

OAKLAND HOSTS PRESERVATION CONFERENCE: Public Invited to Participate

Historic preservation--what is it? Saving old buildings? Turning them into museums? Removing them from the economic mainstream? Not necessarily. The forthcoming Seventh Annual California Historic Preservation Conference in Oakland is a three-day opportunity for any and all persons, regardless of age or previous knowledge of the subject, who have an interest in the past of our built environment, to come together and explore new preservation ideas. Would-be investors, who perhaps had not previously thought of older buildings as profitable ventures, are especially invited to attend and see successes-in-action.

Oakland Heritage Alliance is the co-sponsor this year, jointly with the California Preservation Foundation, for the conference to be held April 29 through May 2 in Oakland. Conference headquarters will be the Oakland Museum and the Oakland Auditorium.



The Hotel Oakland, recently rehabilitated as senior citizens' apartments, will be one case study illustrating the theme, "Reinvesting in America," at the preservation conference April 29-May 2.

Under the thematic title, "Reinvesting in America," speakers will concentrate on the economic questions of preservation in the Eighties: what kinds of profitable investment opportunities do exist, despite the grim inflationary picture; what creative financing approaches can help bring them about; how property owners can understand and apply the provisions of the 1982 Economic Recovery Tax Act; and what incentives and dis-incentives there are for would-be investors in historic property rehabilitation.

Keynoting the conference will be Robert Spiller, investment banker with extensive successful experience in the financing, rehabilitation, and adaptive re-use of such historic structures as Boston's Quincy Market and Old City Hall (combining office, mercantile and restaurant uses). In addition, his bank, Boston Five Cents Savings, has underwritten the broadcast of PBS's popular "This Old House" series.

A conference highlight will be the grand opening of the new "Storefront Museum" located in the Nicholl Block building (1876), on Ninth Street between Broadway and Washington, recently rehabilitated by Storek and Storek Architects as part of the Victorian Row project in Old Oakland. Developed through the Oakland Museum, the new storefront facility will display a Smithsonian Institution traveling exhibition, entitled "Buildings Reborn: New Uses, Old Places."

Other conference highlights include working site visits to locations in Oakland that provide case studies of successful historic reinvestment (the 1100 Broadway Building), neighborhood rehabilitation (the Oak Center neighborhood), conservation.

Continued on page 2 ▶



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

- President.....Leslie Flint
- VP. Development.....Melinda Young Frye
- VP. Programs and Education.....Gary Knecht
- VP. Preservation Action.....Marlene Wilson
- VP. Public Information.....Beth Bagwell
- Financial Officer.....Brad Niebling
- Membership Secretary.....Jon Good
- Recording/Corresponding Sec.....Marlene Wilson

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Beth Bagwell (1981-83).....653-5968
- Carolyn Douthat (1981-82).....763-5370
- Leslie Flint (1981-83).....658-4915
- Melinda Young Frye (1981-82).....763-1642
- Jon Good (1981-83).....531-5086
- Bruce Judd (1981-83).....421-1680
- Gary Knecht (1981-82).....865-6382
- Richard Lloyd (1981-82).....273-3941
- Brad Niebling (1981-83).....254-6819
- Laura Pan (1981-82).....835-4620
- Marlene Wilson (1981-83).....655-3210
- Dean Yabuki (1981-82).....893-1278

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

© 1982 Oakland Heritage Alliance. 5569 Lawton Avenue, Oakland, CA 94618



CREDITS Editor: Beth Bagwell; Design: Blair Prentice; Production: Gary Knecht, Philip Bellman; Contributors: Melinda Young Frye, William Sturm, Charles B. Oakland, Dean M. Yabuki

Continued from page 1

of materials (Hotel Oakland), and site interpretation (the Camron-Stanford House). Those who were personally involved in each project will describe the problems, processes and solutions in each case.

Special events include a gala evening reception by Mayor Lionel Wilson at Oakland's historic Beaux Arts City Hall (1914), and Sunday's elegant finale at Oakland's outstanding restoration project and National Landmark building, the Paramount Theatre.

Conference attendees will hear updates on current political and legislative issues in preservation on both the state and the national fronts, and will have a chance to make their opinions known, in a formulation of "resolutions" which are developed annually at conference time through the efforts of Californians for Preservation Action.

California's statewide preservation conferences got underway in the Bicentennial year and have gained in stature with each succeeding meeting. Pasadena, Sacramento, Riverside, and San Jose are a few of the cities that have hosted the conference in the past. Oakland takes particular pride this year in receiving up to 500 persons from around the state who come to learn from each other and to gain insight and inspiration from successful projects recently carried out here. To find out more, or to offer help, please call (415)839-2121.■

An Oakland Civic Center: History of A Dream

When, in the spring of 1915, the Oakland Auditorium opened wide its doors for the first time, the city was basking in the permeative glow of civic optimism and achievement. A new City Hall, a resplendent Hotel Oakland, a bountiful system of parks and playgrounds, burgeoning industries and growing population--all these had become part of Oakland under the pro-

gressive stewardship of Mayor Frank K. Mott. Spurred by the "City Beautiful" movement (inspired and ennobled by the shimmering mercantile classicism of the 1893 Chicago Fair) Oakland brimmed with great plans and visions. Among those plans was one proffered by noted city planner Werner Hegemann in his 1915 Report on a city plan for the municipalities of Oakland and Berkeley. Hegemann envisioned a civic center organically connected with the Auditorium which would include a museum,



Architectural rendering of the 1947 Civic Center Plan from the City's Master Plan

opera house and other facilities. "...A satisfactory 'place' or 'square' can be created which...will form a beautiful open air room of the city," Hegemann remarked.

Not a new idea, the notion of an Oakland civic center was first broached by planner Charles Mulford Robinson in his 1906 report "A plan of civic improvement for the City of Oakland." Robinson conceived of a 300-foot-wide green corridor extending along 16th Street from the railroad station at 16th and Wood, to the gore at San Pablo and Clay, there to terminate in a civic center centered upon the newly planned City Hall (the present structure).

Hegemann's concept, unlike Robinson's less economically viable vision (downtown property was expensive) attracted followers. In 1930, the Society of Architects of Alameda County proposed a complex in the area between 10th, 13th, Fallon and 1st Avenue, to include a new public library, museum, hall of records, and other public buildings, with the Auditorium as their

nucleus. The court house was built on Fallon Street, but the Depression forestalled further realization of the plan.

In the flush of post-war prosperity, thinking began anew on a civic center. A 1947 City Master Plan included a civic center which called for more than a dozen public buildings to be grouped between Harrison and Fallon and between 14th and 10th in a rectangle, continuing past the Auditorium and the School Administration building on E. 10th Street in a curve around the south end of the lake. The new public library, opening in 1951 at 14th and Oak, was the single realization of this plan.

The opening of the Oakland Museum in 1969 (always a part of civic center thinking), the building of the County Administration building and BART headquarters gave fresh life to the idea of a cultural complex.

Seventy-six years ago, Robinson had concluded his report by quoting Ruskin: "You may have thought that beauty was expensive. You are wrong. It is ugliness that costs." Perhaps someday the fragmented pieces of the civic center dream will come together. ■

-- William Sturm

Ed. note: The Hegemann and Robinson Reports can be seen in the Oakland History Room, Oakland Public Library.

BRIEFING...

● The city's Housing Conservation Division wants to demolish the Italianate HINSON BUILDING (originally called the Central Block) at 1102-18 East 12th Street. The building has serious structural problems and suffered a fire last November (see January-February *OHA News*), but the owner, Hinson Wu, has not made the necessary repairs and has moved new tenants in since the fire. At its meeting of February 17, the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board recommended delaying demolition for 60 days to allow time to find a new owner who would rehabilitate the building. The Board took its action after hearing speakers from the neighbor-▶



Hinson Building at 11th Ave. and East 12th St. In addition to the fire damage, the building has serious structural problems as indicated by the diagonal buttresses along the side lot line.

hood urging that the building be preserved. The building would normally be eligible for such a delay by the Director of City Planning because it is on the city's preservation study list; however, in the case of the Hinson Building, the delay is expected to be overruled by the city's Inspectional Services Department, which may take such action if it determines that the building is an immediate threat to public health or safety. Several developers have expressed interest in rehabilitating the building but acquisition of the property from Mr. Wu may be difficult. For further information, call OHA board member Carolyn Douthat at 763-5370.

- The future of the half-mile section of TEMESCAL CREEK between Grove and Adeline Streets remains uncertain. The Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District has been proposing to culvert this section of the creek, but is willing to install a reconstituted and controlled creek over the buried channel if the City of Oakland agrees to build a park along the creek at the northeast corner of 47th and Market Streets. The project is intended to avoid a 100-year flood (that is, a flood that is likely to occur once every hundred years) along the creek and to halt bank erosion which is threatening adjacent properties. Reconstituted creeks

have previously been installed along Temescal Creek behind the Department of Motor Vehicles and along Peralta Creek through Peralta Hacienda Park.

OHA has joined the Sierra Club and neighborhood residents to form the Temescal Creek Coalition, which has urged that if the creek must be culverted, the reconstituted creek should be installed. However, creekside residents do not want the park, arguing that it will attract drug dealing and vagrancy.

The creekside residents persuaded the City Council to reconsider its initial approval of the park. The council then referred the question to the City Planning Commission, which on February 10 recommended that the park proceed. At press time, the council was tentatively scheduled to consider the issue again on March 2. For further information, call OHA Preservation Action Chair Marlene Wilson, 655-3210, evenings.



Reconstituted Peralta Creek at Peralta Hacienda Park, 34th Ave. and Paxton St.

- In another creek development, the Flood Control district is proposing to install a concrete channel along ARROYO VIEJO CREEK between Arroyo Viejo Recreation Center (near 78th Avenue) and MacArthur Boulevard. The channel walls will vary up to a maximum ten-foot height. The proposal and alternatives are explained in the District's Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the project. Copies of the EIR can be obtained

by calling Richard Hendrix, 881-6488, at the district's Hayward office, although the period for public comment officially ended February 25. One of the alternatives presented in the EIR is installation of walls only along those portions of the channel where serious erosion problems exist. For further information, call OHA member Vera Dahle at 834-4182, evenings.

● The shell of the FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, at 24th Street and Broadway will



Fire-gutted shell of First United Methodist Church, 24th Street and Broadway

probably be sold for a price close to \$2 million and demolished for an 18-story office building, although the deal may not be final until about the end of March. The church was gutted by a fire last July 4, and had been for sale since the preceding January. (See Aug.-Sept. 1981 and Oct.-Dec. 1981 *OHA News*.)

The large Baroque-style church, with an octagonal dome and twin towers, was built in 1912 to a design of Norman F. March, architect of the Southern California city of Venice. For further information, call OHA president Leslie Flint at 658-4915.

● At its meeting of February 10, the City Planning Commission reaffirmed its earlier position that no new height limits were necessary around LAKE MERRITT, rejecting a City Planning staff proposal for a 45-foot height limit on the east side of the lake and a variety of height limit options on the north side (see Jan.-Feb. 1982 *OHA News*). The commission's report will be

considered by the City Council, probably in early March. For further information, call Leslie Flint at 658-4915.

● As reported in the Jan.-Feb. 1982 *OHA News*, a series of public hearing was held on the MAYOR'S HOUSING TASK FORCE REPORT. The last hearing was scheduled for March 11. The Report's recommendations seek to increase Oakland's housing supply, while retaining existing neighborhood character. (See Oct.-Dec. 1981 *OHA News* for a full discussion of these recommendations.) The final form of the task force's recommendations may strongly influence future city actions on residential downzonings (i.e., rezoning an area from a "higher" use, such as apartments, to a "lower" use, such as one-family homes). Some of Oakland's historically or architecturally important areas appear threatened by new development because they are zoned for much higher uses than presently exist. Two such areas, the Rose Garden and Richmond Boulevard neighborhoods, have already requested downzonings, but city policy is that action on downzonings is being deferred pending the task force's final report. Other areas which may be



Linden Street near 14th Street in the Oak Center neighborhood. This area is presently zoned R-70, allowing for construction of large apartment buildings in an area which today is predominantly two to three story residences.

candidates for downzoning include the Oak Center neighborhood of West Oakland, the Lincoln/Madison Squares area around 7th and Madison Streets, and a part of the Clinton/Bella Vista area around 8th Avenue and East 24th Street. For further information, call Marlene Wilson, 655-3210, evenings.■

City Mourns Two Longtime Oaklanders

Oaklanders have been saddened in recent months by the deaths of two women who both in their own ways contributed significantly to the preservation of Oakland history: Helen Penniman Pardee and Virginia Lawler.

Helen Pardee, who died November 27, was the last remaining member of an illustrious family. She and her three late sisters were the daughters of George C. Pardee, mayor of Oakland (1893-1895) and governor (1903-1907). As governor, George Pardee helped to oversee relief efforts after the 1906 earthquake and fire. The sisters were the granddaughters of Enoch H. Pardee, also a mayor of Oakland (1876-1878). It was Enoch Pardee who built the family home at 11th Street and Castro just after the earthquake of 1868. Helen Pardee devoted much of her life to preserving the home and grounds. The Italianate villa is a city landmark and, by the terms of her will, is to be opened to the public as a museum.

Virginia Lawler, who succumbed on December 9 following a long illness, was a seven-year member of the city's Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board. During the last two years, she had served as chairperson of the board, which she helped to establish. In her busy life as a professional journalist and mother of five children, she nevertheless found time to give more than 25 years of public service to Oakland, and was honored for her contribution by being named Mother of the Year in May 1981.■

-- Beth Bagwell

OHA UPDATE

● On February 8, the first of the OHA MONTHLY PROGRAMS was presented. The spring series, entitled "Preservation Projects in Downtown Oakland," began with "An Overview of Problems and Possibilities" by Patrick Cashman of the City's Office of Economic Development and Employment (OEDE), who is City Center Project Director and also an OHA member. Cashman gave a summary of ongoing preservation projects accompanied by slides. Projects included were Preservation Park, Victorian Row/Old Oakland and its neighboring new construction, 1100 Broadway, and the Fox Oakland Theater. An attentive group of 45 people attended this evening session which included a lengthy question and answer period and refreshments. Many thanks go to Pat Cashman for his informative presentation and to St. Paul's Recreation Center for the use of their auditorium.

The series continued on Monday, March 8, with a presentation by architects/developers Storek & Storek on "Victorian Row: Past, Present, and Future of Old Oakland," and on the second Monday of each month, 7:30-9:30pm at the St. Paul's Recreation Center Auditorium (adjacent to St. Paul's Church), 116 Montecito Avenue (one block east of Harrison St. and Grand Ave.), Oakland. \$1.00/OHA member, \$2.00/general public, including refreshments. For further information, see the OHA Calendar or contact Gary Knecht, Program Chair, (415) 865-6382.

● The Local Arrangements Committee of the 1982 CALIFORNIA HISTORIC PRESERVATION CONFERENCE would like to thank the OHA members who helped in the mailing party for the Conference flyer and the Camron-Stanford House for the use of their facility. OHA members have received the flyer by now.

If you can help with the Conference in any way or have any questions, please contact Dana Cordeiro, Conference Coordinator, at the Conference office (415) 839-2121.

● OHA members recently helped with aspects of the local arrangements for the PRESERVATION TAX INCENTIVES WORKSHOP held in San Francisco, February 15-16. Thanks were received from Joe Towner (Local Arrangements Chair) of the National Park Service for all the help rendered.■

OHA CALENDAR

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. Deadline for the May-June calendar is Friday April 2.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Wed 17 Mar 5 - 10 pm

St. Patrick's Day Mailing Party. Work party to prepare for mailing 6,000 registration brochures for the 1982 California Historic Preservation Conference. E.B.A.I.A. office, 315-14th St., Oakland. Volunteers needed! Please bring thematic refreshments. RSVP to mailing coordinator, Kati Johnson (415) 653-8543, or 1982 Conference office (415) 839-2121.



- Thurs 18 March 5-10 pm
Mailing Party continues. See previous item.
- Wed 17 & 24 Mar 7-9pm and Sat 20 & 27 Mar 10am-4pm
Rural Alameda County. Sister Ethel Mary Tinneman, historian. Holy Names College Continuing Education Class. Brennan 42, Holy Names College. Pre-registration required. \$55. Includes Sat. tours. Contact Holy Names Continuing Education Office, 3500 Mountain Blvd., Oakland 94619.
- Sat 20 Mar 1:30 - 3:30 pm
Friends of Terra Cotta Walking Tour of Oakland's Early 20th Century Downtown & 1920's Uptown. Dean Yabuki, architectural programmer & OHA director. Meet in front of City Hall, Washington and 14th Sts., Oakland. \$2/FOTC members, \$3.50/general public. Contact Dean Yabuki (415) 893-1278. This will be a great opportunity to also attend the Paramount Theatre tour on the same day (see regularly scheduled tours).
- Sat 20 Mar 1 pm
 Lecture by Prof. George Hildebrand, author of Borax Pioneer, Francis Marion Smith. James Moore Theater, The Oakland Museum. Champagne reception and autograph session following lecture. Museum bookstore. Free. Contact the Oakland Museum (415) 273-3842.
- Thurs 25 March, 1, & 8 April 8pm
BAHA "Historic Building Restoration" Lecture Series. Lectures by Bill Coburn on the Byrne House, Grey Brechin on Victorian house remodeling during the past 75 years, and Bruce Judd on architectural terra cotta. TBA. Contact Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association (415) 845-6591.
- April
Berkeley Historical Society Annual Dinner. TBA. Contact Gloria Cooper (415) 524-3892.
- Sun 4 April - Sat 10 April
Berkeley History Week.
- Mon 12 April 7:30 - 9:30 pm
Hotel Oakland: The Art of Finding Profit in a Preservation Project. Dick Neault, development consultant. OHA Monthly Program. St. Paul's Recreation Center Auditorium, 116 Montecito Ave., Oakland. Refreshments. \$1/OHA members, \$2/general public. Contact Gary Knecht, Program Chair (415) 865-6382.
- Wed/Mon 14, 19, & 21 Apr 7-10 pm & Sat 24 Apr 10am-4pm
Nineteenth Century Oakland. Sister Ethel Mary Tinneman, historian. Holy Names College Continuing Education class. Brennan 42, Holy Names College. Pre-registration required. \$55. Includes Sat. tour. Contact Holy Names College Continuing Education office, 3500 Mountain Blvd. Oakland 94619.
- Sat 17 & 24 April 9 am - 1 pm
Berkeley History: Teachers Workshop. Chuck Wollenberg, Karen Jorgensen-Esmali, & Trish Hawthorne. Vista College class. All Soul's Parish Episcopal Church, 2220 Cedar St., Berkeley. Registration at first class meeting. Free. Contact Vista College (415) 841-8431.
- Thurs 22 April - Sun 25 April
Oakland Public Library Association Book Sale. Old Firehouse, 14th & Grove Sts. (next to Preservation Park). Proceeds to Library book budget. Preview: Thurs. 4-7pm. Free/OPLA members, \$5/general public. Sale: Fri. 10am-8pm, Sat. 10am-5pm, Sun. 10am-1pm. Used books may be donated at branch libraries. Volunteers needed. Contact City-Line (415) 444-2489.
- Late April
Japanese American Internment Program. Berkeley Historical Society. TBA. Contact Gloria Cooper (415) 524-3892.
- Wed 28 April 8:00 am - 6:30 pm
Deterioration and Preservation of Architectural Terra Cotta Seminar. Friends of Terra Cotta. San Francisco location TBA. Pre-registration required. \$75/FOTC members, \$80/general public. Contact FOTC, c/o California Historical Society, 2090 California St., San Francisco, California 94109 or David Look, AIA, Seminar Coordinator (415) 556-7741.
- Thurs 29 April all-day
Bus Tour to the Gladding McBean & Co. Terra Cotta Plant, Lincoln, California. Friends of Terra Cotta. Pick-up points in San Francisco and Oakland. Pre-registration required. \$15. Lunch not included. Contact FOTC, c/o California Historical Society, 2090 Jackson Street, San Francisco, California 94109 or David Look, AIA (415) 556-7741.

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

Thurs 29 April - Sun 2 May

1982 California Historic Preservation Conference. Oakland Museum/Oakland Municipal Auditorium. Co-sponsored by **Oakland Heritage Alliance.** Contact Dana Cordeiro, Conference Coordinator (415) 839-2121. (See related article on page 1.)

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 11 am-4pm, and Sundays 1-4 pm. 1418 Lakeside Drive at 14th Street, Oakland, (415) 836-1976.

Paramount Theatre Tours. Tours are offered the 1st & 3rd Saturday of the month, 10 am. 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 3 pm. 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 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. ■

OAKLAND HISTORY NOTES

In the age of be-plumed ladies' hats, the Bentley Ostrich Farm on the northeast corner of High and East 14th Streets served the imperious demands of fashion. Complete with salesroom featuring "Ostrich Feather Products, Plumes, Boas, Stoles," the farm flourished from 1904 to 1917.

Postcard, courtesy Oakland Public Library.



Oakland Heritage Alliance
5569 Lawton Avenue
Oakland, California 94618

Non-profit organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Oakland, California
Permit No. 31

HISTORIC PRESERVATION:
REINVESTING IN AMERICA'S PAST
Preservation Week * May 9-15, 1982
National Trust for Historic Preservation

DATED MATERIAL — PLEASE
DO NOT DELAY DELIVERY

