



*Oakland History Room*

Men work around the ruins of Antonio Peralta's adobe walls, destroyed in the earthquake that struck the morning of October 21, 1868. Hugh Dimond's son Dennis took most of the adobe brick from this original site to Dimond Park, where he used them to build a clubhouse, and where they remain to this day.

## Preserving Oakland's birthplace

*By Holly Alonso*

UC Berkeley historian Lewis Koue calls the 1870 Antonio Peralta House and surrounding site of the Peralta rancho headquarters, "more important than Sutter's Mill." City officials call it "the ground zero of Oakland history" and L. Thomas Frye of the Oakland Museum of California extols it as the true "birthplace of Oakland."

Why such reactions to a park in Fruitvale which few may have heard of? This extraordinary map of time—with two adobe footprints from the Spanish and Mexican eras and a borrow pit deposit of rancho-era artifacts—bears

witness to the transformations of California over the past 200 years.

This Fruitvale abode was the last residence of Antonio Peralta, at the headquarters of the once vast Peralta land grant from the days when Oakland was part of Spain and Mexico.

The home will open to the public Saturday, July 14, for the first time since its restoration to original 1870 conditions, a process that began two and a half years ago. The Faces of Fruitvale Exhibition will also be unveiled at this event. The day's offerings include food, music, poetry, ceremonies—and, of course, tours telling all about the restoration. The cele-

bration will be held from noon to 3 p.m. at the house at 2465 34th Ave.

The restoration, managed by Friends of Peralta Hacienda Historical Park, was funded by a generous grant from the city of Oakland's Measure K bond program.

Over the past two and a half years, the object has been to restore the house to the conditions when it was first built in 1870, during the twilight of the rancho period and the dawn of the new Oakland. This occasion represents a major step forward in the \$5 million development of the 6-acre site as an interpretive park.

see **PERALTA** on page 4



## A message from the president: What you can do to help

At our recent board retreat, we developed a challenging agenda. Our goals are to:

- increase membership significantly, increase collaboration with neighborhood and like-minded groups,
- raise funds for several exciting projects
- increase volunteer participation in our organization
- plan a grand celebration of Oakland's 2002 sesquicentennial.

OHA needs your help to achieve these goals. We will thank you for your efforts. They enable us to be a stronger, more vigorous organization, and thus more able to honor and preserve Oakland's unique history.

### Increase OHA Membership

Tell your friends and acquaintances about OHA. Leave a message with names and addresses at the office and we'll send information.

### Help OHA work with other groups

Advocacy is most effective with many voices. Let other organizations know about OHA. If you would like informational materials or a guest speaker, please call our office.

### Help OHA with a contribution

There are many ways to contribute:

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Oakland History Room

A tug pushes a whaling ship out of winter mothballs. These ships spent the winter in the Oakland Estuary, then returned to northern waters in the spring to ply their trade. OHA plans a floating tour of the estuary, but needs your help to accomplish it.

- write a check
  - purchase books: Beth Bagwell's *Oakland, Story of a City* has been reprinted. Jane Powell's *Bungalow Kitchens* is also available. Both make great gifts!
  - participate in walking tours, house tours and other events.
- Contributions make existing programs better and help us develop new ones. Some exciting events we want to present are:
- a floating history tour of the Estuary
  - a "how-to-restore-your-home" lecture series.
  - a grand celebration of Oakland's sesquicentennial.

### Volunteer with OHA

It's a great way to strengthen preservation efforts while meeting an interesting group of Oaklanders. We need people to follow the issues, attend meetings, do historic research, plan events and help with office and administrative tasks.

Volunteering on walking tours, house tours, or next year's 150th birthday celebration can also get you free entrance to some of these special events.

Planning these activities is important too! Many OHA members have discovered a whole new group of friends who share their interests through our programs.

Working with and contributing to OHA offer some unique ways to be involved with shaping the city we love.

Development pressures are changing the face of Oakland and there are many exciting challenges ahead. We will be on the front lines, ensuring that we create a great mix of old and new and preserve a sense of place as Oakland grows.

We look forward to working together to make OHA stronger, more effective, and having a great time planning—and then attending—some unusual events in remarkable places!

For membership materials, to obtain a speaker, to volunteer or to ask questions, call 763-9218 or e-mail me at president@oaklandheritage.org. To make a contribution, please use the form on page 15. Thank you!

— Pamela Magnuson-Peddle



The Floral Depot will soon have a new face: missing dark blue tiles that might be described as “gently folded” are being custom-made by a Las Vegas tilemaker. The three missing second level windows, seen here boarded on the far right, are being custom-made to match the existing windows. Molds will be made of the terra cotta trim around the in-place windows to replicate it.



Joyce Roy

## Floral Depot: breathe a sigh of relief

By Joyce Roy

The Floral Depot finally has what every good building deserves—an owner who loves it. Akol Architects purchased it in April 2000 and the firm moved into the space fronting 19th Street soon thereafter.

The architects' office has been a construction site as they shaped the interior for their needs and worked on the restoration of both the 19th Street and Telegraph Avenue facades.

The preservation community can finally breathe a deep sigh of relief. Albert Evers designed this obviously very special Art Deco treasure in 1931. Threats to its continued existence have been on and off for over 20 years.

One of OHA's earliest preservation battles began in 1982, when Carter Hawley Hale, Inc., owner of Emporium-Capwell, was considering the site for a regional shopping center.

It was nominated for landmark status in 1982 and finally in 1984 came before the City Council. The council tabled it because of objections from the owner. In 1983, the State Historic Resources Commission had recommended the Floral Depot for inclusion in the National

Register of Historic Places but because of owner objection, it was not actually listed.

Disney World gave the Floral Depot recognition. The theme park created a replica of it in Orlando. You would think this might stop developers from looking at this two-story building as simply an underutilized site and open eyes to its value as major contributor to an uptown entertainment/retail district.

In restoring the façade, Dan Akol said he is trying for an authentic restoration and replicating original materials where possible. The missing dark blue tiles that might be described as “gently folded” had to be custom-made by a Las Vegas tilemaker.

Similarly, the three missing second level windows are being custom-made to match the existing windows. Molds will be made of the terra cotta trim around the in-place windows to replicate it, but the new trim might actually be made of fiberglass.

The spandrels, which were probably covered with signage, are finished with a black mystery material. It was decided that using black tiles would not violate the spirit and be more durable, with or without signage. The awnings that were

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**Akol Architects are pioneers betting on the revitalization of the uptown as an entertainment and retail area alive with activity day and night. Their polishing of this gem should brighten the prospects.**

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set in pockets above the window will be replaced.

Akol said he particularly liked the traditional storefronts on Telegraph with their recessed entries even though they presently attract uninvited overnight guests. He plans to restore the storefront at 1908 Telegraph Ave.

Akol Architects are pioneers betting on the revitalization of the uptown as an entertainment/retail area alive with activity day and night. Their polishing of this gem should brighten the prospects for uptown.



*Friends of the Peralta Hacienda House*

Archaeologists reviewed the scope of archeological testing work with the project team before excavations began.

## Peralta

*Continued from page 1*

The Faces of Fruitvale Community Heritage Exhibition will link people who live in the neighborhood today to the historic house, weaving together stories, photos and audio recordings. Created by artists, historians, curators, staff and community participants, the exhibit shows the connection of each individual's life to the sweep of history. It is one of seven Community Heritage Projects funded throughout the state by the California Council for the Humanities, in partnership with the James Irvine Foundation.

A dedicated group of neighbors, Friends of Peralta Hacienda Historical Park, has lobbied successfully over a 22-year period for more than \$6,000,000 in funds from private, city, state and federal sources to carve the park out of the surrounding neighborhood.

The Friends wanted to create a park in a district with the lowest percentage of open space in Oakland and with the highest percentage of children and youth. They were also committed to preserving the historic features of the headquarters of Rancho San Antonio. Both history and community have been the touchstones of the organization since its inception in the 1970s.

The park's six acres are graced by a lovely stretch of Peralta Creek. The two adobes that once stood near the top of the bank were the first non-indigenous dwellings in the East Bay, built in 1821 and 1840 by the Peraltas and Indian laborers. Between these two dates the site was the center of the East Bay Californio community, the first and largest of the land grants in the region, connected to the institutions of Spanish California by a network of religious, social and economic activities.

During this period, Antonio's wife Maria Antonia Galindo gave birth to 11 children, seven surviving. By the 1840s the vast rancho's herds had grown to some 8,000 cows and 2,000 horses.

When Yankees began to arrive in the 1840s, the Peraltas welcomed them. American travelers' accounts give a vivid picture of the rancho, with the beloved, if idealized, images of fandangos, fine horsemanship and limitless hospitality.

By 1850, an adobe wall 9 feet tall and 3 feet thick enclosed the site. Twenty-two adobe rooms leaned against it, housing guests and workers. Soon, however, Peralta land was besieged by squatters and speculators, among them the notorious Horace Carpentier, one of Oakland's founders.

The paper from the legal land cases from those days—still stored in the Bancroft Library—could cover acres.

**The Friends wanted to create a park in a district with the lowest percentage of open space in Oakland and with the highest percentage of children and youth. They were also committed to preserving the historic features of the Rancho San Antonio headquarters.**

Accordingly, the Peraltas paid the lawyers who pleaded those cases with thousands of acres of land.

Antonio Peralta's grip on his property was becoming precarious in the new society, just as the Californios' Spanish language and Mexican culture were being eclipsed. In 1868 an earthquake shook the area and the adobes fell in ruins. The Peraltas repaired the smaller, older adobe, and lived there for two years while they built the wooden structure which opens again July 14. It was created from a kit brought around Cape Horn, but made with redwood cut in the Oakland hills.

In relation to other houses built at the time, it was modest, due to the diminishing wealth of the family. To our eyes today, it is a beautiful Italianate Victorian, with its balconies, tall ceilings and dignified symmetry.

It has survived the wrecker's ball, fires, earthquakes, re-zoning and redevelopment and stands nearly alone as the link to the site's amazing history. I use the word "nearly" because an archaeological deposit from the early rancho period, recently rediscovered, still lies buried underground.

It is as significant as the house in learning about Oakland's heritage. Together,

*See PERALTA on page 6*



# MONTGOMERY WARD: REQUIEM FOR A HEAVYWEIGHT BUILDING

By Joyce Roy

After a protracted battle, Montgomery Ward, a national register building, is being reduced to rubble; this is the loss of an economic as well as a historic resource. The cleared site of 7.85 acres is slated to accommodate an elementary school (or schools) on 3.15 acres. The majority of the site, 4.7 acres, is to be a community soccer/baseball field.

The final action that doomed the building was the approval of the demolition contract by the school board at a special expedited meeting on Jan. 19.

The board bypassed its usual procedure of deliberating on construction issues at both the Finance Committee and Facilities Committee before presentation to the full board.

It refused to explore board member Paul Cobb's proposal for a public/private



Photo Credits: Oakland History Room, below, Joyce Roy, above

The 1925 *Oakland Tribune Yearbook*, below, celebrates the presence of Montgomery Ward in Oakland, left. Seventy-six years later the building stands on its last legs as demolition crews demolish the structure, above.



partnership that would have re-used the building for housing, including 100 units of affordable housing for teachers, and would have built a new school on the site without cost to the school district. In fact, the income from the building, had it been adapted for housing, could have provided a stream of funding for more schools.

The loss for Fruitvale is profound. The Fruitvale Transit Village is a nationally recognized pioneer transit node development. But it has been largely dependent on public subsidies. The adaptive reuse of the Montgomery Ward building, only 1/4 mile from the BART station, could have attracted other investment to the point that market forces could take over.

There is a loss to the city, as well. The need for more housing is a major theme in Oakland's General Plan. The Planning Commission in its deliberations in July 1999 concluded that preservation of this building and economic development policy were aligned and in conformity with the General Plan.

Other cities with similar buildings—like Chicago, Baltimore, Portland

and Dallas—have reused them to distinguished advantage. In Dallas the adaptive reuse of a 1.4 million sq. ft. Sears warehouse near light rail is changing a blighted area into one that is blooming.

The destruction of the Montgomery Ward building is a loss for the region. Demolishing a structure near regional transit that could provide 430 units of housing during a severe housing crisis flies in the face of good sense.

It would be hard to find a better example of preservation as smart growth than the restoration and reuse of this building. (see "Smart Growth" in the Fall, 1999 *OHA News*, page 8)

The 430 units of infill development would have taken hundreds of cars off the freeway and preserved over 100 acres of open space.

Proponents of saving the Ward building had consistently pointed out sound economic reasons to rehabilitate it. A reuse project would have saved demolition costs, generated substantial private

see **HEAVYWEIGHT** on page 6



*Friends of Peralta Hacienda Park*

Holly Alonso gave a report on the interpretive plan at a community meeting reviewing master plan design alternatives, summer 2000.

## Peralta

*Continued from page 4*

these two features bracket the historic span of Peralta Hacienda.

The house was purchased and reserved for public use by the Trust for Public Land as a result of Friend's efforts. Under their management, it has been painstakingly researched and restored. Project historian Mary Jo Wainwright compiled a 150-page monograph as a base for understanding the social conditions at Peralta Hacienda.

She delved into document repositories, and discovered an early newspaper photo showing that the house once had a first floor balcony. Restoration architects Kirk Peterson and Bill Coburn found nail holes from a missing widow's walk. These restored features now embellish the exterior.

Mary Hardy analyzed the earliest paint layers under a microscope; the restored historic colors now glow with the lush aesthetic sense of a different time. Ruby Newman found the whimsical pattern of

the original wood graining on doors on the upper floor, and spent months removing the layers that had been painted over them. Hank Dunlop, Victorian expert, has coordinated all aspects of the interior restoration, while combing the state for appropriate light fixtures, stoves and fireplaces.

The Antonio Peralta House today is a beautiful empty box, waiting to be filled with exhibits and programs for the wider public and local community. Future exhibits are being developed which will introduce visitors to the Californio period in Oakland, tell the story of the native peoples on the rancho, of the Peraltas and of the contributions of many ethnic groups to the history of 21st century Fruitvale. Through activities involving the five senses, programs will encourage visitors to explore Oakland's transformation from managed wilderness to rancho to farm to city.

For more information on the July 14 celebration, call 261-4181.

*Holly Alonso is a member of Friends of Peralta Hacienda Historical Park.*

## Heavyweight

*Continued from page 5*

investment, created jobs, and generated tax revenues, as well as provided a school and new housing.

Beside the economic losses are the emotional ones felt by neighbors—a distinctive landmark that was part of their heritage and their sense of place. Restored, it could have defined Fruitvale as a vibrant place even to those who merely passed it on BART or the Nimitz freeway.

It was the recognition of the value of this "friendly giant" that led community resident, Xandy Grube, to hold her finger in the dike beginning in 1996 when it was originally threatened.

She founded The League for the Protection of Oakland's Architectural and Historic Resources, which succeeded in saving it in a landmark court case when it was originally threatened in 1996.

Many residents in the surrounding community did not know the building was slated for demolition. They thought the clean up for toxic abatement was preparation for restoration.

In December and January, volunteers circulated a petition in the neighborhood and learned that nine out of 10 polled wanted the building saved. Unfortunately, no organized neighborhood group existed to speak for them and generate enough political power to make their wishes known.

Events that led to the building's demolition point to the necessity of building links between neighborhoods and raising awareness that economic growth, environmental responsibility, community revitalization and historic preservation are all components of a liveable city.

In cases such as Old Merritt College, the Broadway Building and even City Hall, organized citizens' groups fought for a change in the political landscape to save valuable buildings. One hopes that Oaklanders can use the lessons learned in this battle to avoid such a loss in the future.





Erika Mailman

At the top of a narrow staircase, cobwebs and bat silhouettes certainly make for a very spooky cupola.

## Halloween at the mansion

By Erika Mailman

A staircase draped with cobwebs... a human skull showing up in the gleam of your flashlight... dark rooms with intricately carved jack o'lanterns the only illumination... and, best of all, real ghosts on the premises.

This year, OHA teamed up with the Pardee Home Museum to present "Halloween at the Mansion," a fundraiser that capitalized on the fact that the historic 1868 Victorian home in downtown Oakland is reputed to be haunted.

For the unlucky price of \$7 or \$13 (adults), visitors were given a flashlight and free rein of the home's three stories. In the rooms, docents were stationed to give information about what spooky things might've happened there.

(For instance, telling if someone died in the room—or pointing to the window where the top of Emily Pardee's head was seen as she crouched on the balcony trying to overhear conversations in the 1800s).

Ghost-seeker Tim Dennehy has previously documented psychic activity on the estate and he did so the night of the

event. With fascinated kids peering at the view screen of his video camera, he captured footage of orbs of light in the attic space below the cupola.

Out in the coach house, visitors could have their tarot cards read by Gary Turchin or play with a Ouija board. Wonderful homemade refreshments were available, including pumpkin soup served out of (you guessed it) a hollowed-out pumpkin and warm spiced cider, a particular favorite on that somewhat rainy night.

Midway through the evening, Karen McKinney and Sebastian Romeo in historical costumes performed a reading created by Pardee Home Museum director David Nicolai.

The reading focused on the rancorous relationship between George Pardee and his stepmother, Emily, including allegations that he poisoned his father and that she was cheating on her husband as he lay on his deathbed.

If you missed this enjoyable evening, don't worry. We hope to collaborate with the Pardee Home again to make this an annual event.

**Out in the coach house, visitors could have their tarot cards read by Gary Turchin or play with a ouija board. Wonderful homemade refreshments were available, including pumpkin soup served out of (you guessed it) a hollowed-out pumpkin**

*Special thanks to Vicki Wiese and David Nicolai of the Pardee Home, Analuisa Quinonez for her graphic arts skills, volunteers Jo Ann Coleman, Naomi Schiff, Zina Goodall, Alan Howard, Kevin Flynn, Abraham and daughter Marilyn Citron (who created the bats in the belfry), Chris Weidenbach, Joyce Roy, Diana Daniels, Riley Doty, Eric Kos, Cheryl Maslin, Mayra Rivas, Kevin Chak, Marcia Metzler and Pamela Magnuson-Peddle.*



Erika Mailman

Throughout the home, statues were shrouded in cobwebs. Here, the likeness of a young girl receives an evil glare over her shoulder from Mary Pardee's portrait.



# OHA honors its 'Partners in Preservation'

By Pamela Magnuson-Peddle

On Dec. 7, the Oakland Heritage Alliance held its annual holiday party and presented the "Partners in Preservation" awards. These awards honor preservation projects and people that reflect the diversity of Oakland, that make us aware and proud of our culture, our history, and our city. The projects can be neighborhood or downtown, grand or small, physical or cultural; we like to cast a wide net. The people are those who through their special efforts bring to light our combined histories or promote preservation efforts.

## This year's winners

**Lifetime Achievement:** Helen Lore is a long-time community and preservation activist. She worked in Oakland's Parks and Recreation department for 22 years and while there became involved in the Peralta Hacienda Historic Park. For 10 years Helen was administrative director of OHA. She helped us grow and was the heart, soul and constant of the organization for all those years. She continues to work for preservation as a secretary of the board of the Friends of Peralta Hacienda Historic Park, founding member of an ad hoc committee to save and rehabilitate Vicente Peralta's mausoleum and as president of the Alameda County Historical Society.

**Journalism:** Paul Cobb has been called a "griot"—an African storyteller-culture bearer. His column in the *Oakland Tribune* was a carrier of community traditions and honored the ethnic and cultural history of the African-American community in particular and Oakland at large—reporting on such events as the Greenlining Institute, the work of OCCUR, church events and West Oakland's efforts (in which he was personally involved) to reroute the Cypress Freeway and reunite the neighborhood. His beautiful Victorian home and garden in West Oakland are personal examples of his commitment to preservation as an expression of neighborhood and civic pride.

## Projects

**The Artship, Slobodan Dan Paich.** The Artship came to berth in August of 1999 at the 9th Avenue pier. This art deco ship was built in 1939 and launched as the *Del Orleans* which plied the East-coast-to-South-America trade. Within a year she was transformed to the *USS Crescent City* and for the next 24 years was in active duty in war efforts. Then she was idle until 1977, with her third incarnation as the *Golden Bear*, the Maritime Academy's training ship until 1993. In 1997, through the efforts of Slobodan, the Artship Foundation and Ron Dellums she began her latest transformation. She is the U.S. headquarters of the International Peace Institute. The Artship Foundation is restoring her original art deco style and historic character and transforming her into a multi-purpose creative arts and education center.

**Jeff Norman—"Beyond the Pussycat: The Nine Lives of a Neighborhood Landmark"** is another of Jeff's ongoing efforts to recognize and celebrate Temescal history. Funded by Oakland's Craft and Cultural Arts Department, the month-long streetside display included a one-day community event focusing on the empty lot vacated by the Pussycat's demolition. The display recorded the theater's history and the allowed the community to reflect on how the site might once again become a community asset.



The Artship, Slobodan Dan Paich; the Artship Foundation



Kevin Flynn

1561 8th Street at Peralta in West Oakland; owner, Tim Witter.

**Restoration of the Grand Lake Theatre marquee and neon.** The theater was designed by the Reid Brothers, who also designed the Hotel Del Coronado near San Diego. Built in 1926 and opened with a grand celebration, the theater and its marquee now have their full complement of lights, neon, and enamel paint—restored thanks to Steffan Shelley and Greg King, and owner Allen Michaan. There was detective work involved: scraping paint to discover the original colors and taking apart the sign from inside to do a technical analysis to uncover not only the original color of the neon, but how to recreate the waterfall effect.

**"Rambling Gambrel"—the moving of a 5th Avenue house to the 5th Avenue pier.** This monumental task, an all-day effort caught on video, involved first efforts to save the house from demolition, then move it (with its top sawed off) to its new home. It was the combined work of Leal Charonnat, architect; J.W. Silveira, new owner; and Dwane P. Jensen, a planner in the zoning division of the Community and Economic Development Agency. Dwane was instrumental in advising to change the house's zoning to "live-work" so its reuse in an M-

See **PARTNERS** on page 9





## Partners

*Continued from page 8*

40/Heavy Industrial area, will comply with the city's zoning requirements.

**Restoration of Glen Echo Creek (and park).** The project began in the mid '70s when the county was going to culvert the creek. Valerie Winemiller and the neighbors of Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood Improvement League (PANIL) stood up to the bulldozers. Supported by Tom Bates, then Alameda County Supervisor, and Mary Moore, Oakland City Councilperson, a comprehensive arrangement between city and county and private citizens turned the creek and environs into a community park. This section was completed in 1998, and another section will be developed downstream. This is one of three creek projects locally—the other two are in Dimond Park at Sausal Creek, and Courtland Creek, which runs parallel to High Street.

### People

**Bill Sturm**, the head of the Oakland History Room at the main library, who is retiring this year. A native of the Laurel District, he took over the history room in 1978, after working in other library departments. He started presenting exhibits in the history room in 1980—four exhibits a year, centered around Oakland themes—efforts, with help of volunteers, to make history visible and bring it to the public. He has enhanced and developed the history room resources to make them accessible, and he and the staff are enormously helpful with outside history projects. He has also been the back page writer for the *OHA News* since its inception. He will be sorely missed.

**Wilda White and Marianne Dreisbach.** Both are founding members of the Jack London Neighborhood Association. Fearing the loss of the historic character in their area, they began in 1998 to fight inappropriate development in the Waterfront Warehouse District. Galvanized by the group and increasingly aware of the

neighborhood's unique past, they began a year-long process, which culminated in the area's listing on the National Register of Historic Places in spring 2000.

### Buildings and adaptive reuse

**21 West Grand, Rosa Parks House,** a three-story stucco apartment building, was in terrible condition and now has fresh paint and refurbished wooden windows—a rehabilitation done with taste and care thanks to BOSS, Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency. BOSS is a 29-year-old agency which provides services for the poor and homeless, supporting its clients with 30 programs in four strategic areas: food and shelter; longer-term housing; economic development, employment and education; and community building. The Rosa Parks house is transitional housing for 23 people, established in 1994 with money from HUD, the county, the city of Oakland and BOSS, and finished in January 1999. Contractor was Oliver & Company, architect was Erick Mikiten, Kodama/Diseno; BOSS renovation overseer was Daniel Barth.

**1561 8th Street at Peralta** in Oak Point District of West Oakland is a lovely yellow Italianate, built in the 1870s, whose character and style was brought out with careful painting and attention to detail. Its owner, Tim Witter, first bought in this neighborhood in 1991 with a city loan and now owns the next two houses. He does his own rehabilitation work, being careful to reuse as much of the older materials as he can. His work has inspired the neighborhood.

**Clara Mohammed School and Masjidul Waritheen,** 47th Avenue and Bond, East Oakland. Originally built in 1920s as the Melrose Baptist Church, it has been home of this branch of the Muslim American Society since the mid-1970s. The group refurbished and repainted the mosque, school and courtyard, retaining all the elements and details and choosing a color scheme which highlighted the glazed tiles. They did a spectacular job with color and detail, making it a gem in the neighborhood.



Kevin Flynn

**Restoration of Glen Echo Creek (and park).** Valerie Winemiller and the neighbors of the Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood Improvement League (PANIL).

**Willow Brooks Creamery** on 2515 San Pablo Ave. is a great example of adaptive reuse of an unusual brick and plaster art deco commercial building. This was one of several urban creameries and is now an art-space for both performance and the exhibition of multiple arts disciplines. It brings added life to this area of San Pablo Avenue.

**Clawson School** conversion at 3310 Peralta St., by developer Paul Parkman and partner Kathryn Porter is an unusual adaptation of a public school to live/work space. Finished last year, the building's architect was Bendrew Jong.

**Tribune Tower**—John Protopappas, owner-developer of Madison Park Developers; Gary Guenther, architect; and Judy Romann, construction manager. The Tribune building was originally built as the six-story Brueners Furniture Store in 1906. Its signature tower was added in 1922 after the *Tribune* bought it.

Current restoration and remodeling work on the building took two and a half years. The original concept was for live-work spaces, but the demands were such that it became commercial space and drew the newspaper back to its old home.

*Oakland Heritage Alliance invites you to share your knowledge of award-worthy programs or people. Call 763-9218 or e-mail [oaklandheritage@california.com](mailto:oaklandheritage@california.com).*



## LANDMARKS BOARD UPDATE

Compiled by Annalee Allen

### JULY 10, 2000

Board reviewed Pardee Home Museum garden master plan. EBMUD is underwriting a portion of the installation.

**Oakland Army Base:** announcement of a Section 106 consultation meeting Aug. 2. Concern for base warehouses Bldg #1 (administration building) and Parade Ground will be included in the re-use feasibility study.

**Lafayette Square Park:** Possibility of Alameda County Historical Society contributing a marker or plaque at this site.

**Fox Theater Marquee:** Tax credits and Title 24 exemptions could be available to a future lessee.

**Election 2000-2001:** G. Lythcott, Chair, C. Douthat, Vice Chair.

### SPECIAL MEETING JULY 13, 2000

The priorities voted on to focus on for 2000-01: landmark nominations; incentives for historic preservation; positive examples of preservation landmarks booklet, Web site, *Rehab Right* republication and definition of economic feasibility.

### SEPTEMBER 11, 2000

**Cox Cadillac property:** Two reports are going to Council Committee, one from the Landmarks Board and Planning Commission that recommends the entire site be designated, and a second from staff recommends showroom only be designated. New developer, Avalon Bay, has housing proposal for site. Community input sought.

**Presentation from Port of Oakland:** New book, *Pacific Gateway*, a history of the port, was commissioned as mitigation for demolition of Howard Terminal Transit Shed.

**Army Base:** Report on Section 106 meeting. Board to draft letter addressing preservation concerns. OBRA says conveyances of structures should be made with no preservation restrictions. Consultant reuse feasibility study is still underway.

Announcement that Douthat would not be reappointed. A. Allen voted Vice Chair.

### OCTOBER 16, 2000

Introduction of new Board member Y.H. Lee (replacing C. Douthat).

Secretary is preparing a resolution to acknowledge Douthat's contributions.

**Claremont Hotel:** BONC (the neighborhood group) preparing intent to nominate; staff to meet with them to explain process.

**Oak Center S-7** preservation district staff presented an update on district application.

**Planning Department's Chris Buckley** presentation on proposed zoning standards for residential design review for one and two unit structures and how standards relate to historic properties.

**Fox Theater:** Architecture firm Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer preparing a master plan, conducting market assessment, scenarios for future development.

### NOVEMBER 13, 2000

**Cox Cadillac:** Meetings with Avalon Bay and community are ongoing. Landmark nomination has been tabled at request of Councilperson Nancy Nadel.

**Southern Pacific Car Paint Shop Building:** Board voted to place on Preservation Study List.

**Announcement:** Chair G. Lythcott met with City Manager Robert Bobb regarding preservation issues in Oakland.

**Army Base:** Boardmember J. Bensen met with West Oakland community, awaiting consultant's reuse feasibility report.

### DECEMBER 11, 2000

Planning Commission upheld Board recommendation on Lawn Bowling Green and Rotunda Building landmark nomination, both scheduled for Council review.

**2333 Harrison St (MWM Building, A-rated):** Report on owner's intention to apply for demolition permit. There is no replacement project and since the demolition ordinance loophole (permitting creation of a parking lot in place of) is still on



Dennis Evanosky

Landmark nomination for the Cox Cadillac Building has been tabled as neighbors and Avalon Bay continue to meet.

the books, the building may be lost. Previous efforts by Board to landmark were met with objection from owner. Status will be reviewed next meeting.

**Claremont Hotel:** BONC (neighborhood group) filed intent to nominate for landmarking. Board voted to accept the preliminary rating sheet and direct applicant to complete nomination form within six months.

### FEBRUARY 5, 2001

Introduction of new board member N. Franklin, who replaces outgoing member J. Bensen. Revisions to Demolition Ordinance to go to Council in May.

**Claremont Hotel:** Staff reports no application on file as of yet for anticipated expansion.

**Historic mitigations:** OHA awaits response from staff on status of what work is still outstanding with respect to compliance with various mitigations entered into by City over past several years.

**2333 Harrison (MWM Building A-rated)** Staff is reviewing with applicant feasibility of offering structure to be moved off site. The demolition application is pending. When (or if) permit is issued, Board or Director could impose 60-day delay. Action is ministerial; no EIR is required: shows why demolition ordinance must be amended to close this loophole.

To view a copy of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board minutes, contact Helaine Kaplan Prentice, at 238-2978.



# The Claremont's landmark status

By Wendy Markel

At its press conference in June of 2000 OHA recognized seven Oakland historic structures it deemed most endangered. Among this threatened group I was amazed to find the Claremont hotel.

Surely, I said to myself, this substantial, and somewhat flamboyant early 20th century structure that one can see as a beacon even across the bay cannot be endangered! Doesn't it have any cultural or historical significance to the East Bay?

The OHA press conference information did nothing to set my fears to rest. "We appreciate and promote Oakland's distinctive neighborhoods and attractive downtown" I read. "We have been ahead of the curve in advertising the fact that Oakland has long been a center of art, culture, and noteworthy architecture in the Bay Area and we want to leave an Oakland of which we can be proud. We need the help of all Oaklanders to save these seven buildings, districts, categories, and sites."

How could this possibly be? Doesn't Oakland have a branch or government structure that functions to recognize cultural history? Haven't I read something about "Preservation Park?"

Isn't there something called the Pardee Home Museum with gardens? How was it the Claremont hotel has been left out of the protective fold?

Questions! Questions!

I found that indeed the city did have a Preservation Board and also a very impressive historic preservation element in the General Plan. Naturally, others had gone before me in the desire to respect and care for the symbols of our ancestors. What I found is as follows:

During the 1950s and 1960s Oakland was growing and there was no city protective mechanism for irreplaceable landmarks that were disappearing without a trace. (See *OHA News*, Vol. 14, No. 2-3 for more details). There was no general consensus on what was worth saving. In



Dennis Evanosky

Could Oakland's Claremont Hotel—that early 20th century beacon that one can see even across the bay—be endangered?

1966 the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act declared that "historical and cultural foundations of the nation should be preserved as a living part of our community life and development."

This act offered Oakland and other communities the vehicle for preserving and caring for historic resources. With this in mind the city established the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board to the Planning Department in 1973. The board went to work, and between 1974 through 1979 was instrumental in achieving protective designation for many of the city's historic structures.

Oakland Heritage Alliance was among 10,000 nationwide historic preservation organizations that were established, and itself was incorporated in 1980.

The story does not flow smoothly forever! Although the work of the board and the city's Cultural Heritage Survey office continued, it became clear that it was easier to landmark some structures than others and "increasingly the Board's actions aroused debate, especially when they looked beyond the obvious top 40...a moratorium on design-

nating new landmarks and districts went into effect...the city's preservation efforts were at a standstill." (*OHA News*, Vol. 14, No. 2-3).

What was needed was a process for the city to adopt to accomplish preservation of the cultural heritage within the General Plan. It took many years and the recommendations of neighborhood groups, real estate businesses, the development community, preservation experts and city planners to come up with the Historic Preservation Element of the Oakland General Plan. The plan was unanimously adopted by the City Council and signed by the mayor in 1994.

Yet another question: and what did the Historic Preservation Element say? With a document over one inch thick it was hard to come up with all the important aspects, but what I did come up with were the two goals:

**Number 1:** "To use historic preservation to foster the economic vitality and quality of life in Oakland by: maintaining and enhancing throughout the city the historic character, distinct charm, and

See **CLAREMONT** on page 12



## Claremont

*Continued from page 11*

special sense of place provided by older properties; and preserving and encouraging a city of varied architectural styles and environmental character reflecting the distinct phases of Oakland's cultural, social, ethnic, economic, political, and architectural history; enriching the quality of human life in its educational, spiritual, social, and cultural dimensions through continued exposure to tangible reminders of the past."

**Number 2:** "To preserve, protect, enhance, perpetuate, use, and prevent the unnecessary destruction or impairment of properties or physical features of special character or special historic, cultural, educational, architectural or aesthetic interest or value."

The General Plan's Historic Preservation Element also states that the city adopts the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties consistent with standards for preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction and that by using these standards Oakland will conform to them and join many other communities nationwide."

One of the standards states "Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use."

And another states "The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved."

The general plan outlines the guidelines for determination of landmark eligibility. In the ongoing comprehensive historical and architectural survey conducted by the City Planning Department, all individual properties are thoroughly researched, documented and evaluated according to an A, B, C, D, E rating scale.

Using the city's evaluation criteria, rating "A" is as follows:

"Highest Importance. Applies to the most outstanding properties, considered clearly eligible for individual national Register and City landmark designation. Outstanding examples of an important style, type, or convention, or intimately associated with a person, organization,

## A friend in the Fox

Friends of the Oakland Fox is sending out a new brochure showing one of the deities that flanks the stage of the old theater, as photographed by Jeff Lindquist. The city has hired a theater sign specialist, Wagner Sign Company, to restore the prominent Fox Oakland blade sign to its former glory, relighting a somewhat forlorn stretch of Telegraph Avenue.



event, or historical pattern of extreme importance at the local level or major importance at the state or national level (41 total points and up)."

Given all this history it seems to me and other members of the Berkeley and Oakland neighborhoods around the Claremont that it too should be listed among the important and landmark properties of both Oakland and the East Bay.

The National Historic Preservation Act and the Secretary of Interior's Standards and the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board are in place, the Oakland Heritage Alliance is in place, the Historic Preservation Element of the city's General Plan is in place, the historical and architectural survey is in place. The time has come to be able to list the Claremont among our precious landmarked properties.

Following the submission of an "Intent to Landmark" document to the Preservation Advisory Board, and upon discovering that the Claremont hotel has an Oakland City Landmark eligibility rating of 69 (almost off the charts!), the landmark application committee of Berkeley/Oakland Neighbors of the Claremont (BONC) has taken up the banner and is currently working on this application.

Those preparing the application are in communication with the management of the Claremont Hotel and together they are discussing how to best accomplish landmark and management goals.

It remains for the whole community of

Oakland, and the East Bay, to make sure the mayor and councilmembers know the residents support this landmark application. It was for a reason that the hotel and the grounds on which it sits were saved from destruction in the 1991 Firestorm.

We care for our landmarks, and once we have bestowed the Oakland designation of landmark on the property we can permanently take it off the "most endangered" list.

## EXTENDING A WARM WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

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Thank you and much appreciation to all those who have contributed time, money and spirit to OHA, as we fight to ensure that the Oakland renaissance includes a renewed appreciation for our extraordinary architectural heritage. We welcome contributions to our effort at anytime.

## OHA FALL 2001 HOUSE TOUR

CLAREMONT PINES AND ADJACENT AREA

By Mary McDonald

The curvilinear, gently sloping streets and quality homes of Claremont Pines and adjacent Oakland neighborhoods of will be featured on OHA's Fall 2001 House Tour.

Claremont Pines is bounded by Broadway Terrace, Margarido Drive, Acacia Avenue, and Romany Road, just above a portion of the Claremont Country Club Golf Course.

Originally owned by Jose Vicente Peralta, this area was purchased by developers in 1850 and subdivided in 1879. It was part of the area more generally known as "Rock Ridge."

In 1904, Philip E. Bowles, a financier and philanthropist, purchased the 58-acre site and constructed a now-demolished large villa, stables, an exhibition space for American saddle horses and lush gardens.

The Bowles estate, "The Pines," was richly photographed by Gabriel Moulin. His photographs are archived in the Bancroft Library and are reproduced in the newly re-released book *Gabriel Moulin's San Francisco Peninsula: Town and Country Homes, 1910-1930*.

At the same time Mr. and Mrs. Bowles established The Pines, they and other members of the Claremont Country Club purchased a large portion of the surrounding acreage for a golf course and

country club. When Mr. Bowles died in 1926, the Claremont Pines Corporation, successful southern California developers, prepared the estate for subdivision and selected the York Company of Oakland to handle the development and sales of lots for exclusive homes in what then became known as "Claremont Pines."

The York Company foresaw the desirability of the location near downtown Oakland and San Francisco, as well as the appealing natural beauty of gently rolling hills with bay views. The company established covenants, codes and restrictions to implement its vision of quality homes, which included rolled curbs, underground utility wires and elegant cast iron street lamps.

Some of these houses and the majority of homes in the adjacent area were destroyed in the 1991 Firestorm. The tour will emphasize pre-Firestorm homes, along with a few post-Firestorm ones whose construction has incorporated many of the ideals proposed by the York Company.

OHA is beginning to recruit volunteers to help with historical research, writing the tour booklet, advertising and promotion, refreshments, floral arrangements and day-of-tour docents. To help in this fun fund-raising endeavor, please call OHA at 763-9218.

Ladies and gentlemen,  
[www.oaklandheritage.org](http://www.oaklandheritage.org)

OHA is proud to announce the launch of [www.oaklandheritage.org](http://www.oaklandheritage.org). This new Web site is full of information, with a calendar listing, links to other like-minded organizations and a news icon, which when fully operational will contain press releases, media information and up-to-the-minute briefings on Oakland's preservation news.

If you're Web savvy and would like to volunteer to help make some of those "soon to be operational" icons operational, call the office at 763-9218 and donate some of your time.

### Call for nominations

Want to raise your hand and make a nomination? Our voting system is completely chad-free!

OHA invites you to nominate buildings to our Most Endangered List, and to nominate people, buildings or projects for our Partners in Preservation Awards. No ballots necessary. Call OHA at 763-9218 or e-mail us at [nomination@oaklandheritage.org](mailto:nomination@oaklandheritage.org).



## 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, call 763-9218, or e-mail [news@oaklandheritage.org](mailto:news@oaklandheritage.org). All phone numbers in 510 area code unless indicated

### Exhibits

**Auto Racers and Racing.** Oakland Public Library and Emeryville Historical Society present an exhibit about Alameda County's colorful auto racers and racing, from the first Emeryville race in 1909 to the midget races held in Oakland's Exposition Building in the 1950s and '60s. "Automobile Racing in Alameda County" is at the Oakland History Room, 125 14th St., through May 15. Monday, Tuesday, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Wednesday, Thursday, noon to 8 p.m.; Friday, noon to 5:30 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Sunday, 1 to 5 p.m. 238-3222.

### Upcoming events

**Monday, May 14 6:30 p.m.** A Karen Bartlett documentary, "Mary Jane Colter: House Made of Dawn" will screen at the Pacific Film Archive Theater, 2575 Bancroft Way in Berkeley. OHA co-sponsors this film with Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association, the Organization of Women Architects and the UC Berkeley Department of Architecture. Colter was an Arts & Crafts architect and chief designer for the Fred Harvey Company until 1948. Free. 841-2242

**Sunday, May 20, noon to 4 p.m.** Spring Garden Tour of 10 beautiful Fernwood gardens. Tickets \$20. Sponsored by Fernwood Community Club and Hillside Gardeners of Montclair. Advance tickets: Robin Johnson at 547-3856.

**Monday, May 28, 10 a.m.** 80th Memorial Day

Commemoration at Mountain View Cemetery with a tour celebrating the cemetery's veterans and Medal of Honor recipients immediately following. 5000 Piedmont Ave. 658-2588.

**Thursday, May 31, 7 p.m.** "Imperial San Francisco." Author Gray Brechin presents a slideshow about the Hearsts and other powerful Bay Area families. \$5. Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Ave. in Alameda. 748-0796 or [www.alamedamuseum.org](http://www.alamedamuseum.org).

**Thursday, June 28, 7 p.m.** "Victorian Glory." Author Paul Duchscherer shows slides of Bay Area Victoriana. \$5. Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Ave. in Alameda. 748-0796 or [www.alamedamuseum.org](http://www.alamedamuseum.org).

**Tuesday, Sept. 16, 11 a.m.–5 p.m.** Alameda Legacy Home Tour. View splendid interiors of historic homes and stroll through neighborhoods rich in architectural heritage. Ticket price (\$18 in advance, \$20 day of tour) includes keepsake "Legacy Guidebook" and refreshments. Hosted by Alameda Architectural Preservation Society and the Alameda Museum. Mail a check payable to AAPS to Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Ave., Alameda, CA 94501. 523-5907 or [www.alameda-home-tour.org](http://www.alameda-home-tour.org).

### Tours

**First Tuesday Tour** sponsored by Oakland City Tours Program. Free tours of City Hall, Frank Ogawa Plaza and administration buildings first Tuesday of every month 10 a.m. City Hall front entrance. 238-3234 or [www.oaklandnet.com](http://www.oaklandnet.com) and click on community link.

**Black Panther Legacy Tour** conducted by the Dr. Huey P. Newton Foundation. Eighteen sites significant in the history of the Black Panther Party, last Saturday of each month, noon–2:30 p.m.. Advance tickets: \$20 adults, \$15 students. Day of tour: \$25. Departs from West Oakland Branch Library, 1801 Adeline Ave. 986-0660.

**Camron-Stanford House**, an 1876 Italianate house museum on Lake Merritt, offers tours 11

a.m.–4 p.m. Wednesdays and 1–5 p.m. Sundays. \$4/\$2 (free first Sunday). 1418 Lakeside Dr., 836-1976.

**Cohen-Bray House**, an 1884 Stick Eastlake with original interiors, 1440 29th Ave. Tours 2 p.m. fourth Sunday or by appointment. \$5. 532-0704.

**Dunsmuir House & Gardens**, a neoclassical Revival mansion, offers free access to its grounds 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Tuesday–Friday, 2960 Peralta Oaks Court. To learn about the grounds and mansion tours, (there is a charge), 615-5555 or [www.dunsmuir.org](http://www.dunsmuir.org).

**Mountain View Cemetery** offers free docent tours at 10 a.m. on second Saturday of each month. 5000 Piedmont Ave. 658-2588.

**Paramount Theatre**, an art deco movie palace, offers \$1 tours of areas not usually open to the public. Learn the theater's history, at 10 a.m. on the first and third Saturday. 2025 Broadway. 893-2300.

**Pardee Home Museum**, an 1868 Italianate villa home to two Oakland mayors and one California governor, offers tours at noon on Fridays and Saturdays, reservations recommended. Schools and private groups may arrange a special tour. \$5 adults, children 12 and under free. 672 11th St. 444-2187 or [www.pardeehome.org](http://www.pardeehome.org).

### Meetings of interest

**Friends of the Oakland Fox**, second Thursdays, 6–7:30 p.m., 1970 Broadway, 12th Floor. 869-3519.

**Oakland Planning Commission**, alternate Wednesdays, time varies, City Hall. 238-3941.

**Oakland City Council**, every Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. City Hall, Council Chambers. 238-3941.

**Oakland Heritage Alliance**, Board of Directors, first Mondays 7–10 p.m., Camron-Stanford House, 1418 Lakeside Drive. 763-9218.

**Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board**, second Monday, 4–8 p.m., City Hall, Hearing Rm. 1. 238-3941.

## OHA NEWS

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EDITOR-PRODUCTION: Dennis Evanosky  
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 [news@oakland-heritage.org](mailto:news@oakland-heritage.org)

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 of the city's archaeological, architectural, cultural, environmental and historical resources. Membership dues and contributions are tax deductible, under IRS regulations. Oakland Heritage Alliance is a 510(c)3 organization

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### GREAT BOOKS ABOUT BAY AREA HISTORY



Dennis Evanosky

Diane Curry, left, and Abby Wasserman teamed up to edit *The Spirit of Oakland*.

*The Spirit of Oakland* anthologizes sixteen writers on Oakland history, among them former OHA president Annalee Allen and present board member Erika Mailman. The coffee-table book is lavishly illustrated with photos from the collection of the Oakland Museum of California. *Heritage Media Corp., \$49.95. museum giftshop and local bookstores.*

*The Peraltas and Their Houses* is a hot-off-the-press, nicely bound booklet from the Alameda County Historical Society. Published in 1951 and now reprinted in an edition of 600 copies. By J.N. Bowman, with a catalog of Luis Maria and Maria Loreto Alviso Peralta's seventeen children. Useful maps of the Peralta homes and line drawings. *\$8.50 at selected bookstores and museums. Order from the Society at 484 Lake Park Ave., #307, Oakland, 94610. Please add \$1 for shipping.*

*Bungalow Kitchens* is a glorious full-color peep into local kitchens and offers advice for faithful restorations that don't create headaches for homeowners. Author Jane Powell, past president of OHA, is working on a companion, *Bungalow Bathrooms*. *\$34.95. With a \$100 tax-deductible donation to OHA, free. 763-9218.*

*Oakland, the Story of a City*. Beth Bagwell's classic is an invaluable resource on Oakland's history. Published in 1982, and reprinted by OHA. *\$11.95 paperback, \$14.95 hardbound. Call OHA, 763-9218; also available at local bookstores.*



# Oakland History Notes: the T and D Theatre

By William W. Sturm

Oakland's first major motion picture theater opened Nov. 22, 1916, on the south side of 11th Street between Franklin and Broadway. Named the T and D Theatre after the Turner and Dahnken Circuit theater chain, the 3,500 seat moviehouse was touted as "the largest motion picture theater outside New York."

"This magnificent structure is famous all over America," the *Oakland Tribune* informed its readers. "Equipped with the finest facilities, a monster Wurlitzer Hope-Jones organ, tea rooms, lounging rooms, parlors and all manner of conveniences, it is a marvel of theatrical architecture."

Designed by Cunningham and Politeo, prolific theater architects whose work included the Alcazar in San Francisco, the T and D was replete with the opulent amenities of the golden age of movie palaces. The second floor featured a gentlemen's smoking room carpeted with Turkish rugs and fitted up with Moorish fixtures. A "Pompeian Loggia," a rest area for ladies and gentlemen, was graced with an aquarium filled with rare fish. The ladies' tea room was filled with potted palms, ferns, art jardinières—and scores of canaries in cages hung from every portion of the room.

The theater itself was a place of exotic enchantment. "On the main floor, aisles extend in a gentle slant towards the stage and orchestra pit, where the fifteen-ton organ is housed. At intervals, lights imbedded in the ceiling and walls give a soft illumination to persons wishing to pass to and from seats. The lights are arranged in five colors, controlled from the organ seat, so that sunset, moonlight, morning, firelight and other film lightings may receive a correspondingly harmonious house lighting..."

The T and D, like many moviehouses of this time period, featured live entertainment as well as cinematic pleasures. A program from the '20s highlighted Wolohan's Californians in concert, introducing Miss Filbert singing "A Perfect Day" and a chorus from "Maytime." Harold Lloyd film "Safety Last" followed the Californiana.

For many years, the T and D entertained Oaklanders with first-run movies.



*Oakland History Room*

The T and D Theatre, circa 1920.

Throughout the '50s, news commentator John K. Chapel broadcast from the theater. The T and D closed in 1976, joining many downtown theaters on the road to oblivion. In 1978, items from the theater were auctioned off.

Long gone were the canaries and rare fish. The building was demolished to make way for the Trans Pacific Centre, which opened in 1982.

**Oakland Heritage Alliance**  
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