. Contact Vista College (415) 841-8431.
- Mon 8 Feb 7:30-9:30 pm
An Overview: Problems, Politics, and Possibilities. Pat Cashman, City Center Project Director, OEDE. OHA spring monthly program, "Preservation Projects in Downtown Oakland." St. Paul's Recreation Center Auditorium, 116 Montecito Ave., Oakland. \$1.00/OHA Members, \$2.00/general public. Refreshments served. Contact Gary Knecht, Program Chairman (415) 865-6382.
- Tues 9 Feb 7:45 pm
Victorian Monstrosities. Gray Brechin, Architectural Historian. Heritage Monthly Program. Haas-Lilienthal House Ballroom, 2001 Franklin Street, San Francisco. Free/Heritage member. \$2.00/other. Contact Heritage (415) 441-3000.
- Mon 15 Feb
President's Day Holiday.
- Mon 15 Feb - Tues 16 Feb
Preservation Tax Incentive Workshop. National Trust and National Park Service, are among the co-sponsors. OHA is a local cooperating organization. TBA \$75/staff or board mem-

bers of nonprofit organizations. \$100/Trust member (not staff or boardmembers). Preregistration required. \$25/student. \$150/other. Contact Joe Towner, National Park Service (415) 556-7741 (see related article).

Wed 17 Feb - 24 Feb 7-10 pm Sat 27 Feb 9-4 pm
Fifty Golden Years: San Francisco Before the Earthquake. Sister Ethel Mary Tinneman, Historian, Holy Names College class. Brennan 42, Holy Names College includes Sat. tour. Pre-registration required. \$55.00. Contact Holy Names.

Late Feb

BAHA Rehabilitation and Restoration Lecture Series. Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association 3 Lectures *TBA*. Contact BAHA (415) 845-6591.

Mon 8 March 7:30-9:30 pm

Victorian Row: Past, Present and Future of Old Oakland. Storek & Storek, Architects. *OHA* Spring Monthly program. St. Paul's Recreation Center Auditorium, 116 Montecito Avenue, Oakland. Refreshments served. \$1.00/*OHA* members, \$2.00/general public. Contact Gary Knecht, Program Chairman, (415) 865-6382.

Wed 17 Mar - 24 Mar 7-9 pm Sat 20-27 Mar 10am-4pm

Rural Alameda County. Sister Ethel Mary Tinneman, Historian, Holy Names College Class. Brennan 42, Holy Names College, includes Sat. Tour. Pre-registration required. \$55.00 Contact Holy Names.

Sun 4 Apr - Sat 10 Apr

Berkeley History Week.

Mon 12 Apr 7:30-9:30 pm

Hotel Oakland: The Art of Finding Profit in a Preservation Project. Dick Neault, Development Consultant. *OHA* Spring Monthly Program. St. Paul's Recreation Center Auditorium, 116 Montecito Ave., Oakland. Refreshments served. \$1.00/*OHA* Members. \$2.00/general public. Contact Gary Knecht, Program Chairman (415) 865-6382.

Sat 17-24 Apr 9am-1pm

Berkeley History: Teachers Workshop. Chuck Wollenberg, Karen Joregensen-Esmaille, and Trish Hawthorne. Vista College Class, All Soul's Parrish Episcopal Church, 2220 Cedar, Berkeley. Registration at first class meeting. Free. Contact Vista College (415) 841-8431.

REGULARLY SCHEDULED TOURS & ACTIVITIES

OHA Monthly Program

Second Monday evening of the month, 7:30-9:30 pm. St. Paul's Recreation Center Auditorium (next to St. Paul's Church) 116 Montecito Ave., Oakland (second floor). One block east of Harrison St. and Grand Ave. \$1.00/*OHA* members. \$2.00/general public. Refreshments served. Contact Gary Knecht, Program Chairman (415) 865-6382.

Camron-Stanford House. Free tours are offered Wednesdays 11am-4pm, and Sundays 1-4pm. 1418 Lakeside Drive at 14th Street, Oakland, (415) 836-1976.

Paramount Theatre Tours. Tours are offered the 1st & 3rd Saturday of the month, 10am. 2025 Broadway at 21st Street, Oakland. \$1.00. Meet promptly at the box office entrance on 21st Street, (415) 465-6400.

Dunsmuir House. Tours are offered Sundays at 1,2 and 3pm. 2960 Peralta Oaks Court, Oakland. (415) 562-7588.

Oakland Tours Program. These regularly scheduled free tours are on winter break. They will commence again in April 1982. Tours include Chinatown, Old Oakland, City Hall/City Center, Uptown to the Lake and Preservation Park. Contact Oakland Tours (415) 273-3234.

REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETINGS

Oakland Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, Meets the 3rd Wednesday of the month, 3:30 pm, City Hall, Room 221, Washington & 14th Streets, (415) 273-3941.

Oakland City Planning Commission. Meets the 2nd & 4th Wednesday of the month, 1:30 pm, City Hall, Room 115, (415) 273-3941.

Oakland City Council. Meets every Tuesday evening, 7:30 pm, City Hall Council Chambers, (415) 273-3266.

Oakland Heritage Alliance Board. Meets the 1st Monday of the month, 7:30 pm. For location and agenda, contact Marlene Wilson, (415) 655-3210

Brooklyn Neighborhood Preservation Association. Meets the last Sunday of the month, 7:30 pm. For location and program, contact BNPA, P.O. Box 187, Oakland 94604.

Oakland Design Advocates. Meets the 2nd Wednesday morning of the month, 7:30 am, Tom Lovely's Restaurant, 336 Grand Avenue, Oakland, (415) 893-6834.

Camron-Stanford Guide Training

The historic Camron-Stanford House is seeking volunteers for its upcoming guide training program. The restored Victorian residence on Lake Merritt offers various public education programs, including multi-media shows and special exhibitions. This 12-week guide training course provides the unique opportunity to become more aware of how our rich urban history has helped shape the environment in which we live and work today. Guest speakers will lecture on Oakland History, the Victorian Era, Local Architecture, and 19th Century Decorative Arts. The class will also stress the techniques and skills required for giving informative and sensitive tours.

Two alternative weekly classes are offered, Tuesdays 7:00-10:00 pm (beginning Feb 2) and Saturdays 9:00 am-Noon (beginning Feb 6). Vista College credit is available. For further information, please contact Pam Morton, Guide Training Coordinator, (415) 836-1976.

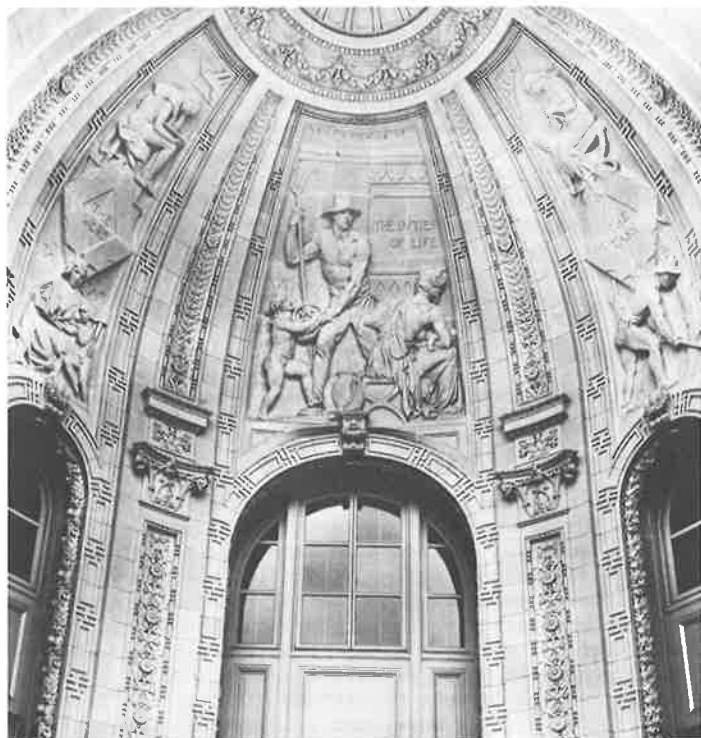


The Camron-Stanford House Preservation Association

1418 LAKESIDE DR., OAKLAND, CA. 94612 • (415) 836-1976

BRIEFING, continued from page 1

The Auditorium would then be sold to the same investors for \$25 to \$35 million. This money (along with the remaining proceeds from the Museum sale) would be invested to generate City income to lease back both buildings for 30 years, after which time the City can repurchase the buildings. Funds for the repurchase would be drawn from income accrued from the investments not needed for lease payments.



Detail of architectural terra cotta work in one of the Auditorium's 7 niches.

Under this plan, the City would continue to operate the Museum and Auditorium. The Museum's collection is not affected by the plan. The City would continue to own the land, leasing it back to the private investors. The advantage of this plan to investors is the depreciation tax write-offs they would receive.

This plan is intended to finance about \$12 million in repairs to the Auditorium. When the need for the repairs was first brought to the attention of the City Council last February, it appeared that no City funds were available and that demolition of the Auditorium was a possibility



Oakland Auditorium upon its completion in 1914. John J. Donovan, architect; Henry Hornbostle, consulting architect. Donovan was best-known for his schools, including Oakland Technical High School. Hornbostle and his partner, Palmer, designed Oakland's present City Hall.

(see Spring 1981 *OHA News*).

The City has selected the Ratcliff Architects to prepare a design proposal for the Auditorium. Among the preservation projects of this firm is the recent rehabilitation of the Oakland Hotel.

OHA has asked the City for the opportunity to review and comment on the Auditorium rehabilitation plans.

● In early 1981, public protests against the proposed construction of a twelve-story apartment building at 2340 Lakeshore Avenue facing LAKE MERRITT prompted the City Council to request a study of more



East shore of Lake Merritt (c.1969) included in the height-limitation study area. The tallest building in the photo generally do not exceed 5 stories. Under the current zoning, buildings as tall as 12 stories have been proposed. A row of 12 story buildings at lakeside would block views of most of the ridge in the foreground.

restrictive height limits in the area bordering the Lake. Concern was expressed that eventually a "wall" of highrises would ring the Lake.

Most of the Lake frontage is zoned for highrise apartments with heights controlled through floor-area ratios (FAR) rather than fixed height limits. Along most of the east and north sides of the Lake, the FAR is 3.5, which means that a building that covers half the lot could have a maximum height of seven-stories while a building that covers a quarter lot could be 14-stories.

The City Planning Commission initially concluded last May that no further restrictions were necessary. The Commission felt that due to real estate market conditions, there was no danger of a "wall" of high-rises developing around the Lake in the near future. This conclusion was rejected by City Council, which referred the matter back to the Commission for further study of raised height limits along the north and east sides of the Lake. Possible alternatives which have been proposed include establishing a specific height limit (perhaps 45 feet), or allowing tall buildings, but requiring them to be slender and/or spaced a prescribed minimum distance from one another.

OHA believes that as one of Oakland's principal scenic resources, the Lake Merritt area may warrant more restrictive height limitations. OHA is presently studying the possible range of alternatives. The City Planning Commission is expected to develop a new recommendation in January, 1982.

● On September 30, Alameda Superior Court



Victor H. Metcalf House-245 Perkins Street.

Judge Robert Kroninger ruled that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required for building 36 condominiums on the property now occupied by the VICTOR H. METCALF HOUSE at 245 Perkins Street. The ruling was a victory for Adams Point Preservation which had filed a petition arguing for an EIR. The City had earlier approved the condominiums with the condition that the Metcalf House be moved to another location rather than demolished. However the Adams Point group wants the house preserved on its present site, due to its historical and architectural importance and its contributing role to the neighborhood's character.

The house, built in 1909, was designed by Oakland architect Walter J. Mathews. Between 1904-1908, Metcalf had served as President Theodore Roosevelt's Secretary of Commerce and Labor and then as Secretary of the Navy.

The developer intends to proceed with the condominiums and is now preparing an EIR. After the EIR is completed, the City ▶

New OHA Members

The Officers and Board of Directors of OHA wish to welcome and thank all those concerned citizens who have shown their interest in Oakland's history and preservation by joining OHA.

Between May 5 - Dec 7, 1981, OHA's new members are as follows:

Rev. William N. Abeloe, Philip/Frances Bellman, Amy Berg, Mr./Mrs. William Blackfield, Jim/Linda Bostwick-Anderson, Robert Brecker/Deborah Levine, Patrick/Elsa Cashman, Anita Clark, Emelita Cohen, Horace Crow, Vera L. Dahle, Robin E. Datel, Kim Davis/Joseph Keaveny, Steven Donaldson, Dennis Drabelle, Fillmore Eisenmayer,

G.P. Encinas, Jeannine Falmo, Charles Fiske, Marion Guerrero, Anita Halpern, Elaine R. Hammill, Trish Hawthorne, Joan Hughes, Mrs. Susan R. Hyde, Dennis/Abigail Kelley, Margaret Langston, Mrs. E. Douglas Law, Mary S. Lentz, Margaret W. Long, Sherrie McLeod, Jane N.L. Murphy, Robert/Marian Nielsen, Chris Patillo, Tamara Patri, James M. Paul, Lester E. Paul Jr., John R. Pichotto, Donnalynn Polito, Mrs. Marie R. Pritchett, Nancy G. Reidenbach, Vernon J. Sappers, Jeanne M. Schuman, Jane Schwicter, Ruth H. Shibley, Dr./Mrs. Ronald Sipherd, Gail Solomon, Randy Swenson, Roy Taylor, Hans A. Thompson, Donald Tyler, Timothy Vickers, Lelia C. White, and Kira Yanovsky.



must again decide whether to approve the project.

● The recent upsurge in new downtown Oakland HIGHRISE OFFICE BUILDING PROJECTS is already beginning to impact older buildings. A four-story 1920's brick office building at the northwest corner of 21st and Webster Streets was recently demolished for a new 20-story structure. A distinctive one-story half-timbered Old English style restaurant at the southeast corner of 20th and Webster Streets will soon give way to a 35-story structure.

The restaurant, originally built in 1929 as a service station, was designed by Berkeley architect George E. Koster. It is included in the current phase of the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey (see the Aug-Sept 1981 *OHA News*), which is focusing on the downtown area.

● On November 12, a four-alarm fire seriously damaged the CENTRAL BLOCK (now called the "Hinson Building"), a two-story wood-frame Victorian commercial structure located at the northeast corner of East 12th Street and 11th Avenue. The structure was built in 1879-80 by Charles Jurgens, a



Fire damaged Hinson Building on 12th Street.

German immigrant who was among Oakland's leading 19th century businessmen. The architects, J.C. Mathews & Son, designed many of Oakland's major 19th century buildings. The building together with other Victorian commercial structures on the same block, constitute the principal remnant of the once thriving 19th century Clinton/Brooklyn business district. The

building group was included in last year's Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey, which considered it eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Both the Central Block and the other major structure within the group, the Williams Block (now called the "China Building"), are owned by Hinson Wu who is renting most of the second floor apartments to Southeast Asian refugees. Wu has been under a court order to correct numerous Housing Code violations in the two buildings. If he fails to correct them, the City could order the structures demolished or acquired through eminent domain for rehabilitation (either by the City, a non-profit developer, or a new owner-occupant). The two buildings are on the City's preservation study list, which allows the Director of City Planning to delay issuance of a demolition permit for 60 days.

● This winter, the MAYOR'S HOUSING TASK FORCE will hold public hearings to receive comments on its recent housing report (for background information, see Oct-Dec 1981 *OHA News*).

In October 1980, in response to critical housing problems in Oakland, Mayor Lionel Wilson appointed a Housing Task Force to study the situation and make recommendations to City Council. On June 23, 1981, the Task Force presented its report to the Mayor and City Council. The City Planning Commission was directed to comment on the report and public hearings were ordered to receive input concerning the report and its recommendations.

Two more hearings will be held at 7:30pm Wednesdays: February 10, Eastmont Mall Community Hall, #1 Eastmont Mall; and February 24, Oakland City Hall, City Council Chambers.

OHA members concerned about the impact of zoning changes, condominium construction, and neighborhood preservation, should attend these hearings. For further information contact Oakland Office of Community Development (415) 273-3502.

● The Oakland City Planning Department's popular award-winning rehabilitation book, REHAB RIGHT, was extensively plagiarized ▶

in a book released last fall called "Restoring the Victorian House and Other Turn-of-the-Century Structures" by John Bracken. OHA Director Bruce Judd noticed the similarities between the new \$9.95 Chronicle Books publication and the 140-page Rehab Right and notified the City Planning De-



Italianate (mid 1860's-1880's)



Single Story Italianate (mid 1860's-1880's)



San Francisco Stick (late 1870's-1890's)



Queen Anne (1883-1890's)

partment. Chronicle Books subsequently recalled their book by Bracken, a Mill Valley author with more than 50 books to his credit.

Rehab Right is available free to Oakland residents from the Oakland City Planning Department, City Hall, 6th floor, 273-3941 (ID required). Non-Oakland residents are charged \$4.75 per copy.

● VIRGINIA LAWLER, longtime Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board member, died December 9 following a long illness. A seven-year member of the Board, Lawler served as its Chair for the last two years of her tenure. ■

Survey Acknowledgements

The Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey extends its special thanks to the following organizations for their contribution of funds for office space and utilities during the 1981-1982 Survey Year: Buttes Gas & Oil Co., Kaiser Aluminum & Chemical Co., Safeway, and Compath.

PRESERVATION PARK, continued from page 1

tion Advisory Board issued an eight page report noting that a number of buildings on the site "are under threat of demolition because of their location in the City Redevelopment Project. Structures in adjoining areas are similarly endangered by (construction of) the Grove-Shafter Freeway." The report recommended that the Redevelopment Agency remove the requirement for open space and instead "retain and enhance architecturally or historically significant structures in the three-block area. Remaining vacant lots in the area would provide relocation sites for threatened buildings from surrounding areas. The resulting complex would be called Preservation Park in recognition of the architectural and historical significance of the area." The report also recommended that the entire area be placed in the City's S-7 Preservation Combining Zone in order to assure a coordinated effort that "privately performed exterior work conforms to the overall design concept." Additionally, the report urged that the building be kept occupied to minimize "vandalism and stripping." As originally envisioned by the Board, much of Preservation Park would be developed privately. The City's role would be confined to providing the land, buildings, street improvements, and general design guidelines.

Although this report appeared in 1976, the City took more than two years to adopt the first two recommendations. The City Council (acting as the Redevelopment Agency) amended the Central District Urban Renewal Plan, designating the western most portion of the City Center Project as the Preservation Park Area in which historically and architecturally valuable structures may be preserved. The entire area was rezoned S-7 Preservation Combining Zone. The third recommendation "to keep the buildings occupied," was never implemented. As a result, several buildings have been vandalized, and some hardware and architectural features have been stripped. This is an ongoing problem. In a June letter to the City, OHA expressed its concerns about the danger of ▶

arson, continuing deterioration, and the apparent lack of security on the site.

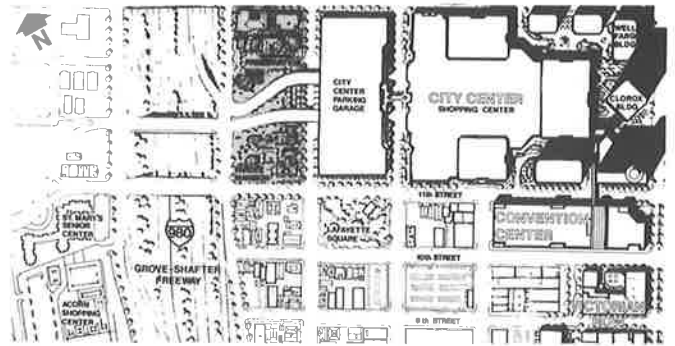
Early last year, after five buildings had been moved onto the site, the Oakland City Planning Department released a report containing design and development guidelines for Preservation Park (see June-July 1981 *OHA News*). Adopted by the Redevelopment Agency in June, the report reaffirms the City's commitment to making Preservation Park a showpiece of architectural preservation and sensitive adaptive reuse. Among its many recommendations is a requirement that restoration efforts "at the very least, meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation." This should help assure high quality sensitive rehabilitation by small and medium size developers who will purchase the properties as soon as a master plan is adopted by the City.

A major concern for the success of Preservation Park, both aesthetically and economically, has been the massive 3,000 car City Center Parking Garage and its proposed access ramp(s) which would cut through Preservation Park. Although technically still part of the Central District Urban Renewal Plan, the proposed garage has floundered due to changing economic and City policy considerations. A new master plan for the City Center project area has been in the works for several months, and will soon be reviewed by the Redevelopment Agency. One aspect of the new plan is the creation of a pedestrian link on 13th Street between the City Center BART Station and Preservation Park. Another is the reopening of 12th Street to vehicular traffic.

Without the 3,000 car garage, parking becomes a problem for the design of the Preservation Park master plan. Additionally, the intended building use in the pro-

OHA Acknowledgements

OHA extends special thanks to Buttes Gas & Oil Co. for its donation of secretarial, printing, and mailing services during 1981. This administrative help has been indispensable throughout the year.



Shaded area is Preservation Park. Proposals for adjoining garage and shopping center will be abandoned.

ject will have to be addressed in the plan. Presumably the First Unitarian Church will remain a church. The Pardee House will eventually become a house museum (potentially one of the finest on the West Coast, and a real asset to downtown Oakland). The future use of the Greene Library is much less certain. From time to time it has been proposed as the location for a City Archive. Presently it is occupied by various City agencies (see Greene Library history in this issue).

The rest of the twelve buildings on the site are vacant, and all but one were built as single family dwellings. At least five (and possibly ten more) such buildings can be moved onto the site. Presently the City sees most of these buildings as owner-occupied professional offices, with perhaps 25% of the space used for restaurants and entertainment facilities. The City has a list of several hundred people who have expressed interest in acquiring these properties when they come on the market. For further information, contact Pat Cashman, Project Manager, OEDE, (415) 273-3692.

With the removal of the proposed City Center Parking Garage, and the design of a final subdivision plan about to be prepared, the long-awaited development of Preservation Park may finally start. The real challenge to both the City and the designers will be to make the project an economically viable showpiece of architectural preservation and sensitive adaptive reuse which all of Oakland can point to with pride. ■

- Gary Knecht

The Charles Greene Library Building—A History

"The Oakland Free Library is, we are sorry to say, a rather neglected institution. Indeed there are grave fears that if something is not done to prevent, the building may tumble." Thus did one Cassandra of the "Oakland Tribune" warn, in 1891, of the lamentable condition of the two-story wood-framed library at 14th and Washington Streets. Since 1878 the building had housed the public library and was now, literally, bulging at the seams and sagging at the portals. Attempts to replace the moribund structure, however, were doomed by a stingy City Council. (Indeed, Oakland's first Librarian, Ina Coolbrith, lost her job over the matter.)

Finally, in 1899, the new City Librarian, Charles S. Greene, approached steel magnate Andrew Carnegie (who had lately embarked upon the endowment of library buildings) for a new Oakland library. The feisty tycoon agreed to Mr. Greene's request—provided that Oakland supply the land. Numerous sites were proposed for the Carnegie Library—among them Lincoln Park, Lafayette Park, City Hall Plaza—but funds were scarce to buy land. Fortunately, the Ebell Society (Oakland's venerable, civicly active women's society) launched a vigorous and highly publicized subscription drive, securing \$20,000 for a vacant lot on the corner of 14th and Grove Streets, next to the First Unitarian Church. The architects selected were Bliss and Faville (best known in Oakland



The Charles Greene Library, c. 1902.

as architects of the Hotel Oakland, 1912).

Construction proceeded slowly, troubled by financial problems (Carnegie's \$50,000 did not quite cover building costs). At last, on June 30, 1902, amidst flowery orations and orchidaceous singing, the building was dedicated—Oakland had a splendid new library. Later, the artistry of Arthur Mathews graced the interior walls with murals.

Like its forlorn predecessor, however, the new structure soon outlived its usefulness. Between 1900–1910, the population of Oakland, spurred by annexations and the 1906 Earthquake displacement, rose from 66,960 to 150,174. By the 1930's, complaints about the inadequacies of the library were numerous and strangely reminiscent of an earlier time. In 1951, financed by a post-war bond, a new main library was dedicated at 14th and Oak Streets. The Charles S. Greene building, as it came to be known, continued to function as a branch library until 1973, after which time it has served as the location of a number of City offices.

The future? The Greene building will be a part of the projected Preservation Park, but its function within the project is yet unclear. Many would like to see the building become a City Archive, a place where the historical records of Oakland could be housed and made available to the public. As an historical center, the old main library would be a visible and enhancing part of Preservation Park. ■

-William Sturm, Librarian, Oakland History Room, Oakland Public Library



Charles Greene Library interior, c. 1915.

State Conference in Oakland

"Reinvesting in America" is the theme of the 1982 California Historic Preservation Conference to be held in Oakland, April 29-May 2. The sponsors, the California Preservation Foundation and OHA, expect this 7th Annual State Conference to bring 500 participants to the Oakland Museum/Oakland Auditorium. Speakers will address such topics as the basics of preservation, and the economics of reinvesting in commercial properties, neighborhoods, and existing materials. Those attending the Conference will have the opportunity to visit preservation projects such as the Hotel Oakland and Victorian Row. Among the possible special events are a reception in the rotunda of City Hall and a tour/champagne brunch at the Paramount Theatre. The local Co-chairs for this four day event are OHA Directors Melinda Young Frye and Gary Knecht.

In March, OHA members will receive by mail a Conference program and registration material. Volunteers are urgently needed for a variety of skilled and unskilled tasks. If you can help, please contact Dana Cordeiro, Conference Coordinator, at the Conference office (415) 839-2121.

State Conference Acknowledgements

The Local Arrangements Committee for the 1982 California Historic Preservation Conference would like to thank the following donors for gifts, loans, or assistance above and beyond the call of duty: BankCal; Bancroft Corners; Buttes Gas & Oil Co.; City of Oakland (City Council - Resolution #60064, City Planning Department, Department of Parks & Recreation, the Oakland Museum, Office of Economic Development & Employment, Volunteers for Oakland/ Oakland Tours); Goldfarb & Lipman - Attorneys at Law; Oakland Convention & Visitors Bureau; Pacific Telephone; St. James Episcopal Church; and Storek & Storek Architecture.

Additional donors will be acknowledged in future issues of *OHA NEWS*. ■

Tax Incentives Workshop Offered

The National Park Service, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the State Office of Historic Preservation are among the co-sponsors of a workshop on "Preservation Tax Incentives" under the new Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981. The tax incentives in this new law make rehabilitation of historic buildings a more attractive investment than before. A new 25% investment tax credit will replace existing incentives.

A San Francisco workshop will take place February 15-16 at a location still to be arranged. OHA is one of the cooperating organizations for this topical session. \$75/Staff or Boardmembers of non-profit organizations or public agencies, \$100/National Trust members (non-staff or boardmembers), \$25/Students, \$150/Others.

For further information, please contact Joe Towner, National Park Service, (415) 556-7741. ■

Positions Available

● The Oakland Museum is presently hiring five temporary positions. The three positions in the History Department are a full-time Assistant Project Director, a full-time Curatorial Specialist, and a part-time Exhibit Coordinator.

Two additional positions involve the new Storefront Museum: a full-time Coordinator and a part-time Exhibit Technician.

For further information, please contact Sheila McCune, Administrative Analysis, (415) 273-3402.

● The Pardee Home Foundation is seeking to fill the position of Historic House Administrator for Oakland's historic Pardee House (1868).

For further information, please contact The Search Committee, Pardee Home Foundation, 672 11th Street, Oakland, California 94607.

● The OHA Local Arrangements Committee for the 1982 California Historic Preservation Conference is seeking a volunteer Registration Secretary for the month of April.

For full details, please contact Dana Cordeiro, Conference Coordinator (415) 839-2121. ■



OHA UPDATE

● On October 12, *OHA* held its first ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING at the Paramount Theatre (T. Pflueger, 1931). The nearly 40 members attending and 75 members voting by proxy elected twelve Directors: six to one-year terms and six to two-year terms (see page 2 for list of Directors and their phone numbers). The two retiring Directors, William Sturm and Michael Swernoff, were thanked for their year of service, while Carolyn Douthat and Richard Lloyd were welcomed to the Board. Business concluded, Peter J. Botto, general manager of the Paramount, conducted a tour of the Landmark Art Deco theater, concluding with refreshments on the theater stage.

● On December 10, the California Tamarack Foundation awarded *OHA* a \$5,000 grant to publish the OHA NEWS during 1982. In a letter to Melinda Young Frye (*OHA* Vice President for Development), the San Francisco-based foundation noted that they were impressed by *OHA*'s accomplishments during its first year and hoped for its continued success. The grant assures the continuation and development of *OHA News*. The *OHA* Board of Directors, the Editorial Board, the *OHA News* staff, and readers extend a hearty thanks to the California Tamarack Foundation.

The *OHA* Board extends its sincere thanks to Bill Sturm for the time and energy he devoted as editor in shepherding the *OHA News* through its first year. History journalist Beth Bagwell, *OHA*'s first president, will be *OHA News* editor for

1982. Dean Yabuki has been interim editor for this issue of *OHA News* while Beth completes her forthcoming book on Oakland history.

● Under the terms of an Oakland City Planning Department proposal to the State Office of Historic Preservation, *OHA* and the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board will cooperate with City Planning in conducting the OAKLAND CULTURAL HERITAGE SURVEY (see Aug-Sept 1981 *OHA News*) during its third Survey year (April 1982-March 1983). *OHA* will provide volunteers and publicity for the Survey as well as telephone and office space in the Camron-Stanford House. Although State funding for the 1982-1983 Survey year is not guaranteed, all parties involved are "hopeful" that the U.S. Department of the Interior's budget uncertainties will be resolved in time to assure continuation and continuity of this invaluable Survey.

● The *OHA* Programs & Education Committee is planning a MONTHLY PROGRAM on current preservation projects and issues in Oakland. The first three programs are tentatively entitled "Preservation Projects in Downtown Oakland", featuring presentations on Victorian Row, Preservation Park (see article in this issue), and Hotel Oakland. A following series will cover "Problems in Preserving Historic Buildings". The Committee is proposing to schedule each lecture on the second Monday of the month (beginning in February). If you are interested in helping plan these programs, please contact Gary Knecht, Program Chair, (415) 865-6382. ■

Oakland Heritage Alliance, 5569 Lawton Avenue, Oakland, California 94618

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 will make OHA a more effective organization.

Name _____ New Renewal
 Address _____ Change of Address only
 City/Zip _____ \$ 5 Senior/student/limited income (1 vote)
 Phone Numbers (H) _____ (W) _____ \$10 Individual (1 vote)
 I am willing to participate in the following ways: \$15 Family (2 votes)
 _____ \$25 Organization (1 vote)
 _____ \$ _____ Additional contribution



Oakland Landmarks Board Summary

● At its October, November, and December meetings, the Board discussed establishing a MERIT AWARD program, to supplement the existing Landmark program. Unlike designated Landmarks, properties receiving Merit Awards would receive no protection from demolition or alterations. The Board agreed that Merit Award eligible properties must be at least forty years old and either excel in architectural quality or be associated with a significant person or event. Except for the age limitation, these criteria are similar to those for Landmarks. The Board will continue to study the proposal.

● At the urging of Tom Knapp, project manager of the Victorian Row/Old Oakland rehabilitation project, the Board requested that the City Planning Commission recommend to City Council the adoption of the STATE HISTORIC BUILDING CODE. The

Code encourages rehabilitation of historic buildings by providing alternative standards to contemporary building codes. At present, the City's Building Inspection Division uses the Code as an administrative guideline, but it has never been adopted as an official City regulatory device. Adoption would remove code-related uncertainties for preservation projects and would encourage more standardized treatment of preservation efforts. At the December 9 meeting of the City Planning Commission, Tom Knapp and OHA Director Gary Knecht spoke in favor of adopting the Code but the Commission declined to take action, apparently basing its decision on a letter received from the City Inspectional Services Manager citing problems his office has with the Code.

● The City Council, acting upon Board recommendations, approved Landmark designation for the DeFremery, Bamford, Davison, Nichols, and Preshoe Houses (see Oct-Dec 1981 *OHA News*). ■

OAKLAND HISTORY NOTES

Beginning in the 1890's, August Schilling's private preserve at the foot of Jackson St. was opened to the public. The park featured tropical plants, a hanging garden, fountains, and a boat house. Closed in 1922, the grounds are now occupied by the Regillus apartments.

Postcard, courtesy Oakland Public Library.



Oakland Heritage Alliance
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