

Preserving Oakland Point's historic character

By Bill Coburn

The image of a dense collection of plain and some fancy Victorian homes in a state of fragile repair has been projected into the minds of Oaklanders and others passing by the West Oakland neighborhood of Oakland Point.

For thirty years, this was the view from the old Cypress freeway, built in 1953, which, typical of its day, sliced through the poorest and most ethnic of neighborhoods to achieve ease of access to developing regions further away from the cities. BART riders now see this same view as they course through "West Oakland."

The rooftops are still there, with some exceptions, and these days they are in better repair than in the recent past. This residential district in West Oakland appears eligible for the National Register. Its 47 city blocks include 845



Dennis Evanosky

Built in the 1870s, this trio of Italianate homes at 9th and Chester streets in the Oakland Point Historic District shows the consistency of design once prevalent in the neighborhood.

properties, of which about 750 are wood-frame residential structures built before 1910. Of the 845 properties, 616 (73 percent) are considered contributors to the historic flavor of the district. Italianate, Stick and Queen Anne styles predominate.

Oakland Point indeed occupied a point of land that jutted out into the Bay. It was called a wooded area because of the dense growth of indigenous oaks which earlier covered this grassy area from the marshes at the shore line at Wood Street, east across downtown Oakland, and finally to the Lake Merritt slough.

Peralta Street now roughly bisects the district from north to south and gives evidence of the first European-based land ownership atop the centuries old Native American homelands and settlements throughout the area.

The cataclysmic racial, political and cultural upheaval, which followed the Spanish king's 1821 Peralta land grant, set an avalanche in motion.

It eventually completely transformed the once pristine gentle, wooded shoreline into a hustle bustle of a city with all the real and symbolic might of the post-Civil War world of capitalism, heavy industry, massive population shifts, cultural change and reconfiguration.

see **OAKLAND POINT** on page 5

Happy 150th year, Oakland!



Liza Heider

As a part of Oakland's 150th birthday celebration, Mayor Jerry Brown, left, joins Pardee Home Museum board chairman Stan Stidham in placing a historic plaque at the museum. More photos of the celebration begin on page 8.



Calm elegance



Alan Templeton

**HIGH STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
1945 HIGH ST., JULIA MORGAN, 1921.**

Looking into the sanctuary from the vestibule, one immediately feels the warmth of this welcoming church, which resembles an attractive house. The simple forms of the doors, windows and walls emphasize the beauty of the materials used: fine wood, glass and metal. The many windows and lights bathe each room in soft, diffuse light, creating an atmosphere of restrained elegance and calm.

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We know how to celebrate!

By Mary McDonald

OHA continues to develop its increasingly sophisticated events and fundraising efforts while keeping tabs and, hopefully, brakes on the many development plans that threaten our historic heritage. We hope you've noticed our heightened positive profile, and look forward to your support for our preservation efforts.

Our organizational efforts reached unprecedented heights with the success of the OHA-sponsored "Historical Block Party" on May 4th, which celebrated Oakland's 150th birthday.

Master minded beautifully by committee co-chairs Pat Dedekian and Jamie Cross and committee members Kathy Ferreira, Erika Mailman and Rene Bartolini, the Block Party—held in Preservation Park the First Unitarian Church, the African-American Museum and Library of Oakland (AAMLO), and the Pardee Home Museum—attracted nearly 2,000 visitors who were treated to a truly mind-boggling cornucopia of events.

Strollers through Preservation Park were transported to another era amidst vintage buildings, cars, and costumes, dappled sunshine, breezy air, and alternating strains of jazz and swing music.

Visitors to the First Unitarian Church were treated to Chinese and Filipino folk dances, a performance by Splash

Circus, instructions in tile-making by noted tile-maker Diane Winters, hat-making with the Museum of Children's Art (MOCHA), and many more activities. A horse-drawn carriage brought visitors back and forth between AAMLO and Frank Ogawa Plaza.

In addition to being an organizational feat for a volunteer group, our sponsorship of the Historical Block Party also marked the first time that OHA has worked in such an intimate fashion with the city of Oakland on a sustained, collaborative basis.

The planning involved weekly meetings and numerous daily conversations with city staff over a four-month period. We believe a mutual respect and appreciation developed, and we hope to foster this goodwill in the future.

We also trust it will be remembered by the city when we have the inevitable conflicting opinions on planning and preservation issues.

We will be increasing our membership efforts in the coming months, and hope that you will encourage your friends, colleagues, and neighbors to join OHA. We take delight in our local heritage and know that a large membership base will help ensure that our historic architectural fabric is retained and restored.

See you at our summer walking tours and our September 29 Historic Home Tour in the Oakmore District!

Cohen-Bray house awarded grants

The Cohen-Bray has been awarded a grant for the construction of a fence in front of the house. The garden committee has researched fences appropriate to the Victorian era and consulted photographs of the original fence. The committee is now in the process of bringing fence plans to the attention of the Oakland Heritage Alliance and securing contractors.

The committee has also recently received a grant from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust for security lighting for the front garden. Plans are being developed for hidden as well as visible lighting. Once the fence and the lighting are in place, the committee will be able recreate a garden appropriate to the style and era of the house built in 1884.



Strolling around the streets of Rockridge

By *Quentin*

Continued from our last issue

The name Rockridge comes from a large landmark rock located at the intersection of Glenbrook and Bowling streets. The name was chosen by Rock Ridge's three developers: Col. John C. Hays, capitalist Horatio P. Livermore, and Charles E. Livermore.

The older streets of Lower Rockridge were developed by a Mr. DesRochois in 1873. Welcome to streets like Forest, Hudson, Clifton, and Summer. The latter is today's Cavour and probably remembers the Italian nationalist, Conte Camillo Benso di Cavour. Forest is a popular street name often used to appeal to would-be buyers of real estate. Hudson may have been named by Peter Donahue for the Hudson River Valley of New York, where his family once lived. The derivation of Clifton is unknown.

Most of Contra Costa had been a land grant from the governor of Spanish Nueva California to Luis María Peralta for 40 years of military service. Before his death in 1851 he divided his Rancho San Antonio among his four sons, one of whom was [José] Vicente Peralta.

"The vague Mexican boundaries encouraged the rapacity of American settlers or squatters, whose claims to rancho lands were upheld in a report made by Henry W. Halleck..." (Hart, *A Companion to California*, p. 407). Thanks to byzantine litigation in American courts, little by little the sons were forced to sell their land.

Vicente Peralta subdivided his acreage between Telegraph and present-day Claremont in 1886. The streets he added to the map honor several individuals, including himself. Originally a long street parallel to Telegraph Avenue, with the construction of Highway 24 Vicente Way became an angular, broken street. Manuel M. Ayala was the second husband of Mrs. Encarnacion (Galindo) Peralta. Hermann? Well, Herman [*sic*] Cordes was the man who filed Vicente's



Oakland History Room

Gathering around the namesake: The name Rockridge comes from a large landmark rock at the intersection of Glenbrook and Bowling streets. The name was chosen by Rock Ridge's developers: Col. John C. Hays and Horatio P. and Charles E. Livermore.

tract map with the county, but we learn in *The Peraltas: Spanish Pioneers* that Vicente sold his land to a group that included Lucien Hermann. Martin is another problem.

There must have been a member of the Peralta-Galindo-Ayala family named Martin, but research has not found him. A child who died in infancy, Miranda (Miranda Street later became part of 57th Street) is a similar mystery, although Temescal's "first woman settler" was Mrs. Bridget Miranda Shannon Evoy.

According to U.S. government reports, the average U.S. soldier in the Spanish American War (1898) had the following characteristics, based on a study of 9,226 random troops: height: 67.59 inches; weight: 147.07 pounds; average chest measurement: 37.38 inches; average age: 27.6 years of age.

Many of these soldiers were Californians. Ergo, as the boys headed home the powers that be decided it would be appropriate to change the names of four streets in Lower Rockridge to memorialize the war.

Gen. Henry W. Lawton led the charge at Santiago, Cuba, and was killed in action near Manila. Maj.-Gen. Nelson A. Miles led an expedition to Panama. Admiral Dewey destroyed the Spanish fleet on May 1, 1898, in Manila Bay. Maj.-Gen. William R. Shafter was a commander in Cuba, and later, commanding officer of the Department of California.

Urban planning is not a modern idea. A few ancient cities reflect a plan—certain Greek cities, for example—but

See NAMES on page 4



Helaine Kaplan Prentice takes a moment in Preservation Park. Undoubtedly her best-known project was *Rehab Right*, a unique book, which she wrote with her husband and co-worker, Blair.

Hail and farewell, Helaine

By Annalee Allen

During National Preservation Week in May, Helaine Kaplan Prentice's friends and colleagues hosted a recognition and farewell event for the longtime Landmarks Advisory Board secretary.

Helaine's tenure with the city began in 1974 when she started work as the only female planner in the department.

A graduate of Harvard University's masters program in landscape architecture (with an undergraduate degree in city planning from the University of Pennsylvania), Helaine used her academic background to facilitate numerous projects over the years that pertained to both the natural and built heritage of the City.

The projects and initiatives Helaine worked on included writing the Tree Protection Ordinance, developing view corridors and open space protections for Skyline Boulevard and Shepherd

Canyon, and putting together an early creek identification process.

Undoubtedly her best-known project was *Rehab Right*, a groundbreaking manual she wrote with her husband and co-worker, Blair. The book showed homeowners effective (and preferred) methods of rehabilitating older properties, the backbone of our urban fabric.

For the past 12 years, as secretary to the Landmarks Board, Helaine spearheaded designation of 14 city landmarks, and facilitated over 130 public meetings—offering skilled advice and diplomatic counsel.

Helaine will continue writing and consulting. She will also teach at UC Berkeley. In her gracious farewell speech Helaine said: "My final recommendation to the people responsible for Oakland's built form is this—identity is more powerful than conformity. Identity is an economic force. And in any great city, identity is the product of heritage—a heritage worth protecting.

"Oakland's identity is found in its downtown and neighborhoods, creeks and hillsides, its oak trees and bay woodlands, its waterfront, its churches and vernacular houses, theaters, libraries, markets and parks, its new highrises, creative new housing and old commercial buildings. In your vision for Oakland, make the most of these assets."

For a complete transcript of Helaine's speech, visit the OHA Web site at www.oaklandheritage.org.

Names

Continued from page 3

European cities like Moscow, Berlin, Paris, Vienna, and London that first began to draw up comprehensive plans for the development of their cities.

By the mid-19th century a few American cities had taken some of these concepts and used them in planning their city centers. It wasn't until the 20th century that Oakland had any long-term plan for the interurban plain known as Oakland Township.

In the early years of the new century, Lower Rockridge gained several new streets: Locksley, Boyd, James, and Coronado/Butler. Locksley? Who knows. In Scott's Ivanhoe Robin Hood takes the name Locksley. Tract owner John G. McCulough may have named two of these streets for one of his partners, James T. Boyd. Coronado and Glendale (1913) presumably are named for the cities in Southern California. It's a stretch, but Redondo (1906) (Beach) may fall into the same category.

With Frank K. Mott's ascent to mayor in 1905, the path was paved for Oakland to have its day in the sun. City planners like Werner Hegemann and Charles Mulford Robinson assisted the mayor in turning Oakland into "The City Beautiful."

Oakland's first master plan, written by Hegemann in 1915, bore the mundane title, *Report on a City Plan for the Municipalities of Oakland and Berkeley*.

The omnium-gatherum: James T. Clarke was a member of the Realty Syndicate team. Because he and wife Katherine lived nearby on Emerald Street, Clarke Street may honor them. Desmond Street may be for grocer Daniel J. Desmond.

The origin of many street names is hard to pin down. The persons who knew about Avon and Hardy Streets are long dead. However, for sure, Hemphill Place is named for the John G. Hemphill family; he owned the tract where the street is located.

Board vacancies

Due to term limits, a number of vacancies are expected on the city's Landmarks Board in the near future. If anyone wishes to serve, they can make their interest known to the Mayor's office by calling 238-3141 or e-mailing jb@oaklandnet.com.



Oakland Point

Continued from page 1

Overnight, the area exploded with population growth with the advent of the transcontinental railroad in 1870. There wasn't time to sort things out too much, so although there were sub-neighborhood areas where the houses might have been more genteel, there was also an exceptional and surprisingly democratic mixture of classes and races of people throughout the district.

Seventh Street, once this district's urban center (and site of Oakland's first local railroad in 1863) was until the 1950s an urban street full of life, with local retail and service stores, hotels, entertainment centers and a very vibrant presence—before the days of modern planning techniques.

Generations of immigrant groups who have settled West Oakland—the Anglo Americans, the Irish, German, Italians, Greeks, Chinese, African Americans, those who came from Australia, Spain and the Spanish colonies, South America and everywhere else imaginable—all called this neighborhood home. With



Alan Templeton

Bay windows on the first and second floors and brackets on the cornice line hint at the original Italianate design on these insensitively remodeled homes on Peralta Street.

some exceptions these people have coexisted in the West Oakland neighborhoods as a rich curry in the emerging stew of what the modern day Oakland diaspora has become.

The most intense and perhaps the most significant cultural overlay on the

Point has been the profound contribution of the African-Americans.

Their presence in the district has overall been the longest, most continuous and had the greatest cultural imprint on the institutions and social life of the district. The development of the Seventh Street corridor with black-owned businesses, the concentration of blues nightclubs around World War II and the activism of this community in the political life of the Oakland are still passionately recalled in properties and visible in the memories of many familiar with the area.

These relics, many of which haven't been painted or lived in for the last thirty years, are poignant evidence of the continuity of intense activities of many overlapping and congruent groups of peoples from all over the world, who came, settled for a time and have moved on. That process very much continues today with some new twists.

It is interesting to contemplate the kinds of issues that put this historic area at risk.

See OAKLAND POINT on page 6



Alan Templeton

New investment has obliterated the Victorian character of this street. Note the inappropriate window on the lefthand structure. Other new development beyond, though making architectural reference to the gabled ends of existing houses, dwarfs the historic structures on this block, adjacent to the Oakland Point district.



Alan Templeton

The district still contains fire-damaged vacant structures, such as an Italianate store and residence at Wood and 8th streets. The original portion dates from the 1860s.

Oakland Point

Continued from page 5

In city planning documents from 1949, an Oakland report declared the area too decrepit to repair and it was therefore bypassed as a potential redevelopment site. The perceived risk was that the properties were too frail to be worth dealing with.

This perception is certainly still evidenced by some individuals and institutions. A rather new risk however is at hand in the district.

With the recent advent of middle class and working class enterprising folk, the structures in the district have been seen as palettes to serve new economic agendas.

As a result, we see houses lifted up, new inappropriate additions, and some plainly inappropriate modernizations that quite often escape the eyes of the city staff. The challenge for the future for Oakland Point residents will be to recognize the special qualities of their

district and not remodel it so much that this history is obliterated in the name of pest control, improving the looks, making the most money, or recreating a fake and inappropriate history for the place.

Landmark status for this historic district with residents actively championing its relevance will significantly aid in minimizing these pitfalls.

An adjacent historic district, Oak Center Residential District, is seeking designation as a City Landmark. Residents wish to upgrade their district while preserving its historic character. Residents of Oakland Point can look to these neighbors for counsel.

The author is indebted to the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey.

Note: an adjacent neighborhood, South Prescott (between 7th and 3rd streets, from Peralta to Center streets,) will be the site of an OHA walking tour on Sunday, July 14 from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

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, \$22.95 hardbound. Call OHA, 763-9218; also available at *local bookstores.*

Bungalow bathing

Indoor plumbing is the very basis of modern civilization. From the white, sanitary bathrooms of the late 19th and early 20th century, through the wild-colored tile and fixtures of the '20s and '30s, *Bungalow Bathrooms* author Jane Powell explores the history of plumbing and bathroom design. She suggests ways to restore vintage bathrooms, or build a new bath in a period style.

An Arts and Crafts restoration expert, Jane is also the author of *Bungalow Kitchens*, rapidly becoming the Bible of period kitchen restoration. She has become a lecturer and consultant on all aspects of early 20th century houses. A former OHA president, she is currently renovating her ninth bungalow, where she lives with her four cats.

You can purchase Jane's book for a special price of \$39.95 through the OHA office, 763-9218 or e-mail info@oaklandheritage.org.



Historic resources on Army Base are threatened

The City of Oakland is trying to fast track the approvals process for conveyance of the Oakland Army Base by Sept. 30, 2002. The Draft EIR for the Oakland Army Base (OARB) Area Redevelopment Plan was issued on April 29 and comments were due on June 12. The proposed redevelopment program would clear the site of all historic resources even though the city has no development plans.

At risk are the entire OARB potential National Register Historic District and all evidence of the importance of this site in the Pacific campaign of World War II. The district includes 22 structures, among which is a steel-framed machine shop built in 1918, the Administration Building from 1942, and seven huge warehouses, 1941-42. All but a very few of the buildings are still in use.

A citizens advisory group, West Oakland Community Advisory Group (WOCAG) has met for five years, planning for cultural and economic reuse of these resources. Their recommendations have simply been set aside. A major focus was the Administration Building and the seven warehouses. The Administration Building is a two-story wood-framed stucco building in the Art Moderne style. With its 160,000 square feet of space in a series of pavilions around courtyards, it could serve educational or office uses. Its reuse is made questionable by the possibility of toxics beneath portions of the building but the Army's toxics report was not included with the DEIR.

The proposed demolition of the seven warehouses is the most egregious, both historically and economically. The Port claims it needs to clear the site to build a new intermodal rail facility to replace a facility they have just constructed for \$37.1 million!

Each of these warehouses is almost a quarter-mile long and provides 5.3 acres of enclosed space. Their interiors—each constructed with solid timber walls,

columns and trusses supporting a roof with continuous clerestory windows—can best be described as “awesome” (or, a Craftsman-style interior on steroids). They are presently still in use as warehouses but their flexible space can easily accommodate other uses such as light manufacturing, offices, media studios, galleries, or markets, including a produce market.

Such industrial structures are particularly suitable for the kind of uses that are appropriate near a port and would provide jobs for residents in West Oakland. Lacking such facilities near the port could force some companies to build new facilities in the hinterland and truck their goods along highways into the port.

Reusing most, if not all, of the historic resources, would fulfill such redevelopment objectives as “alleviate economic and social degradation due to closure of OARB, strengthen the economic base, and allow for sustainable job creation.” These resources are a heritage that belongs to the community. The federal government recognizes this by conditioning its conveyance upon the benefit to the public.

Waterfront Warehouse District

The preservation action committee has been commenting on a proposal for a proposed eight-story development at 426 Alice Street, which would demolish a contributory building in the Waterfront Warehouse Historic District.

A final EIR is now available at CEDA offices, 250 Frank Ogawa Plaza, 3rd floor, or call Scott Miller, 238-2235. A public hearing on the application was scheduled for a special meeting of the Planning Commission on June 12.

Lower Broadway

The other item at this special meeting was the final EIR of another project, a 14 story mixed-use office/residential building at 210-228 Broadway. The committee has also followed this closely and expressed objections in comments

on the DEIR. This building's scale is out of context and would loom over the adjacent Produce Market. This use does not conform to the Estuary Policy Plan which designated lower Broadway as a retail/entertainment district. Final EIR is available at CEDA offices, or call Pat McGowan, 238-3063.

New redevelopment area

CEDA is establishing a huge new redevelopment area in East Oakland, reaching from Lake Merritt to the San Leandro border. OHA members in the district have been monitoring meetings and elections for local representatives to an advisory committee to ensure that the redevelopment plans will include preservation and enhancement of historic residential and commercial structures, and that planning will work toward preserving Oakland's unique sense of place.

OHA THANKS ITS GENEROUS DONORS

Patron Membership (\$250)

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Sponsor Membership (\$125)

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Additional Contributions

Gary Goss

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Lois Over

Anita Pender

Jeanne Porter

Stay tuned for next issue's thanks to the generous supporters of OHA's recent fundraising campaign.

Letrisha Culbertson



Two modern-day ladies pause by one of the antique cars in Preservation Park. The park was dressed in its finest for the day: costumes, cars and the homes combined to celebrate Oakland's birthday.

Dancing, relaxing



The love of the dance is apparent on the faces of these two young dancers from Sol Mejica, who performed in the church.

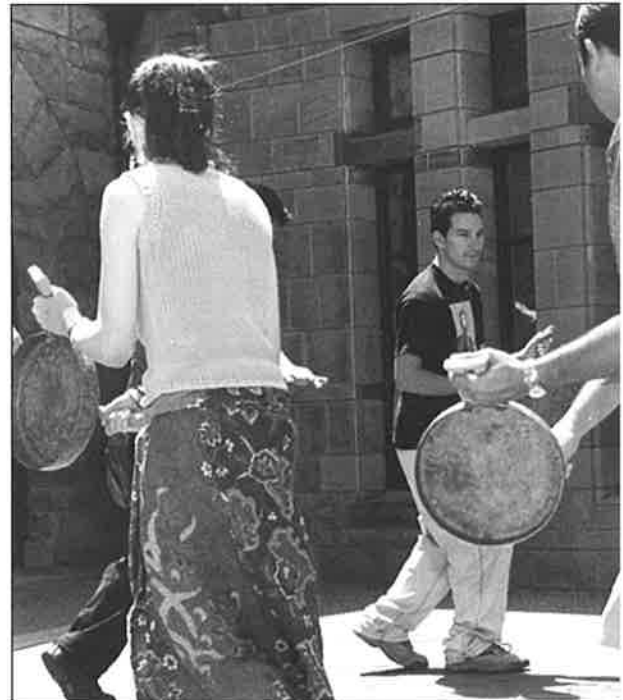


Skirts are a blur, in the energetic spurt of motion f



Letrisha Culbertson

The Black Cowboys brought a taste of the Old West to the celebration.



Members of Diskarte Namin demonstrate gong and outside the First Unitarian Church. They played in Pied Piper-style, indoors for a performance.

and remembering



These Sol Mejica dancers.



Letrisha Culbertson

Taking in the sights at Preservation Park.



Square dancers swing their partners on closed-off 12th Street.



Two instruments in a workshop on the plaza is Filipino music and led the audience,



At Preservation Park, visitors found the strains of the Royal Society jazz orchestra irresistible and simply had to dance.



For others, mellowing out on a picnic blanket was the way to go.

Unless otherwise credited, photos here and on page 10 are by Liza Heider.



Celebrating with dance and music



Girls from the Chinese Folk Dance Association wait backstage in elaborate costumes.



In gossamer dresses, the Chinese folk dancers adopt stylized poses.



An Aztec dancer concentrates on her moves.



The Museum of Children's Art (MOCHA) contributed to the day's festivities, helping youngsters to make their own hats. Left, there's a kid underneath that newspaper, being wrapped with masking tape by a MOCHA helper; above, enjoying the product of all that labor.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS (MAY-JUNE)

Sandy Barber	Lorraine Heinemann
Rachel Blan	Jerri Holan
Michael Carson & Ronald Steignerwalt	Mary Jenevein
Edward Carville	Steve Lowe
Kathleen Dadey	Marilyn McEneaney Livingston
Rebecca Darby-Williams	Lois B. Roach
Mario & Kathleen DiGiovanni	Jeff & Kristil Roberts
Jody Dworzak	Tina Silverstein
Heather Ehmke	Michael Simpson
Karen Engel	Pam Strayer
Vicki Friedman	Luan Stauss of Laurel Bookstore
Trisha Gorman	Marianne Tomita McDonald
Jessea Greenman	Rita Widra-Kuprieski

HATS OFF TO OUR BIRTHDAY VOLUNTEERS

Annalee Allen	Cindy Haines	David Nicolai
Maya Alyassini	Geoff Haines	Rachelle Parham
Diane Atwood	Karen Hata	Camilla Parham
Renie Bartolini	Lauren Hotchkiss	Vivian Perry
Hossein Bayat	Alan Howard	Allyson Quibell
Marina Carlson	Bob Howell	Scott Reda
Deborah Cooper	Dotty Howell	Marga Riddle
Bo Cross	Judy Jacobs	Ren Robb
Jamie Cross	Peg Janosh	Jay Roller
JoNina Cross	Lilla Jimenez-Ertl	Joyce Roy
Kathy Dadey	Rose Marie Johnson	Naomi Schiff
Pat Daniels	Denise Lewis	Rachella Sherris
Pat Dedekian	Diane Levy	Marcia Sherris
Pipi Ray Diamond	Josh Long	Ataollah Shirmohammadi
Monica Dimitri	Mary MacDonald	Nicole Smith
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Laurie Gordon	Rick Moss	Brandon Williams
Melanie Gould	Bill Moys	Chelsea Zephyr

The 'Kingdom of Homes'



Dennis Evanosky

Come along on OHA's historic home and garden tour of the Oakmore District, from noon to 5 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 29.

This 150-acre residential area is where view and streetcar line used to meet. The Leimert Bridge is scheduled to be plaqued as a city landmark at 11 a.m.

Admission (includes reception): \$25 OHA members, \$30 non-members, and \$35 day-of tickets. Call 763-9218 or email info@oaklandheritage.org.

ADVERTISERS WANTED

If you are interested in advertising in the OHA Newsletter or are interested in a position selling advertisements for the newsletter, please call Kathy at 763-9218.



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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@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.

OHA MISSION STATEMENT

OHA is a nonprofit membership organization which advocates the protection, preservation and revitalization of Oakland's architectural, historic, cultural and natural resources through publications, education, and direct action.

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LANDMARKS BOARD SUMMARIES

Compiled by Jordan Harrison

FEBRUARY 4, 2002

Director's Report: Leslie Gould advised the board that the Sears project on Telegraph Avenue has been revised and no longer includes reconstruction of the missing tower. The project applicant has elected to forego pursuing preservation tax credits and will not strictly follow the Secretary of the Interior standards, citing increased costs and complexities.

Gould reported on a staff meeting with the Oak Center Association regarding a future S-7 designation of the Oak Center Neighborhood. Gould informed the board that there will be modifications to the S-7 design review standards for individual properties within the historic district.

A Resolution of Appreciation was presented to outgoing board member George I Lythcott III for seven years' service (1995–2001). He was board chair 1998–2001 and vice chair 1996–1998.

An Introduction of New Members by Secretary to the Board Helaine Kaplan Prentice summarized the professional experience and community service of the two new members. Barbara Armstrong served on the board 1988–1992, during which time she served as vice-chair; she is the founder of Armstrong Development Services and works with property owners, developers, contractors and neighborhood associations as an advocate to local government; she has a general contractor's license and is a real estate broker. Previous community service includes participation in the city of Oakland Storm Drain Task Force, the CEDA advisory committee, and the Environmental Affairs committee. John Bliss is a registered civil engineer and the director and cofounder of Construction Price, which offers a business-to-business e-commerce Web site for construction related services. He coordinates the

annual Oakland Technical High School model building contest and is a former instructor at UC Berkeley Extension and San Francisco State.

A Special Workshop entitled "An Overview of Preservation Law in California" was presented by Carolyn Douthat, president of the California Preservation Foundation and former board member.

MARCH 11, 2002

Directors Report: Leslie Gould reported on the March 6 Planning Commission meeting at which the commission recommended that only the Claremont hotel building, without its 22-acre grounds, be designated a landmark. The commission directed that only hotel expansion would be referred to the board for comment and that any proposal to significantly change or develop the Claremont's grounds will be considered rezoning and would be reviewed by the commission alone. Two members of the community, Wendy Markel and Gary Knecht, discussed their dissatisfaction with the commission's actions.

New Business: Comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for 426 Alice Street Mixed Use Project located in the Waterfront Warehouse District. The district is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The project would create 94 dwelling units, office space and parking, and would involve the demolition of one district contributor rated Dc1+ in the OCHS and 1D (Contributor to a Listed District) in the NRHP. **Bill Leddy**, project architect, discussed how historic characteristics of the district influenced building design, describing the process as a "contemporary expression inspired by historical buildings" of the district. **Peter Burkholz**, president of the Jack London Neighborhood Association (JLNA), informed the board of inadequacies JLNA found in the DEIR, such as that the 1D NRHP designation should be treated as superseding

the Dc1+ OCHS designation. The neighborhood group also disagreed with the conclusion that removal of the building would not affect NRHP designation eligibility, saying that the incremental removal of contributory properties could eventually result in losing the historic district.

Board moved to advise Planning Commission and City Council that the DEIR is satisfactory in its consideration of historical resources, recommending addition of a mitigation measure requiring the applicant to provide funding for the establishment of a rehabilitation program for the waterfront district to upgrade "potential contributors" to "district contributors." [4 ayes, 1 no (Allen), 1 recusal (Carpentier).] Board moved to advise the Planning Commission that the design was strong; however, it expressed concern regarding the use of glass and aluminum on the top two floors, compared to concrete below.

Comment on DEIR for 200–228 Broadway Mixed-Use Project located in the Lower Broadway District, Area of Secondary Importance. The project includes creation of 109 dwelling units, retail and office spaces, and demolition of two buildings rated C2+ and Dc2+. Board moved to find the DEIR satisfactory in its consideration of historic resources.

Secretary's Report: Prentice announced this is her last meeting as Secretary to the Board. Betty Marvin will be the acting secretary.

APRIL 8, 2002

Director's Report: City Council action on the Cox Cadillac and Rotunda designation resulted in the council's acceptance of the Planning Commission's proposal that only the showroom be landmarked.

Design Review: Board moved unanimously to approve the plan to install lighting in trees as proposed for the Cohen-Bray House, 1440 29th Ave., a city landmark, and to appoint a subcommittee to refine the proposed fence

See **SUMMARIES** on page 13



Celebrate Oakland's birthday by walking with OHA

Join us on July and August weekends to celebrate Oakland's 150th year by discovering 16 different Oakland neighborhoods! Reservations are not required for tours—except for the Eichler Tour, Sunday, August 4. This tour is limited to 30 people. Make your reservations early.

MOUNTAIN VIEW CEMETERY

Saturday, July 6, 10 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
Meet at Chapel of the Chimes, 4499 Piedmont Ave; led by Michael Crowe and Barbara Smith

NEW! FRUITVALE HISTORIC MARKERS

Sunday, July 7, 10 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Meet at Fruitvale Plaza Park, 35th Ave. & International Blvd.; led by Betty Marvin and Monica Praba Pilar

NEW! FIRESTORM RESTORATION

Saturday, July 13, 10 a.m.–noon
Meet at the corner of Ocean View and Margarido; led by Craig Lyall and Barbara Westover

SOUTH PRESCOTT

Sunday, July 14, 10 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
Meet at West Oakland Bart Station, 5th St. & Center; led by Betty Marvin

LAUREL NEIGHBORHOOD

Saturday, July 20, 10 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
Meet at Albertson's parking lot, 4055 MacArthur Blvd.; led by Dennis Evanosky and Pamela Magnuson-Peddle

LAKE MERRITT CIVIC CENTER

Sunday, July 21, 10 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
Meet at Camron-Stanford House, 1418 Lakeside Dr.; led by Annalee Allen and Norman Hooks

Summaries

Continued from page 12

design. Board expressed concern regarding the mix of wood posts and a wire mesh fencing material which has been in production since the 1890s.

Old Business: Gould reported on April 1 Oak Center Neighborhood community meeting regarding the potential S-7 neighborhood designation, indicating a sense of general support from the community.

Gould reminded the board that there will be modifications to the S-7 design review standards for individual properties within the historic district, as attendees of the meeting expressed concern regarding the design standards of the designation. The designation recommendation should be before the Planning Commission in September, and before the City Council by the end of the year.

MAY 13, 2002

Design Review: Following a presentation on the final stage of the Peralta Hacienda Historic Park, the board moved to form a subcommittee to discuss concerns with the project regarding treatment of the adobe ruin, adobe wall, and borro pit; orchards implementation and the proposed Victorian gardens; and a 1906 house which is proposed to be demolished as a part of park improvements.

New Business: Board moved to approve the preliminary landmark eligibility rating of the New St. Paul's Missionary Baptist Church at 1001 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way, which is currently designated a contributor in the Preservation Park S-7 Combining Zone.

Discussion of Preservation Study List nomination procedures included a report by James Jackson of the Oakland Children's Hospital indicating they are in the initial stages of planning to demolish the 1927 Baby Hospital (747 52nd St.), to be replaced with an acute care unit in conformance with SB 1953, which requires hospital seismic retrofitting.

Board Reports: Gilmartin reported on the subcommittee meeting with staff regarding potential mitigation measures for demolition of historic structures at the Oakland Army Base, which has been determined eligible for listing on the NRHP. A DEIR released May 1 analyzes demolition of all buildings. Comments are due to the Planning Commission by June 10; a commission public hearing is scheduled for June 5.

On the behalf of vice-chair Allen, Jerry Garzone, administrative librarian of Oakland's main library, reported to the board on preliminary plans for expansion or rehabilitation of the main library, or possibly a new main library, with the intention of making use of a state bond.



Alan Templeton

Does a little old lady really live in a shoe? Come see for yourself Sunday, August 25.

F. M. "BORAX" SMITH ESTATE

Saturday, July 27, 10a.m.—noon
Meet at the redwood tree, corner of McKinley Ave. and Home Place East (one block off Park Blvd.); led by Phil Bellman

ROCKRIDGE COMMERCIAL DISTRICT

Sunday, July 28, 10 a.m.—noon
Meet at Rockridge BART Station, NE corner of College Ave. & Keith St.; led by Cliff Cline

See **TOURS** on page 14



Tour

Continued from page 13

DOWNTOWN ART DECO

Saturday, August 3, 10 a.m.–noon
Meet under the Camera Corner sign,
13th St. near Broadway;
led by Michael Crowe

NEW! MODERNISM AT HOME IN THE HILLS

Sunday, August 4, 1:30–4 p.m.
Tour limited to 30 people!
\$15 members, \$20 non-members.
NOTE: Please RSVP to OHA office by
Friday, July 26th. 763-9218;
led by Michael Crowe

MILLS COLLEGE CAMPUS

Saturday, August 10, 10 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
Meet at Richards Gate,
5000 MacArthur Blvd.;
led by Jane King & Dean Yabuki

NEW! OAKLAND ESTUARY

Sunday, August 11 2–4:30 p.m.
Meet at Amtrak Station, near the C.L.

Dellums statue;
led by Dennis Evanosky
& Deborah Cooper

RICHMOND BOULEVARD

Saturday, August 17, 10 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
Meet at the pergola, Croxton Avenue
and Richmond Boulevard;
led by Fred Reichman

CHINATOWN

Sunday, August 18, 1–3 p.m.
Meet at the fountain of Renaissance
Plaza, 9th St. between Webster and
Franklin;
led by Ernie Chann & Dean Yabuki

TEMESCAL COMMERCIAL

Saturday, August 24, 2–4 p.m.
Meet in front of Genova Delicatessen in
the Temescal Plaza on Telegraph Ave.
near 51st Street;
led by Sharon Moore

NEW! FAIRYLAND FAMILY TOUR

Sunday, August 25, 10 a.m.–noon
Meet at the entrance to Fairyland;
led by Bill Coburn



Alan Templeton

Where's this? Find out on the Art
Deco tour Sunday, Aug. 3

Donation: \$5 OHA members, \$10
general. Sign up for membership or
renewal the day of the tour and that
day's tour is free. In case of rain the tour
will be canceled. For further informa-
tion please call OHA at 763-9218 or
visit www.oaklandheritage.org

OHA CALENDAR

The OHA calendar lists events that may be of interest to our members. To submit items, call 763-9218 or e-mail oaklandheritage@california.com. All phone numbers in 510 area code unless indicated.

Exhibits

Through Aug. 25: "Scene in Oakland 1852–2002, Artworks celebrating the city's 150th anniversary," Oakland Museum. Fifty views of the city by 40 painters and photographers. Call 238-2200.

Upcoming events

Saturdays and Sundays in July and August: Walking tour season is here! See page 13 for the calendar. Be guided through an Oakland neighborhood by someone with lots of historical information!

Sunday, Sept. 29: House tour of Oakmore District, noon–5 p.m. View the 150-acre residential home-park described as the "Kingdom of Homes." A historic city landmark plaque will be placed on the Leimert Bridge at 11 a.m. Admission—including reception—is \$25 for OHA members, \$30 for non-members, and \$35 the day of the event. Call 763-9218.

Tours and exhibits

First Tuesday tour sponsored by Oakland City Tours Program. Free guided tours of City Hall, Frank Ogawa Plaza and administration build-

ings the first Tuesday of every month at 10 a.m. Meet at City Hall front entrance. Call 238-3234 or visit www.oaklandnet.com and click on the community link.

African-American Museum and Library is finally open in its new (and old) home, the historic Charles Greene Library at 659 14th St. Mon. through Thurs. and Sat., 10 a.m.–5:30 p.m., Fri. noon–5:30 p.m. Closed Sun. Call 637-0200 or visit www.oaklandlibrary.org.

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. Call 986-0660.

Camron-Stanford House, an 1876 Italianate house museum on Lake Merritt offers tours 11 a.m.–4 p.m. on Wednesdays and 1–5 p.m. on Sundays. \$4/\$2 (free first Sunday), 1418 Lakeside Drive. Call 836-1976.

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

Dunsmuir House & Gardens, a neoclassical Revival mansion, offers free access to its grounds 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, 2960 Peralta Oaks Court. For more information on the grounds and on mansion

tours (charge), call 615-5555 or visit www.dunsmuir.org.

Mountain View Cemetery offers free docent tours at 10 a.m. on second Saturdays. 5000 Piedmont Ave. Call 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. Call 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. Call 444-2187 or visit www.pardeehome.org.

Meetings of interest

Friends of the Oakland Fox, second Thursdays, 6–7:30 p.m., 229 Harrison St. Call 869-3519.

Oakland City 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.

Oakland Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, second Mondays, 4–8 p.m., City Hall, Hearing Room 1. 238-3941.



Liza Heider Photography

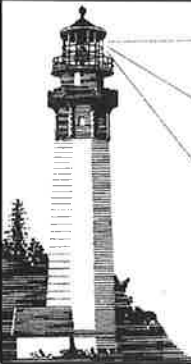
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Oakland Heritage Alliance

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Correction

An editorial oversight in the *Oakland History Notes* in the spring newsletter made it appear as though the Ebell Society paid for all the interior spaces in the Greene Library.

Builder A.E. Barrett's winning bid did not include furnishings or interior finishes. So it exceeded Andrew Carnegie's cap of \$50,000. When asked to supply additional money for a project that so far had cost the city nothing, Carnegie refused. As a result, it took an appropriation in the City of Oakland's 1901-1902 budget to complete some of the new library's interior spaces.

The Ebell Society supplied \$5,000 and its own architects, Coxhead and Coxhead, to furnish the library's Children's Room.

Oakland History Notes: the Maxwell Hardware Co.

By Kathleen Leles DiGiovanni

In the mid 1920s, the ABC Electric Laundress and the ABC Super Electric were the latest in labor-saving devices for the home laundry. The place to buy these up-to-the minute washing machines was the Maxwell Hardware Company, an Oakland institution for seven decades.

In 1885 W.C. Fift sold his Oakland hardware store to Calvin L. Maxwell, a recent arrival from the Midwest. Maxwell had sold his Iowa hardware business the year before and had moved west to improve his health. C.L. Maxwell & Sons did business on the north side of 12th Street between Broadway and Washington until 1891 when they moved to an L-shaped building with entrances on both 14th and Washington streets.

John P. Maxwell, the youngest of C.L.'s three sons, took control of the business in the 1890s and incorporated it as Maxwell Hardware. Eventually the firm expanded to include branches in Berkeley, San Leandro, and East Oakland. At the time of his death in 1939, John P. Maxwell was the undisputed hardware kingpin of Alameda County. His obituary in the *Oakland Tribune* states that he was also an avid golfer and "indulged in real estate and building activity." East Oakland's Maxwell Park neighborhood takes its

name from him, the builder of nearly 400 houses there.

Throughout its successful years of operation in Oakland, Maxwell Hardware sold the best and the latest in household items. In addition to the electric wringer washers in the photograph, Maxwell Hardware sold farm implements and building supplies, ranges, lighting fixtures, pot and pans, radios, sewing machines, garden tools, paint, and kitchen gadgets.

John P. Maxwell's grandsons Carleton and John Bryan continued the business into the 1940s and early 1950s. A \$100,000 modernization in 1951 upgraded the building from basement to attic and added a passenger elevator. These improvements could not save the business from changing shopping trends. The Bryan brothers closed the downtown store at the end of 1954, having closed its satellite stores the year before. *The Observer* noted that



Oakland History Room

For the fantastic price of \$105, you could have the latest in wash-day technology: an electric wringer-washer from Maxwell Hardware. Incorporated in the 1890s, Maxwell Hardware supplied Oaklanders with the latest gadgets until it closed in 1954, despite a thorough modernization three years earlier.

Maxwell Hardware's closure "was based on the lack of adequate public transportation, over-crowded parking facilities, and ever-present harassment of parking meters that have contributed to slowing downtown shopping to a walk."

The Maxwell Hardware building at 1320 Washington St. and 481-14th St. was in use by other retail establishments until the late 1960s. It was razed in November of 1970 in the first wave of demolitions that made way for the City Center development.

Oakland Heritage Alliance
P.O. Box 12425
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Address Correction Requested

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