

## Celebrate Oakland's Rotunda

By Erika Mailman

Developer Phil Tagami gets daily feedback on his Rotunda restoration project. Each workday as he leaves his third floor office and heads to the elevators, "I see half a dozen people looking over the rail, peering up with their mouths open. That's very rewarding."

And what those people are gaping up at is the building's marvelous elliptical glass dome. Newspaper accounts the year the Rotunda opened said that it was "surmounted by the largest elliptical dome in existence...The steel work on the dome was one of the most difficult pieces of construction work ever conquered by Oakland workmen."

There are 400 panes of glass in the dome (once opaque, now clear glass).

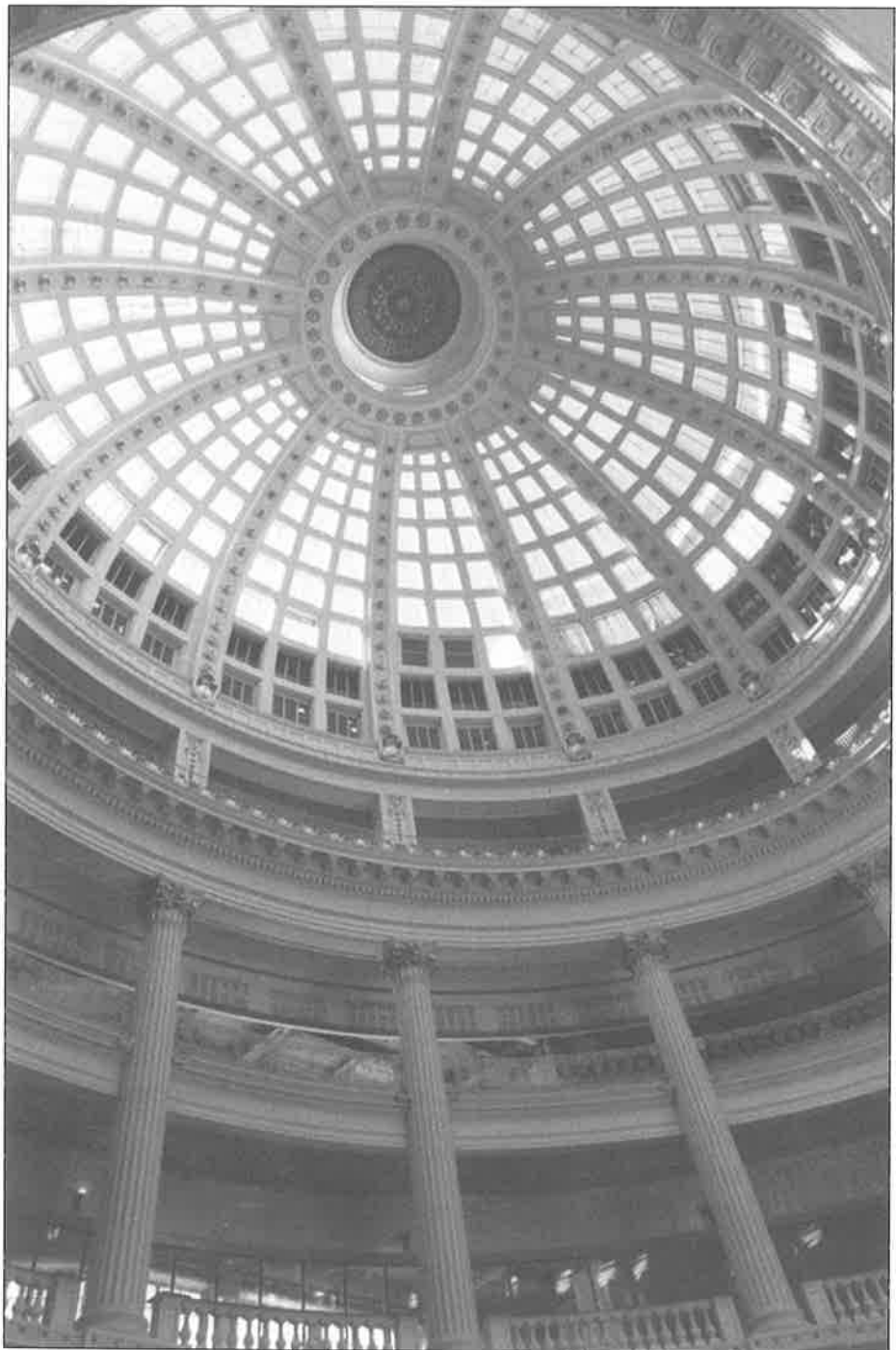
Tagami first saw the Rotunda's interior in 1989, the day after the Loma Prieta earthquake. He was walking around downtown Oakland with a friend, checking out the damage.

"We stumbled across the Rotunda," he says, "and I was just blown away. I said 'God, I'd like to do a project like this someday.'"

Three years later, he was working with city staffers to formulate a plan for the building. But at the tender age of 27, "I was a little young in their minds to be pursuing such a thing."

It wasn't until 1999 that he purchased the building and undertook the \$49.6 million restoration.

See **ROTUNDA** on page 3



Zimmerman Investments

Now restored to its prior splendor, the Rotunda began life as Kahn's department store. Kahn's was the 1879 Oakland business that built the structure on Broadway near City Hall in 1913.



## A new face at OHA

For those of you who have not called the office recently, there is a new person at the desk of the Oakland Heritage Alliance. Kathy Ferreira took the position of Administrative Director in May. After the dust has settled, we can see a few desk tops cleared, flowers in the front window and file cabinets organized. Kathy is a Mills College graduate with a bachelor of arts in sociology.

She is originally from Detroit but loves her adopted home, Oakland. With previous nonprofit experience with the American Cancer Society, she also has a strong interest in urban planning and preservation.

She brings to her new role at OHA strong organizational skills, a cheerful presence and a commitment to the mission of preservation as a positive force for urban development.

Kathy has already proved her value by organizing the office, greeting old and new members on the telephone, helping with publicity on the walking tours and adding to our growing list of volunteers. She is a breath of fresh air. We hope you will call into the office, introduce yourself and welcome Kathy to her new position.

I look forward to seeing you Sept. 7 at the Rotunda celebration and on the Claremont Pines house tour Oct. 7.

— *Pamela Magnuson-Peddle,*  
President

## In this issue

Landmarks Board update	4
Heinolds' landmark status	5
My favorite building	7
Streets of the Laurel	8
OHA Calendar	10
Support OHA	11
Oakland History Notes	12

## Has the city abandoned Studio One?

Originally erected in 1894 to shelter orphans, the Studio One building (365 45th St., near Oakland Technical High School) was one of three structures built for the care of children and elderly women, all of which are still in use—including the Mathilda Brown House and Park Day School.

After World War II, North Oaklanders, students, organizations and businesses raised money to purchase what was by then an abandoned building. They gave it to the city as part of a national movement to provide art and recreation programs for working people. Studio One has seen its share of rising California artists, such as Robert Arneson and Michael Lopez (ceramics), Ralph and Martha Borge (painting), and Richard Graf (printmaking). Generations of Oaklanders have studied with teachers from the Bay Area's rich community of working artists.

Today, after years of delayed maintenance and an earthquake, Studio One is an unreinforced masonry building (URM) badly in need of seismic, ADA, and other upgrades and repairs. Although the Oakland Studio Arts Association (OSAA) has worked to partner with the city to save the historic building and program, the city seems

more intent than ever to close Studio One. Recent statements by City officials make it clear that despite the City Council's previous commitment to support a plan to raise money for building renovations, city staff—from Parks and Recreation to the City Manager's office—strongly oppose it. They say they are developing their own plan for dealing with the problem.

OSAA board member Michael Miller believes this means closing the building and, at best, moving bits and pieces of the program to recreation centers all over town. Without the program, the Studio One building is in greater risk of demolition or becoming blighted.

OSAA is asking interested OHA members to join OSAA and The 1,000 Friends of Studio One, a coalition of concerned East Bay residents, to save Studio One. OSAA believes both the program and the building have historic merit and encourages readers to participate. You can help by signing the 1,000 Friends of Studio One petition, contacting your City Council representative or by volunteering.

Contact Michael Miller at 530.6470, e-mail [strehlou@mindspring.com](mailto:strehlou@mindspring.com), or write to OSAA, P.O. Box 11393, Oakland, CA, 94611.

## Rotunda dedication raises funds for OHA

Come celebrate the Rotunda Friday, Sept. 7 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. The festivities begin at the Frank Ogawa Plaza entrance with Mayor Brown's dedication of the building, and continue under the dome with music, wine and hors d'oeuvres. Developer Phil Tagami, architect Jim Heilbronner and other project participants will discuss the project. OHA will honor Rotunda Partners with its President's Award. Donations are \$25, \$50, and \$100. For reservations, call OHA: 763-9218.

## Tour Claremont Pines

Save Sunday, Oct. 7 to tour eight homes of historic and architectural interest in the Claremont Pines and Upper Rockridge neighborhoods.

Claremont Pines was developed in the late 1920s and early 1930s as an exclusive subdivision.

We need volunteers, particularly docents! Volunteers receive complimentary tour tickets. Call OHA at 763-9218.



# Rotunda

*Continued from page 1*

Alan Dreyfuss, a preservation architect who worked on the Rotunda, says “The interior is so spectacular that it takes your breath away, even in the condition in which we first saw it (in 1997, when the building was city-owned and standing dormant). It was incomplete, dusty, but the light from the dome sort of filtered down through the dust — it had almost an ethereal quality... It was like a beautiful ruin like you see when traveling through Europe.”

“I’ve had a lot of late nights and long weekends to get it where it is,” says Tagami. Today, the Rotunda is 98 percent occupied—and for those who wondered why the grand opening was pushed forward year to year, that’s the reason. Tagami says each new tenant has different build-out expectations, and meeting those expectations delayed completion.

The Rotunda began life as Kahn’s department store, an 1879 Oakland business that built the structure on Broadway adjacent to City Hall in 1913. Tagami plans to honor the Kahn Brothers with a plaque in Kahn’s Alley. Over the years, it changed names and ownership, becoming Schlesinger’s, Kahn’s again, Rhodes and Liberty House. It was under ownership of Zimmerman Investments that the name Rotunda was bestowed.

Myron Zimmerman owned the Rotunda at the time of the earthquake and was doing restoration work even before tectonic activity shook the structure. “(Zimmerman) has real vision and is a real pioneer for Oakland,” says Tagami, who is a friend of the previous owner. “We’re indebted to him; we’ve been beneficiaries of a lot of his hard work... We feel really sorry that the city didn’t have the kind of leadership we enjoyed.”

That leadership allowed Tagami to buy the Rotunda from the city for a token amount, with the agreement that if the building is to be sold or the project refi-

nanced the city would receive 50 percent over the cost of the building.

Myron Zimmerman, whose office is at 14th and Broadway, right across the street from the building he once lavished years on, says “I’m tickled to death it’s open; it’s great for Oakland.” And while he says of Tagami and his partners “Those guys are nice guys... they really did a first-class job,” he’s upfront about the fact that he did a “tremendous amount of the work—about \$35 million worth” and “80 percent of the remodeling.”

Zimmerman was the one who reopened the dome so it could be seen from six floors down; over the years department store tenants had filled in the floors to add retail space. “Obviously the dome wasn’t for one floor,” Zimmerman remarks. He found the original plans for the structure in the basement and launched into high gear with contractors and architectural engineers who had worked on the state capitol restoration.

Zimmerman also opened up the basement, so that one more floor has visual access to the dome, made columns and railings and put gold leaf on the dome. He says of his previous ownership, “The times were bad; it wasn’t good timing, but all’s well that ends well.”

Tagami says he will install a plaque in Zimmerman’s honor—but his main dedication, in the form of a dedication block, will be to the 2,400 laborers who worked on the restoration.

Midge Walterhouse isn’t someone who worked on the restoration, but she’s just about the most dedicated worker the Rotunda ever had. She began working in 1965 as a salesgirl when she was in high



Oakland History Room

The Rotunda—Kahn’s—was built just two years after City Hall, which is visible in the distance.

school, when the structure was called Rhodes. She stayed through the transition to Liberty House, and now she’s the event coordinator for the Rotunda. And it’s all in the family: her grandfather was a stock boy when the store was Schlesinger’s, a buyer when it became Kahn’s again and was the vice president of Rhodes, Inc. Her husband is president of Pankow Special Projects, which worked on the present renovation.

Reflecting back on the glory days of retail under the dome, Walterhouse says “It was *the* elite department store in the area. It was where everyone shopped. It was up there with City of Paris,” a San Francisco department store.

“I absolutely love that building,” she adds. And because her grandfather worked there, she grew up with an intimate knowledge of the spaces less known to the average shopper. “I know the back hiding spaces and the hidden stairways. We got to know all the niches and things.”

Walterhouse is pleased to share again with Oakland “what I’ve been enjoying all my life.” What was once the store’s

*See ROTUNDA on page 4*



## Rotunda

*Continued from page 3*

bargain basement is now the party venue: her domain as event coordinator.

Tagami has something to add about that basement. The structural engineers who worked with him now lease space in the basement. "It's the most dangerous place to be in the building during an earthquake," says Tagami. "It makes you feel pretty damn good" that the engineers trust their own work enough to place themselves in the hot seat.

Are there changes to the building that old-time shoppers will recognize? The fifth floor has been closed in with glass and the 1953 joining of the original structure with a stand-alone 1923 annex has been honored, as has the installation of 1986 handrails, now considered historic.

"People were concerned that we'd fill in the dome," says Tagami, "to increase the gross leasable area. It was just silly."

He points out that he has a "well-established track record with the preservation community," working with the Key System Building and saving the Floral Depot from the wrecking ball and providing 100 percent financing for Matthew Fox, who owned the Floral Depot next.

Tagami's eye is now turned toward airport expansion and another grand structure that needs a lot of help: the Fox Theater. He wants to work with a mixture of live and alternative performance there, and "respect and maintain the integrity of the space." He says his work will provide a "marker hopefully others will follow... the more the merrier. There's room at the table for everybody."

For a man working with steel and glass, it can be hard for him to talk about the less tangible aspects of a building like the Rotunda. "One tries to separate the emotion from conducting real estate development and building—it's hard with this building." One little signal people can pick up on, though, is the fact that he is inserting his *monsho* or family crest

into the middle of the terrazzo floor. The 16th century Japanese crest features a plum blossom. "It's a nice way to sign the building without putting your name on it," says Tagami. "This building will transcend my lifetime."

The Rotunda dedication will be held Friday, Sept. 7 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. with Mayor Jerry Brown. An OHA bene-

fit will follow under the fully restored dome. Join in honoring Rotunda Partners with the OHA President's Award.

Music, wine and hors d'oeuvres and a presentation on "Atrium Architecture" by architectural historian Don Choi will highlight the program

Donations are \$25, \$50, and \$100. For reservations, call OHA: 763-9218.

## LANDMARKS BOARD UPDATE

*Compiled by Annalee Allen*

### MARCH 2001

**Landmark determination status:** Cox Cadillac—still on pending list  
**Report from OHA President**

**Pamela Magnuson-Peddle:** visit to Oakland by Richard Moe, President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and his meeting with Mayor Jerry Brown.

**Old business:** still awaiting Stoltz Report on feasibility of re-using historic structures on Army Base. Concerns of the preservation community should not be overlooked.

**New business:** Comment on DEIR, Lake Chabot Municipal Golf Course. Board comments: importance of course as a historic landscape, concern for impacts on WPA constructed elements such as the clubhouse, the retaining walls and pathways, concern for loss of numerous trees, including live oaks.

**Board Report:** Carpentier on positive contact with new occupants of the Floral Depot building. Also—an update on restoration progress of the Pekin Low Café (706 Franklin St.)

### APRIL 2001

**Special tour:** Charles Greene Library, which will re-open in the fall as the African American Museum and Library

**Design review:** King Building (300 12th St.), a historic unreinforced masonry building. Board approved staff recommendations, owner will consider landmark designation.

**Application:** To install ATM facility on ground floor exterior of the Breuner Building (2201 Broadway). Board recommended denial.

Allen requests information at next meeting from staff on a proposal to build a cathedral in front of the landmark Henry J. Kaiser Auditorium

### MAY 2001

**Special tour:** Library History Room, which has been in operation for 50 years and a presentation by retiring librarian Bill Sturm

**Presentation on restoration plans** for showroom in the Cox Cadillac building by architects Rosemary Mueller and Alan Dreyfuss. The DEIR is expected to be out for board comments in August.

**Comments from Ted Axe,** representing the developer KSL on Claremont Hotel landmark nomination—should be owner initiated. Chair Lythcott will lead a mediation session with KSL and the neighborhood group BONC to try to reach a consensus. A nomination hearing is expected at the July meeting.

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

*We are in need of a volunteer to write this column. If you would like to donate your time to help cover the Landmarks Board, call OHA at 763-9218 and ask for Pamela Magnuson-Peddle.*



Oakland History Room

Heinolds' offered thirsty wayfarers the first chance to enjoy a drink upon entering Oakland from Alameda and the last chance to imbibe when leaving Oakland. The saloon was recently placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Advertisements in the photo promote life on both sides of the Oakland Estuary: Alameda's Neptune Beach is open daily and Lynn Cowan is at Oakland's T&D Theater.

## Dedicating Heinolds' National Register Plaque

By David Nicolai

On January 14th of this year, when many Oaklanders were riveted by the American Football Conference championship game underway at the Coliseum, a respectable crowd of citizens gathered at Jack London Square for the annual Jack London birthday party hosted by the Port of Oakland.

Besides the dedication of the new wolf tracks on the Jack London History Walk and a statue, White Fang, by noted sculptor Cedric Wentworth, the highlight of the afternoon was the unveiling of the new plaque at Heinolds' First and Last Chance Saloon, honoring its recent listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The impetus for seeking National Register listing for Heinolds', the only authentic historic structure left in Jack London Square, began with the original 1998 draft of the Oakland Estuary Plan, specifically its recommendation for a large, mixed-use development adjacent

to the saloon, which has been in continuous operation on today's site since the 1880s.

The Estuary Plan suggested that "The First and Last Chance Saloon should be incorporated as part of this development, either by retaining it in its present location or by incorporating it within the new frontage as a landmark element."

The very mention of possible relocation of Heinolds' alarmed many. The structure—constructed in 1880 on piles in the estuary water—known to thousands of visitors from throughout the world for its deeply sloped floor and bar, dating back to the '06 earthquake, seemed as deeply embedded in its original site as any historic building in the United States.

Protest letters to the Port followed, from, among others Carol Brookman, the proprietor of the tavern and the Oakland Heritage Alliance. The language of the Estuary Plan was changed, to read

**Heinolds' was one of eight 'gems' of Oakland-declared city landmarks at the first meeting of the new Landmarks Board in 1974, and was declared a National Literary Landmark in 1998.**

that Heinolds' "should be retained in its present location."

Nonetheless, the original language of the Estuary Plan and the Port's ongoing plans for redevelopment on all sides of this fragile building convinced Brookman that it was imperative to elevate its landmark status as a defense against any future threat to the building.

see **HEINOLDS'** on page 6



## Heinolds'

*Continued from page 5*

Heinolds' was one of eight "gems" of Oakland-declared city landmarks at the first meeting of the new Landmarks Board in 1974, and at the initiative of Brookman, it was declared a National Literary Landmark in 1998.

However, it had never been listed on the National Register, the most widely recognized official listing of historic sites throughout the U.S., established by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. (Nor has the tavern ever been declared a state historic landmark—a future project!)

Brookman was referred to me, when I was beginning work on a master's thesis which was to be a comparative study on the landmarking process. We met and enthusiastically agreed to work together on gaining National Register status for the First and Last Chance.

I went to work, using the copious files on the tavern's history compiled by Brookman, who inherited the business from the Heinold family in 1984 with a firm promise to honor and promote its historic status and museum-like interior.

I also researched the files in the Oakland History Room, the excellent documentation on the building from the Cultural Heritage Survey (which described its architecture as "historic funk"!), and miscellaneous sources about Jack London, Oakland's most famous son whose years of association with the tavern and its original proprietor, Johnny Heinold, is celebrated in neon, as "Jack London's Rendezvous," above the saloon's wooden, false-front facade. I came across a few historical conundrums about the site when I got deeper into my research. Perhaps half the available sources on Heinolds' stated that the tavern first opened in 1883, and the rest stated 1884.

So, after hours of trying to pin down the correct date, I stated on the National Register application that the correct date for the opening of the business simply could not be ascertained.

Likewise, about half the sources spell the name of the business as Heinold's and the other half Heinolds' ('s vs. s'), and historic photographs reveal both spellings on the facade signage at different times, so I arbitrarily chose the current facade spelling—s'.

Finally, the frequently made statement that "First and Last Chance Saloon" referred to an era when Alameda was a "dry" town and Oakland was not was

---

### One of the most difficult aspects of preparing the nomination was separating the considerable lore that has come to surround Heinolds' over the years from verifiable historical fact.

---

positively refuted by years of city directories showing dozens of taverns in both cities until Prohibition.

Under the "tripartite" scheme of listing historic properties on the National Register laid out by the Historic Preservation Act, the Heinolds' nomination had to first be approved by the city Landmarks Board and the State Office of Historic Preservation (SHPO) in Sacramento before being approved by the National Park Service in Washington.

The nomination first went before the Landmarks Board in December 1999, when Brookman, Kate Nichol, an environmental planner with the Port of Oakland (the owner of the building) and I spoke in favor of the listing.

The Landmarks Board, noting that the saloon "is an excellent example of the economic benefits of heritage tourism," and that "the unassuming but stalwart character of the building suggests in physical form London's contribution as prolific writer and political thinker," enthusiastically forwarded the nomina-

tion to Sacramento. The nomination underwent a somewhat more rigorous review by a staff historian at SHPO in Sacramento.

#### Lore vs. fact

The statement that the building was constructed from the timbers of a whaling ship had to be deleted, for lack of documentation—for me, one of the most difficult aspects of preparing the nomination was separating the considerable lore that has come to surround Heinolds' over the years from verifiable historical fact.

Mention of the many layers of memorabilia that adorn all the walls and ceiling of the interior also had to be deleted—"insignificant" by National Park criteria.

#### Heinolds deleted

Mention of the Heinolds—Johnny and his son George, who owned and ran the tavern, and aggressively promoted it as a "destination" historic site, for some 50 years—as significant persons associated with the site was also deleted at the recommendation of the SHPO historian.

Thus trimmed, the nomination went forward to the State Historical Resources Commission in May of last year. It was one of eleven California properties being considered for the National Register which were all listed on the commission's "consent calendar," i.e., pro forma approval for the nominations without debate is anticipated.

#### Approval at last

Once approved by the state commission, acceptance by the National Park Service is normally also considered to be assured, and this was apparently the case with Heinolds', as nothing further was heard until the Sept. 29 weekly listing of properties newly listed on the National Register Web site, [www.cr.nps.gov/nr/nrlist](http://www.cr.nps.gov/nr/nrlist) confirmed that Heinolds' had indeed been listed on the Register on Sept. 1.

*David Nicolai is the director of the Pardee Home Museum in downtown Oakland and the president of the Alameda County Historical Society.*



# My favorite building

By Erika Mailman

I set out, on a sunny Wednesday in late January, to hit the Warehouse District of Oakland and ask people what their favorite building in the neighborhood was. It was astonishing to me how many people shrugged. It seems nobody is looking up these days, at rooflines, facades, fenestration or other details.

I wonder if I had asked instead what people's favorite sidewalk was, everyone would have a fast answer from all the looking down they do! But I was glad to find four sensible people who do have their eyeballs open and notice the environment around them. Here, in their own words, are what their favorite buildings are in the Warehouse District.

"I like this red and white side of it, and the metal and the rooflines. I like anything that has some look to it, not just a blank box. I like old buildings with some style, or really ultra-modern."

— Dwight Dodge  
Alameda  
Leviathan Building



Erika Mailman

"It's like still original. You can't tell it's got offices in it. It's classic. It stands out by itself."



Erika Mailman

— Anthony Hutchinson  
Oakland  
Western Pacific train station on 3rd Street



Oakland History Room



Erika Mailman

"I love brick. Honestly, I like the fact that it's not a stuffy office building. It's got a lot of character to it. I don't like corporate structure inside buildings. More offices should be in buildings like this; it's more conducive to being open."

— Sara Moncada  
San Rafael  
American Bag Building

(Sara did not wish to be photographed.)

## OHA THANKS ITS DONORS, VOLUNTEERS

### Patron Membership (\$250)

Steve & Terry Beck  
Marina Carlson  
G. Pete Encinas

### Sponsor Membership (\$125)

Berkeley Builders (Thomas McCoy)  
Fred Hertz & Randolph Langenbach  
Florence Lind  
Maharaja Me (John Dalal & Aaron Sauberan)  
Donna Mehrten

### Benefactor Membership (\$75)

John Coffey  
Pat & George Dedekian  
Daryl Halverson  
Bruce & Candis Kerns  
Patrick Peter MacKellan  
Mountain View Cemetery Association  
Jon Norman  
Gail & Michael Odkow, MD  
Lois Over  
Howard & Dorothy Stein  
Janet Zampieri & Patrick Stirling

### Donors

Barbara Kay Doyra  
Raliegh Hughes  
Fred & Judy Porta  
Sue Russell  
Barbara Smith  
Howard & Dorothy Stein  
John Sutter

### Volunteers

Maya Alyassani  
Jamie Cross  
Bob & Dotty Howell  
Nicole Jones  
Diane Levy  
Joshua B. Long  
Andrea McCullough  
Peggy Martin  
Bill Moys  
Thomas Murray  
George Strauss  
Arwa Toulan  
Randi Wood

Thanks to all those who contribute time, money, and spirit to OHA, as we fight to ensure that the Oakland renaissance includes a renewed appreciation for our architectural heritage. We welcome contributions at any time.



# The streets of the Laurel District

By *Quentin*

It's easy to miss. While traveling south on MacArthur Boulevard from Fruitvale Avenue, a glance to the left will reveal a street sign that reads "Hopkins Place." Why is this street only 200 feet long, and who was Hopkins?

The first travelers to view what is now the Laurel District were the day trippers who took the train from downtown Oakland to the "Laundry Farm," a pleasure resort where one could frolic in the sunny hills. As the streetcar rounded the curve on present-day Courtland, these fun-seekers, loaded down with parasols and picnic baskets, could have looked north at gentle slopes dotted with the occasional tree and inhabited by grazing cows.

In the late 19th century, a few tracts appeared on this slope: Quigley, Park Place, Rose Hill, Westall and Laurel Grove Park. Each tract gave birth to street names. For example, James Quigley, who emigrated from Ireland in 1857, farmed and raised stock. Besides

Quigley Street he added Lenox—now known as Loma Vista (hill view) Avenue and Redding Street to the landscape. David Redding came from New York State in 1867 and was an early convert to Christian Science.

In 1888, Bovey, Toy & Co. developed Park Place, the large, hilly tract north of Mills College. Added to the maps that year were: Orchard (now Buell), Rose (now Calaveras), Carson, Cunningham, Daisy, Prospect (now Davenport), Fairview, and Frances (now Fair), Glen Road (now Kaphan), Alice (now McClelland), Summit (now Reinhardt), Tompkins (which later gobbled up Leona) and Wilkie.

Eleven years later, the Westall tract gave birth to Maybelle Avenue. Mabel Louise was the daughter of Joseph and Harriet Westall.

In 1900, Laurel Grove Park gave us two streets parallel to Maybelle: Laurel and Maple avenues. Maple had been Quarry Street because it ended at a quarry in the hills.

Laurel Grove Park also extended the state streets—Dakota, Delaware, Florida, Georgia and Kansas—that appeared in a tract to the north.

Prior to the Great San Francisco Earthquake and Fire in 1906, the Jesse Jones tract added Bayo, Vale, Leona, Cora and Evelyn to the landscape.

The Rhoda Tract (1904) gave us Madeline Street, which Albert and Elizabeth Rhoda named for their daughter. By 1920 Cora and Evelyn streets became a part of Harbor View Avenue.



Oakland History Room

Educator Aurelia (Henry) Reinhardt, former president of Mills College, for whom Reinhardt Street is named.

After the 1906 earthquake struck, many thousands fled to Oakland, and most of them chose to stay. Oakland had a building boom, new areas were annexed and the Laurel blossomed.

Early in the 20th century the slope falling away from the hills between Maple Avenue and Peralta Creek was called Key Route Heights, a name taken from the 1909 tract of the same name. However, with the advent of the Laurel School in 1913 and especially with the name "Laurel" appearing in the names of local businesses, Key Route Heights gave way and by 1920, the area was known as the Laurel District.

Let's return to Hopkins Place. Hopkins Street has its genesis in the Dimond District just before the turn of the century. By 1906, it had been extended as far east as 39th Avenue, zigzagging here and there as it encountered a new tract boundary. Until then the usual way to Key Route Heights was via E. 14th Street (now International Boulevard) then by way of Redwood Road or High Street east toward the hills.

See **LAUREL** on page 9

Dennis Evarosky



Tiny Hopkins Place, just off MacArthur Boulevard, is all that remains of Hopkins Street, once a lengthy thoroughfare that stretched from the Dimond District to Mills College.





# Laurel

*Continued from page 8*

By 1929 Hopkins Street was pushed north to connect with 4th Avenue and Lake Merritt and south to Mills College. From then until World War II, Hopkins served as a major thoroughfare. A string of stores sprang up in the Laurel between 35th and 38th avenues. During World War II Hopkins was renamed MacArthur Boulevard. When the engineers aimed to rid the street of the 90-degree turns in the former Hopkins Street, they were left with a remnant they named Hopkins Place.

High Street Terrace and Rose Park came into being in 1907. High Street Terrace gave us: Albert, Adelaide (née Adeline), Huntington and Worden (née Violet) and Rose Park added Hyacinth (née Charles) and Lily, Pampas, Rose and Tulip. In 1911 Laurel Terrace gave us Sylvan, and in the 1920s the Melrose Acres added Madrone (née Acacia) and the Calaveras Tract added Green Acre (now Greenacre) and Merrill.

And how about the stories behind the names? Adelaide is possibly named for Carrie "Adelaide" Walker, an actor and artist who was probably killed by her second husband. Buell likely got its name for a carpenter-contractor from Connecticut. Carson Street is likely just one more place name for the famous frontiersman Christopher "Kit" Carson. Curran was named for the Canadian John Curran, Davenport for the town in Santa Cruz County and Greenacre by developer John Davies to remember his father's Welsh farm of the same name.

High Street first saw the light of day in Alameda, and like "Topsy" it grew and grew; the street is also higher in elevation than many of the streets around it.

Hopkins got its name from Pennsylvanian Thomas Hopkins, Huntington from Dr. William Dresser Huntington and MacArthur for General Douglas MacArthur. Magee's namesake is Walter McGee (sic) who lived where the College of Holy Names is now



Oakland History Room

located. Mattis commemorates George and Charlotte Mattis, McClellan memorializes John McClellan of Scotland and Merrill is named for tract owners Sylvester and Clara Merrill.

Early in the 20th century the slope falling away from the hills between Maple Avenue and Peralta Creek was called Key Route Heights, a name taken from the 1909 tract of the same name. With the advent of the Laurel School in 1913, above, and especially with the name Laurel appearing in the names of local businesses, the name Key Route Heights gave way and by 1920, the area was known as the Laurel District.

Patterson possibly got its name from Black Hawk War veteran Captain James Madison Patterson, while Reinhardt eulogizes educator Aurelia (Henry) Reinhardt, former president of Mills College. Tompkins gets its name from Senator Edward Tompkins of New York, owner of the nearby Souther farm.

And Wilkie? It's a long shot, but maybe it's for David Wilkie, a civil servant who lived on Foothill Boulevard.

Enos (nee Lee), Kaphan (nee Glen Road), Masterson (nee Kanning) and

Norton (nee Jordan) are all memorials to young men who gave their lives in the "Great War"—World War I.

Mother Nature helps round out our Laurel names. Daisy, Lily, Pampas and Tulip are named for plants; Aspen, Madrone and Maple for trees.

So as you walk, bike or drive the streets of the Laurel District, be aware that some of its street names provide a legacy for Californians who lived here before us.



Dennis Evanosky

Maple Street heads for the quarry once located in the distance. Before the Laurel District was developed Maple was known as Quarry Street.



## 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

### Upcoming events

**Friday, Sept. 7, 5:30–7:30 p.m.** Celebrate the Rotunda. (See page 1 of this newsletter.)

**Tuesday, Sept. 16, 11 a.m.–5 p.m.** Alameda Legacy Home Tour. 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).

**Saturday, Oct. 7** This year, OHA's House Tours event focuses on the Claremont Pines neighborhood. Originally owned by Jose Vicente Peralta, this area was purchased by developers in 1850 who subdivided it in 1879. It was part of the area more generally known as Rock Ridge. The tour invites you into eight gracious, interesting homes to view the interiors. Mark your calendar and call OHA for 763-9218 for more information.

**Saturday, Oct. 27.** Halloween at the Mansion returns to the Pardee Home Museum, co-sponsored by OHA. Flashlight tours, refreshments, tarot card readings, ghost hunting and kids' activities. Time to be announced. 763-9218.

### Tours

**Black Panther Legacy Tour;** the Dr. Huey P. Newton Foundation. Eighteen sites significant in Black Panther Party history, last Saturday of 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.

**City Tours.** Walking tours sponsored by the Oakland Tours Program and the Community and Economic Development Agency are offered on Wednesdays and Saturdays, May through October. All tours start at 10 a.m. Reservations are recommended but not required. Groups of five or more can go on any of the tours by special arrangement. Call the 24-hour hotline 238-3234 for more information or log on to [www.oakland-net.com](http://www.oakland-net.com) and click on the community link for map, dates and starting places.

**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 intact, 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.

## For your reading pleasure

*The Spirit of Oakland:* sixteen writers on Oakland history, illustrated with photos from the Oakland Museum of California. *Heritage Media Corp., \$49.95. museum gift-shop and local bookstores.*

*The Peraltas and Their Houses:* nicely bound booklet from the Alameda County Historical Society. Maps 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:* advice for faithful restorations. Call OHA 763-9218; also available at local bookstores.

*Oakland, the Story of a City:* Beth Bagwell's invaluable resource on Oakland history. \$12.95 paperback, \$14.95 hardbound. Call OHA, 763-9218; also available at local bookstores.

## OHA NEWS

CONTRIBUTORS: Annalee Allen, Kevin Flynn, Pamela Magnuson-Peddle, David Nicolai Erika Mailman, Quentin, Joyce Roy, Naomi Schiff

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@oaklandheritage.org](mailto:news@oaklandheritage.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.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President, Pamela Magnuson-Peddle

Vice-President, Naomi Schiff

Secretary, Riley Doty

Treasurer, Kevin Flynn

John Dalal

Pat Dedekian

Cynthia Haines

Mary MacDonald

Erika Mailman

Sharon Priest

Joyce Roy

Naomi Schiff

Johanna Welty



**YOUR LIVING LEGACY CAN ENSURE OAKLAND'S HERITAGE**

Donate outright gifts of cash, real estate and other appreciated assets, including stocks and bonds to OHA. You may also choose to give through charitable bequest by mentioning OHA in your will or naming OHA as beneficiary to a life insurance policy.

In addition, commemorative gifts provide unique opportunities to memorialize family, friends or loved ones and offer lasting testimony to your generosity and concern for Oakland's heritage.

All contributions to OHA are deductible for tax purposes to the extent permitted by current law.

- YES, I would like to learn more about ways that I may ensure Oakland's heritage!
- I have already named OHA through a charitable bequest and/or will and would like for OHA to contact me for further details.
- Please contact me so that I may learn more about naming OHA as beneficiary to a life insurance policy.
- YES, I would like to learn more about establishing a commemorative gift to memorialize family, friends and/or loved ones. Please contact me.

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

**Join OHA today! Your annual tax-deductible membership dues include the OHA newsletter. Your contribution helps make OHA a more effective organization.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ I would like to help with:  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (w) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

- Programs/Tours
  - OHA News
  - Development/Fundraising
  - Membership
  - Preservation Action
  - Mailing/Office
  - Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Membership  new  renewal
- \$15 Limited Income
  - \$35 Individual
  - \$50 Family
  - \$75 Organization/Benefactor
  - \$125 Sponsor
  - \$250 Patron
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Contribution

**Oakland Heritage Alliance, P.O. Box 12495, Oakland, CA 94604, 510-763-9218**  
**www.oaklandheritage.org; info@oaklandheritage.org**

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

- |                      |                             |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Lisa Aliferis        | Eileen Kumetat              |
| Joan M. Allen        | Sharon M. Lawless           |
| Lee Aurich           | Diane Levy                  |
| Margaret Bahan       | Joshua Long                 |
| B.J.& Remi Barron    | Patrick Lynch               |
| Renie Bartolini      | Ashleigh Lyon               |
| James Beatty         | J. Elaine Macey             |
| Edward Bell          | Patrick Peter MacKellan     |
| Steve Berkowitz      | Fred & Jean Matthews        |
| David Bracker        | Ellen Michael               |
| Mary Bradshaw        | Fred Montano                |
| Cate Calderwood      | Bill Moys                   |
| Patsy Cane           | Barbara Nicholson           |
| Viki Cebers          | Lois Oakes                  |
| John Coffey          | Zetta Lynne Poli            |
| Laura O.H.A. Craise  | Judy & Fred Porta           |
| Andrew Danish        | Jason Pump                  |
| Pipi Ray Diamond     | Janet Rodriguez             |
| B.K. Doyra           | Vern Rogers                 |
| Janis Dunivin        | Benton Russell              |
| Jeanne Dunn          | Claudio & Katherine Salusso |
| Albert S. Dutra Jr.  | Skip Skivington             |
| Laurel Egenberger    | Steve Spellman              |
| Faith Fisher         | Jane Stallman               |
| Patricia Frument     | Laura Sutton                |
| Pam Garrels          | Miriam Taylor               |
| Marjorie Gibson-Ttee | Tim Taylor                  |
| Rebecca Goodwin      | Nick & Linda Thom           |
| Jordan Harrison      | Jerry Thornhill             |
| Alice Howard         | Gertrude B. Toll            |
| Earle & Erika Ipsen  | Michael Valent              |
| Judy Jacobs          | Colleen Vetter              |
| Marc L Kagan         | Michael P. Weymouth         |
| Judy Kelly           | Joanne Woo                  |
| Janet Keys Benson    | Margot Yapp                 |
| Pat Kline            | Susan Zeman West            |
| Janis Mazna Knox     | Suzane & Michael Ziegler    |
| Kay Kohler           |                             |

**BE AN OHA OFFICE ANGEL!**

We need to replace and augment some outdated equipment. Can you or your company donate well-functioning, fairly recent vintage items? All donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed under IRS regulation.

OHA needs:

- Photocopier
- Plain-paper fax machine
- Postage meter or digital scale
- Flat-bed scanner

Please call Kathy at 763-9218 for more information.

# Oakland History Notes: Consolidated Piedmont Cable

By Kathleen Leles DiGiovanni

Oakland enjoyed a fleeting romance with cable cars in the 1890s. Consolidated Piedmont Cable was one of two companies operating cable cars here. It built two lines, both featuring a downtown loop, running from Broadway, around 14th to Clay, then to 8th, to Washington, and back to Broadway at 14th Street.

One line ran north on Broadway to Piedmont Avenue and Mountain View Cemetery. The other turned off Broadway at 24th, made a left at the powerhouse, then continued along Harrison Street to Oakland Avenue and up and down and up again to Highland Avenue in Piedmont.

From there the cable car turned left toward Blair's Park, adjacent to the cemetery on what is now Moraga Avenue. The car would then make a roller coaster-like gravity-powered run in a loop from Highland and Moraga through the open countryside, picking up the cable slot on Oakland Avenue for the return trip downtown.

*The Oakland Daily Evening Tribune* marked the opening of the cable line and the powerhouse building Aug. 1, 1890. The article describes a "wonderful building," with splendid offices and waiting rooms, a car barn with tracks to accommodate 32 cars as well as complete

maintenance facilities. The imposing powerhouse itself, the "great sight in the building," received considerable attention. The 250-horsepower Corliss engines were described at length along with the "ponderous cog wheels, fourteen feet in diameter" and the stretching room that kept the cable taut.

Note the coal bunker in the street in the foreground and the plume of rich, black smoke rising from the 136-foot-tall smokestack, a reminder of the days when progress was progress and air quality was a matter of small public concern.

By 1890 the landscape was already dotted with houses in the Oakland View Homestead tract. The Adams Point residential district began development not long after. Mrs. Hannah Jayne Adams, wife of Oakland founder Edson Adams, was still living in the Adams home across Harrison Street from this scene, where the First Congregational Church stands today.



Oakland History Room

The power house on the right was converted into an auto showroom with the carbarn behind it as a repair garage. Later known as the Cox Cadillac building, a 176-unit residential development is planned for the site. The developer would restore the showroom but demolish the carbarn.

The Piedmont Consolidated Cable car line was itself short-lived. Electrified streetcars emerged onto the scene almost immediately. The Piedmont Consolidated went bankrupt in 1893 after three years in operation during its own efforts to electrify the lines.

A parade of street railways owned the business until F.M. "Borax" Smith bought the line and consolidated it into the Key System, which was eventually absorbed by AC Transit.

*OHA welcomes Kathleen Leles DiGiovanni of the Oakland History Room. Kathleen will be writing future Oakland History Notes for the newsletter.*

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

Address Correction Requested



Nonprofit Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Oakland, California  
Permit No. 31