

Joyce Roy



THIS YEAR'S WINNERS of Partners in Preservation awards.

PiP awards honor preservation projects & people

By Allyson Quibell

For the past nine years, Oakland Heritage Alliance's Partners in Preservation Awards have acknowledged the efforts of city residents, property owners and organizations to enhance Oakland, recognizing their commitment to excellence in historic preservation. At a November 18 ceremony at Rockridge Masonic Hall, 14 awards were presented in four categories: architectural rehabilitation, cultural projects and programs, advocacy and lifetime achievement.

This year brought a change to the PiP nomination and selection process. We "formalized the effort and added some structure," explains selection-committee member Valerie Garry. Instead of seeking nominations themselves, the four-member committee decided that a better approach would be to develop a nomination form and formal categories, and have organizations and individuals apply themselves. "We wanted to make the process (this year) as inclusive as possible, but also meaningful," she adds. "If we don't set and maintain high standards, it loses some meaning.

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What happened here in 1877? Let's 'axe!'

■ A pickaxe handle and a nightstick lead museum staffers on fascinating journey

By Deborah Cooper

Oftentimes, we get caught up in looking to buildings to provide a sense of history: marbled halls, preserved homes, business facades. But we can also learn much from something small enough to fit into one's hand. Two such objects have recently surfaced in the collections of the Oakland Museum of California (OMCA) and the Pardee Home Museum: a pickaxe handle and a wooden nightstick. These objects, once used as weapons, attest to a time of anti-Chinese violence in California and the nation—and to Oakland's decision to prevent anti-Chinese mob violence with the formation of a Committee of Safety. Oakland's actions in this crisis were remarkable and very different from what was happening in many communities throughout California at the time.

Museum staffers can sometimes be surprised by the objects in their collections. The Oakland Museum preserves objects related to all of California, including, of course, Oakland, while the Pardee Home preserves objects related to the illustrious political careers of Enoch and George Pardee in Oakland and California. In this case, volunteers taking digital images of the weapons collection at the OMCA wanted to know why an axe handle was in with the weapons instead of with the tools. Answering that question led to discovering the nightstick at the

"Oakland's actions in this crisis were remarkable."

Pardee Home. Neither of these objects is presently on display but they are both part of the rich trove of treasures our museums preserve for us. Exploring that treasure trove is

exciting and will soon be much easier as the OMCA builds the California Collections and Research Center in the Fruitvale district.

The pickaxe handle was donated to the Museum in 1911 by Oakland resident George R. Babcock. A small tag attached to it reads: "Com. of Safety Oakland 1877." The nightstick was saved by Helen Pardee (granddaughter of Enoch Pardee) and kept among other mementos of Enoch and George Pardee's years as Oakland mayors. Its tag reads:

"Used by EH and GC Pardee during the Kearney riots in" (sic). These tags are certainly vague; a little detective work was needed to "read" these objects.

The "Kearney riots" are probably what we often call the Sand Lot riots led by Denis Kearney in San Francisco. Kearney was an anti-Chinese agitator who held meetings in sandy vacant lots to plan attacks against Chinese immigrants. In the 1850s, Chinese immigrants had come to "Gold Mountain," as California was popularly known in China, hoping to strike it rich in the gold fields and quickly return home. Like many others,

see AXE on page 3



THE NIGHTSTICK, left, and the pickaxe handle have a lot to say about Oakland history.

Alan Templeton



It's been a year of wonders for our almost-25 organization!

By Naomi Schiff, president
We're turning 25 in 2005!

As we get ready to celebrate, our 1,000-member organization is going strong. The Crocker Highlands house tour was a great success, thanks to hardworking volunteers, the generous sponsorship of The Grubb Company, and an enthusiastic group of hosting homeowners. We had great weather; the tour went smoothly, the homes were intriguing, and OHA raised a substantial sum to pursue its mission. Look at the impressive list of those who helped, on page 9, and while you're there, notice how many dedicated OHA folks contributed to a superlative series of summer walking tours. The tours are a wonderful way to experience Oakland neighborhoods and they serve as a great outreach for new members. To help with the

2005 tours, call our office, 763-9218.

Our beloved and terrifically competent Administrative Director Esther Hill is moving on and we will miss her dreadfully. But she is leaving us in wonderful shape, with an orderly member database, and the office functioning efficiently. We have excellent applicants, and by the time you receive this, you will hear a new voice on the phone. Esther, we will miss your calm and your resourcefulness! We wish you well!

Not with a farewell, but with heartfelt gratitude for their major efforts, we are thanking Mary MacDonald and Pat Dedekian as they leave the board (but of course not the organization)! As secretary, president, and house tour mastermind, Mary MacDonald put in countless hours

for OHA. She led us through a challenging period of critical decisions. Pat Dedekian, former treasurer and vice president, pulled off numerous wonderful programs, found many new contributors, networked like crazy, and furnished a human link to the Friends of the Oakland Fox. Thank you Pat and Mary!

The Partners in Preservation/Annual Meeting was attended by a wonderful mixture of about 150 community activists, architects, developers, and new and old members. A fast-paced evening included our first digital slide show (thank you, Sally Kemmerer!) accompanying a pithy, engaging and lively awards presentation by Michael Crowe, Joseph Taylor, and the

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LANDMARKS BOARD ACTIVITY SUMMARIES

by Jordan Harrison

AUG. '04: *Director's Report:* The uptown Mixed Use Project, Disposition and Development Agreement was approved by City Council on July 20. The project will next be reviewed by the Planning Commission for land use entitlements and design review. The Development Director has agreed to meet with Oakland Heritage Alliance and representatives of Forest City about the possibility of including the historically important buildings along San Pablo Avenue near 20th.

Actions taken: Board moved to deny the request from the owner of the Holy Redeemer Center to again extend the deadline for the owner's comments on provisional designation as a Heritage Property. The designation was applied in February by the planning director

after a demolition permit was denied. The property has a preliminary rating of "A." The Board discussed the impact the designation process would have on the owner's plan to sell property and how the new owner will find out about the property's landmark status. Board moved to adopt the Resolution Initiating Landmark Designation of St. Augustine's Mission - St. Andrew Missionary Baptist Church (2624 West St.) and direct staff to forward the nomination to the Planning Commission for public hearing. Board moved to approve the Design Review for landscape alterations on the Cohen-Bray House.

Secretary Reports: City Architect has prepared a request to permit the department to negotiate a bid for the Camron-Stanford House (1418 Lakeside Drive) restoration/rehabilitation. The openings at the rear of the Cox Cadillac Building have been boarded. The fence has been repaired and they are monitoring the site to insure that any repairs to the security will be done. The tree at the edge of Vernon has legally been removed. The Arbor Villa Palm Trees (Landmark 77-573) have been confirmed dead by the city arborist. They are willing to put in new trees if the owner agrees to water them for three years.

SEPT. '04: Board discussed the Broadway-West Grand mixed-used project and DEIR,

including the design of the façade retention proposals, and made recommendations for mitigation measures (see more on this, p. 6).

Actions Taken:

Regarding the Pre-Application Design Review of the rehabilitation of an existing 95,000 square foot, three-story building at 66 Franklin Street, which proposes removal of current façade wrap, repair of the original façade, new windows and storefronts, awnings, lighting and colors for commercial use, the Board moved to recommend staff suggested Conditions of Approval regarding landscaping, building signage, exterior color selection, and execution of the Development Agreement and recommend Design Review approval to the Development Director.

OCT. '04: *Actions Taken:* Board moved to adopt a Resolution Initiating Landmark Designation and direct staff to forward the nomination to the Planning Commission for public hearing on the proposed designation of Sheffield Village, which includes properties located on Roxbury Avenue, Marlow Drive,

See LPAB on page 5



HOLY REDEEMER CENTER.

Cynthia Shartzter

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“It was gratifying to see the community be interested and involved ... There’s room for improvement and refinement, but judging from the feedback from the event, it’s the kind of thing we should be doing more of.”

ARCHITECTURAL REHABILITATION

The firm of **Komorous-Towey Architects** was recognized for its meticulous restoration of the *Mary A. Bowles Building*, at 1721



Contributed photo

PULLMAN PORTERS embrace in front of a train.

Broadway. Designed by architect Douglas Dacre Stone and built in 1930, time wasn’t

so kind to this Art Deco beauty. By 1946, a new stucco façade eradicated most traces of its original design of blue-green terra cotta, black tile and silver trim. When Komorous-Towey inspected the building in 2000, it had been vacant for years had fallen into disrepair. After four years of work, the restored façade was completed in September.

Another winner in category was **The Oakmore Homes Association**, for its successful efforts to rehabilitate four 1920s *public stairways* built into the hillside Oak-

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Axe

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most of them found riches to be elusive and ended up staying in California. Chinese workers provided essential labor in building the Transcontinental Railroad across the barrier of the Sierra in the 1860s. But in the 1870s, a national economic downturn resulted in widespread unemployment. Since this depression overlapped with a period of heavy Chinese immigration, many unemployed white laborers blamed the Chinese. (The irony that Kearney immigrated to the U.S. from Ireland only nine years before was apparently lost on him.)

The Chinese in California and across the U.S. became targets of racial hatred. Kearney, leader of the Workingman’s Party in San Francisco, and his counterparts in other towns throughout California founded “anti-coolie” clubs to pressure employers not to hire Chinese workers and to fire those that were then working on the railroads, in factories, in laundries and as household help. As journalist Charles Nordhoff wrote in 1873, “Both political parties in California denounce the Chinaman on their platforms; but if you go to the houses of the men who make these platforms, you will find Chinese servants; if you visit their farms or ranches, you will find Chinese hands; and if you ask the political leader, after dinner, what he really thinks, he will tell you that he could not get on without Chinese.”

Over several days in 1877, unemployed laborers led by Kearney marauded the San Francisco streets, attacking anyone who looked Asian. The National Guard was

called out and the old Vigilance Committee was renamed and reinstated, but the riots took three more days to be quelled.

So that explains the reference to the “Kearney riots.” But what about the “Com. of Safety” listed on the pickaxe handle’s tag? We figured “Com.” probably stood for committee and turned to the Oakland History Room for help. There we found Phil McArdle’s “Oakland Police Department History,” which discussed formation of a Committee of Safety on July 26, 1877. With that date, we tackled the microfilms in the library’s newspaper room. Several hours later, we had newspaper reports of the dramatic founding of the Committee of Safety.

It turns out that the Committee of Safety was created in Oakland by Mayor Enoch Pardee one night in July 1877. He was worried that the vicious anti-Chinese riots in San Francisco would spread to Oakland.

On July 25, after hearing an incendiary speech by Oakland rabble-rouser J. Redstone threatening violence against the Central Pacific Railroad in Oakland if they did not fire their Chinese workers, Pardee felt “it was time to take prompt action to suppress anything in the shape of a riot,” reported the *Oakland Daily Transcript* of July 26. Pardee enlisted 900 volunteers for the Committee.

The volunteers were to patrol the city and “promptly suppress any attempt at disturbance of the public peace,” according to the July 26 *Oakland Daily Tribune*. Assigned to the seven wards of the city, they were put under the command of police sergeants. They were armed with pistols and clubs—such as the pickaxe handle and nightstick—to be used to “enforce prompt obedience to

the law” and to “assist the city authorities in preserving the peace and the good name of our city,” reported the July 25 *Oakland Evening Tribune*.

Despite the higher visibility of San Francisco’s anti-Chinese sentiment, it was certainly not absent in Oakland. An “anti-coolie” club was meeting in Oakland by 1876, and various city ordinances in the ’70s and ’80s were aimed against the Chinese. But canneries and factories as well as private houses and small businesses all employed Chinese workers. The *Oakland Daily Transcript* reported on July 27, 1877, “Mayor Pardee announced the fact that the hoodlum element of San Francisco was massing here and that threats of burning the Jute Mills in East Oakland, and Lusk’s property at Temescal, had been made. Mr. Lusk and the proprietors of the jute mill employ a large number of Chinamen, and the Mayor said that the Committee of Safety had told them to arm their Chinamen and other employees and instruct them to ‘eat up’ the first hoodlums who made a hostile demonstration.”

These small objects in our collections—the pickaxe handle and nightstick—actually loom large now that their history has been unlocked. We can picture them clenched in the hands of residents who stood in gaslit streets with watchful eyes to protect their fellow residents from harm. They mark an important moment in our city’s history.

Deborah Cooper is OMCA’s Museum Collections Coordinator. She thanks David Nicolai of the Pardee Home, Kathleen DiGiovanni of the Oakland History Room, and Joellen Lipsett, Museum Collections Volunteer.

PIp

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more Highlands neighborhood. Over time, the steps had deteriorated and were so hidden by vegetation that many neighbors never realized they existed. Two of Oakmore's volunteer board members, Virginia Lew and Kurt Lavenson, worked with Oakland officials and the community to keep the project in the public eye. Their efforts paid off. And in July, the 16-month project was celebrated with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Flynn Craig & Grant Architects has helped preserve an important example of an early automobile assembly plant, while adapting it for contemporary retail, residential and commercial use. Designed in the Gothic Revival Style, the Durant Motor Company Office and Factory at 10900 International Blvd. was completed in 1922. Jumping ahead about 78 years, the architects were commissioned to restore and expand the 251,000-square foot structure as a mixed-use marketplace including retail, offices and residential space—now known as *Durant Marketplace*.

Built in 1891 as a single-family residence, 2525 11th Avenue had seen more than its share of neglect and inappropriate changes. But **William Anderson**, who purchased the Victorian home in 1982, saw that the original wood clapboard was still there, as was the decorative wood cornice and window trim. Over the past 20 years, William has worked to return it to its handsome and dignified original condition. It's a lovely example of what one property owner with time, patience and perseverance can do to bring back the beauty of an historic home.

Cedric Holley & Robert Fischer didn't have to tackle a heroic construction project to be worthy of recognition. But the asbestos removal and repair of their house at 1015 Martin Luther King Way, was, as Betty Marvin of the City of Oakland said: "something any homeowner could do and therefore, a great example. People are always afraid that there's nothing under their asbestos—or aluminum, or vinyl, or stucco or plywood."

The Italianate Victorian at 1027 Adeline Street has known many owners since it was built in 1876 by Samuel McKee, for-

mer State Supreme Court Justice. After being vacated in the 1980s, it sat lonely, boarded up and obscured by trees. Current owner **Michael Taffet** gets credit for helping return it to its original 19th-century loveliness. After approximately four years of work, including a seismic retrofit, the project is all but complete.

CULTURAL PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

Hattie Carwell has had a 30-year career as a scientist and physicist, and is one of the founders of the *Museum of African American Technology (MAAT) Science Village*, an archive of information on African American achievements in science, engineering and architecture. Here she has developed hands-on science demonstrations and activities as a way to help motivate local youth to consider technical careers. The library, now located downtown in the historic Landmark Athenian Club Building, is open to scholars and teachers, as well as the general public.

University of California historical archaeologist **Anna Naruta** was recognized for her efforts to preserve and uncover the stories and cultural artifacts of some of Oakland's earliest immigrants. Anna has taken up the story of *Uptown Chinatown*, a little-known Chinese community of men who lived on San Pablo Avenue between 19th and 20th streets from 1867 until 1872. With her website and storefront exhibit at 1971 San Pablo, Anna hopes that her interest will jog memories and help gather more information.

Thanks to the efforts of **Andrew Workman, Nancy Mackay**, and the staff and students of Mills College, important pieces of Oakland's recent history are being recorded and pre-



THE MARY A. BOWLES BUILDING gets a little tender loving care, top left, while a student makes a discovery at the MAAT center, top right. The original clapboard siding on William Anderson's home catches some light and shadow, bottom right, while the Durant Marketplace gives new life to an early auto assembly plant, bottom left.

served. The *Oakland Living History Project at Mills College* was developed with a three-year grant from the James Irvine Foundation. The goal: get students involved in the community in which they live, learn its history and document that history in print, tape and digital formats. In the fall of 2002, Mills students undertook a project called "Communal Use of Public Space: Oakland's Lake Merritt." This past year, the project focused on the Laurel neighborhood, just outside the campus gates.

Since 1972, the **Harbor House Ministries** has served Fruitvale and San Antonio districts, offering programs that strengthen families in one of Oakland's most diverse neighborhoods—an area that includes African-American, Asian, Cambodian, Laotian, Mexican, Guatemalan, Salvadoran, and Honduran residents. Last year, Harbor House supplied families with food for 2,268 meals each month, graduated 23 youths from an internship program, and oversaw 250 volunteers.

In celebration of the West Oakland library's expanded schedule and the publication of Larry Tye's book, *Rising from the Rails*, head librarian **Christine Saed** invited Tye to speak and organized a

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Contributed photos



PiP

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panel discussion to honor the Pullman Porters and their contribution to the labor movement and the West Oakland community. A free tour of West Oakland's 16th Street Train Station, formerly a major railway terminus, was given following the discussion.

ADVOCACY AND LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

Jane Powell once said to a reporter: "For the longest time, I've had this compulsion to rescue houses like stray animals." Jane bought her first "stray"—a bungalow in South Berkeley—in 1987. She is now a nationally recognized bungalow guru who has restored bungalows in Adams Point, Laurel, Dimond, Glenview and

Maxwell Park. Jane got so good at fixing up bungalows that she started writing about the process. She has also appeared on HGTV's *Curb Appeal* (see article on page 8) and *Ultimate Kitchens*.

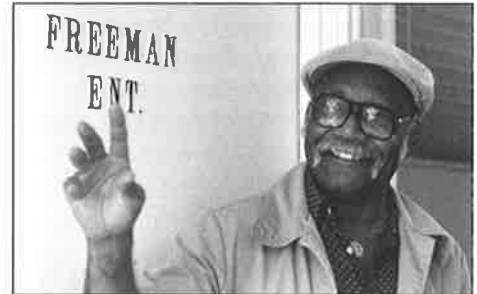
Her future plans include a TV show with fellow bungalow author Paul Duchscherer that will feature restoration and preservation projects. And once her upcoming book is finished, she hopes to have time to lobby for the adoption of the Mills Act in Oakland.

Crescent Electric is a story of one family's commitment to service in Oakland. In 1912, Clifford Meikle opened his store at 1839 San Pablo Ave. In 1924, the year **Stanley Meikle** was born, the family moved to its second location at the corner of 24th and Telegraph, where it remained a warm and vibrant business, serving the community and helping to preserve part of Oakland architectural fabric for 56 years. Sadly, it met its unfortunate demise in 2001 when a portion of a neighboring hotel toppled the wrong way during its demolition, crushing the elegant storefront.

Laura Ingram and Richard Geitzen have saved and rehabilitated more than 15 derelict older homes, from Victorians, to Classical Revivals and Craftsmans. They have purchased houses and small multi-unit buildings in the San Pablo-Golden Gate neighborhood



Contributed photos



CRESCENT ELECTRIC'S interior, top, and a Mills College group interviewed local residents of the Laurel District, bottom.

between Emeryville and Berkeley-areas where investors decline to put their efforts. Many of their projects became catalysts for revitalization of battered neighborhood blocks.

For information on applying for next year's Partners in Preservation awards, contact the OHA office at 763-9218 or send a request via email to info@oaklandheritage.org.

Contributed photo



UPTOWN CHINATOWN existed into the 1870s.

LPAB

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Middleton Street, Covington Street, Brookfield Avenue, 2900–3200 Danbury Street, Revere Avenue and 11810–11848 Foothill Boulevard. The Homeowners Association of Sheffield Village took the vote of each homeowner to go for a S-20 designation; it passed by a majority. There are about 320 homes in the development, which is one of the first planned communities of California. Sheffield Village was built by the E. B. Field Co. between 1938–52, with the majority of homes completed prior to WWII. E. B. Field bought in bulk to save costs and passed the savings on to buyers. The original cost of homes ranged from \$4,700 to \$6,000. Today

they sell starting at \$600,000. Reversing last month's decision, Board moved to grant the owner's request for six months to comment on the provisional designation of the Holy Redeemer Center as a Heritage Property. Board moved to approve the design as presented for the Studio One Art Center (365 45th St.) with the exception of the entry porch at this time and a request that the architects submit a design for a one-story porch, without any restrictions on the proportions. Proposed exterior modifications included an entry porch addition, new window and door replacements in existing openings, new photo-voltaic solar panels, new mechanical exhaust/ventilation roof features, new door openings at rear and side, and new emergency exit stairs. Board discussed diffi-

culty of redesigning the entry, which was originally designed to be the back of the building, consistent with the building's historic design and the Secretary of the Interior's standards. Board commented on the Draft EIR for the Wood Street Development (formerly Central Station Project), approximately 29.2 acres between 10th Street to the south, West Grand Avenue to the north, Wood Street to the east, and the I-880 frontage road to the west. Board elected Boardmember Armstrong as Chair and Boardmember Dreyfuss as Vice-Chair. *Board Reports:* The four dead Arbor Villa palm trees have been removed. A city Tree Inspector is looking into the possibility of tree replacement based on the City's standards for space and location of utilities.



Julia Morgan building hiding behind metal sheath

By Jordan Harrison

In the midst of a block of seemingly modern buildings on Auto Row, an older gem has been discovered: a 1920 Julia Morgan commercial building, currently hidden by a metal parapet and tile attached to the original building façade. This exciting find means that a last-minute change was made to the Broadway-West Grand Mixed Use Project, approved by the city's Planning Commission on Dec. 1. The change allows for façade retention of the Julia Morgan hidden within the Porsche dealership. On a less positive note, 13 buildings will be fully or partially demolished, seven of which are historic resources under CEQA.

The five-acre project site encompasses two square blocks in the Northgate commercial district, located on the south end of Broadway Auto Row, across from the YMCA. The new development will replace auto dealerships, a few small retail and residential buildings, and surface parking lots with 421 condominiums, 30,000 square feet of ground floor commercial space, and 670 parking spaces in multi-level garages. The six to seven story buildings will wrap around the blocks, screening parking structures on the interior.

The project includes retention of the façade of 440–448 23rd St., a 1919 corner garage designed by local architect Clay Burrell in a decorative brick Beaux-Arts style. The garage has tall arched windows with fanlights as well as terracotta keystones, pilaster capitals and columns.

Although the previous design included retention of the 449 23rd St. façade, occupied by the 21 Grand gallery and the Smythe Accordion Center, it will be lost.



AT LEFT IS a 1963 photo of the 440-448 23rd St. garage, built in 1919, planned to be incorporated into the project. At right is 2315 Broadway in 1963. Built in 1922, it is planned for demolition.



A 1963 photo, top, of the 1920 Julia Morgan storefront at 2335 Broadway, planned to be incorporated into the Broadway-West Grand Mixed Use project. Multi-paned transom windows are hidden under the awning. At right is 449 23rd St. as it appears today. Built in 1924, the structure is planned to be demolished.

The corner brick building has a decorative stepped parapet, tiled pent roofs and multi-paned transoms. The two corner garage buildings on 23rd Street along with 439 23rd St. contribute to the "23rd Street Group" Area of Secondary Importance. Commissioner Nicole Franklin, who expressed dismay to see the older buildings go, said she thinks, "Whole or partial use is



both photos: Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey



better than (the buildings) sitting there deteriorating."

Urged by community members, planning commissioners and the Landmarks Board, the applicant revised the project to save the Julia Morgan building at 2335 Broadway. The building once had an intricate polychrome terracotta frieze and cornice with coat of arms tiles and small paned transom windows flanked by pilasters. Today, at least some of the transom windows and the intermediate-level cornice are intact. Further investigation may reveal more intact features.

The planned seven story building that will be attached to the façade is currently designed to be slightly stepped back from the façade with a glass "curtain" on either side and above the façade to frame the historic portion. The applicant intends to use the façade as a primary project entrance. The planning commission did not require design review by the

See **AUTO ROW** on page 10



No 'long winter's nap' for the Fox, we hope!

Here's the place to get the latest gossip on Oakland's historic front. *Around the Town* is compiled by our crack newswoman Hildy Johnson.

■ Heavens to Murgatroyd! If there's one thing that really gets my goat it's pushy neighbors. I thought everyone who is anyone had a copy of Amy Vanderbilt's *Complete Book of Etiquette* by their bedside. I do. Really, I do. BAHA, the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association, announced that they were having four tours in December. With three of them in Oakland. Well, it's great that they appreciate our superior historic buildings! All I can say is that they must have "O" envy. BAHA, we love you anyway.

■ The other day I was looking at the Fox Theatre in Oakland thinking of William Fox and his chain of 1,100 movie houses and his 20th Century Fox studio. It seems like just yesterday the mean old government stepped in and broke everything up because of anti-trust regulations. Well, who can you trust if you can't trust the government? So what do we have today as a result of this breakup? A run-down theatre in need of repair and an Australian billionaire who owns the studio and tells the politicians what to do from his electronic network. Tsk, tsk, some day you'll hear someone say "A dingo's got my Congress!"

Says I aloud, "What is that scrawl in those windows?" as it was all squiggly piggley. A passerby overheard my bemusement and explained that it was called "graffiti." "Zounds," says I, and struck my head with my hand, unfortunately with such force that it felt like a truncheon from an overenthusiastic policeman. But in that cracking cerebral flash of a moment I had an epiphany: it was the fault

of the Oakland Unified School District! Yes, for those good stewards of fiscal probity had made one cut too many: they had eliminated penmanship.

"Really," says I, "If they improved their handwriting, one could read their message."

"Oh, there isn't a message," said the passerby. "It's just a signature. They're called taggers."

"Taggers!" says I. "Are they Scottish?"

But before I could say any more, she told me that there had been a fire inside the offices upstairs. Minor damage, but very troubling nonetheless.

So here is my year-end holiday tale. (As you may surmise, all true blue columnists have holiday tales.)

A scruffy little urchin sat on Telegraph and 19th holding up a bowl, whispering "Please sir, more porridge?" But nobody heard the ragamuffin's cry for help.

Meanwhile, a mayoral candidate whose omnipresent billboards proclaim "Moving Oakland Forward" (Where? to San Francisco?) heard the voice from Christmas Past:

"HEY BUDDY, IF YOU WANT TO MOVE OAKLAND FORWARD, LET'S GET STARTED AND RESTORE THE FOX!"

BAHumbug! he said.

And in another part of town, Mayor Brown (so quiet that some believed he had already packed his bags and moved into the Attorney General's office in Sacramento) heard the voice of Christmas Present:



"HEY, MAYOR! BEFORE YOU LEAVE OAKLAND, LET'S GET GOING AND RESTORE THE FOX!"

BAHumbug! he said.

And a Senate President Pro Tem (pushing aside his attorneys) heard the voice of Christmas Future:

"MR. PERATA, BEFORE YOU, GET INVOLVED IN ANYTHING ELSE, HELP US RESTORE THE FOX!"

"Who are you, again?" he said.

Well, sometimes it doesn't go the way you want it. But, this is how our tale ends:

To the Good People of Oakland, Elected and Non-Elected Officials, Executive and Administrative Assistants: LET'S GET GOING ON THE FOX BEFORE IT BURNS DOWN! THERE IS A PLAN OUT THERE. NOW IS THE TIME!

On Palmer, Hornbostel, on Dickey and Diggs, on Roche and on Morgan, McGregor, on Weeks! To all a good edifice and to all a good night!

CORRECTION

We goofed in the last issue, folks. The page 1 photo depicts the Golden Gate Live Steamers miniature train in Redwood Regional Park. The GGLS club began in 1936 in Oaklander Victor Shattock's basement. The elevated track in the photo was opened in Redwood Regional Park in 1950 and moved in 1971 to Tilden Park in Berkeley, where it is today.

A memorial gift to OHA was made for Lois Over by her daughter Laurie Oppenheimer. Lois passed away July 14.

Calendar

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thursday, Jan. 20: You are cordially invited to attend a special celebration on Julia Morgan's 133rd birthday. Festivities begin with a High Tea and Talk, 4:00 p.m., with Hearst Castle historian Victoria Katner delivering a tribute to Morgan in the drawing room of the Berkeley

City Club, 2315 Durant Ave. in Berkeley. Guests may make reservations for dinner in the dining room, between 5:30 and 7:30 p.m., by calling 848-7800. Attendees may enjoy beverages and hors d'oeuvres from the no-host bar and peruse the Silent Auction items on the second floor (including a two-night stay at the club, Giants tickets, handcrafts and gift certificates). Docent-led tours of the club will be ongoing until 8 p.m. when the highlight of the

evening will commence: a conversation with Miss Morgan herself (played by Betty Marvin). Marvin is the keeper of the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey and a long-time OHA member. Cake and champagne will follow. Tickets to this unique evening are \$15 by advance reservation (by Jan. 10), or \$25 at the door; call 883-9710. Sponsored by the Berkeley City Club, the Alameda County Historical Society and the Landmark Heritage Foundation.

PiP winner Jane Powell visits your living room

By Erika Mailman

Our lifetime achievement winner Jane Powell is not only a friend of preservation, she's also somewhat of a TV personality as well. Powell has been featured on three episodes of HGTV's program *Curb Appeal*, lending her skills towards making housefronts look better—and we do mean fronts. Powell's own (previous) home on Brookdale Avenue was used as the example for one of the shows, and for two months after shooting it was butterscotch on the façade, up to the point where the cameraman said would be visible, and turquoise on the rest.

That's part of the "magic" of television, something Powell has some rueful experience with. "TV is not like real life," she says. "You basically have to stand there and say something they've told you to say with a straight face like you mean it." Sometimes the show's producers would let Powell improvise: "If it's all right, it stays. If not, they'll suggest something for you to say."

They suggested a whole lot more than her



Contributed photo

RECOGNIZE IT? This Brookdale Avenue home was restored on *Curb Appeal*.

on-screen dialogue, it turns out. For the show where Powell's house was featured, the producers were worried that viewers would be confused since the designer and the homeowner were the same person. At their request, Powell offered up a friend, Chris York, who she describes as being at the time "unemployed and photogenic," to play the homeowner. This would have solved the problem, except that the producers then made a strange decision, to have Chris and Jane pose as a married couple. Eventually, the show aban-

doned the fictitious backstory and aired instead with vague language about "the house they share," says Powell. "It confused the hell out of some of my relatives who saw it!"

OHA member Paul Duchscherer, who appeared as a guest star on that mistaken identity program, has appeared on roughly 16 of these programs and was the one who got Powell involved. He initially got into TV as a way to help promote his books (like Powell, he has written several bungalow books), but ironically doesn't have cable and can't watch his own shows when they air. "They send me a tape so I can show my mom," he says, laughing.

Some amusing stories arise from the difficulties of filming in a noisy urban area. "We were constantly doing stuff over because of sirens or ambulances, or someone doing donuts in the intersection," says Powell of the Brookdale Avenue shoot. She also improved the curb appeal of a Prairie home on Chabot Road in Rockridge and a post-

See **POWELL** on page 11

Preservation Action Committee looks at planned projects

By Naomi Schiff & Joyce Roy

Oak to Ninth Project: Signature Properties is proposing a huge mixed-use development on the estuary from Oak Street to Ninth Avenue. The Port of Oakland owns the property, which includes the Ninth Avenue Terminal. Part of the land is governed by the Tidelands Trust. The Ninth Avenue Terminal is the last remaining large marine break-bulk terminal on our waterfront. An OHA boardmember, Cynthia Shartzter, submitted a landmark application for the Terminal, and last May the Landmarks Board voted unanimously to forward a nomination to the Planning Commission. It has yet to be scheduled for a hearing there. In addition to historic preservation issues, other complexities of the mixed-use development are the planned Bay Trail that will run through the area, access challenges, and the fact that the project does not conform to the Estuary Plan. OHA has been discussing this

project with other community groups and elected representatives to get ideas about the best way to structure the area. At our suggestion, and with the agreement of Signature Properties, the city issued an RFP and is now reviewing responses. It will conduct an extensive public process known as a "charrette" early in the year about the best uses and designs for the property.

16th Street Train Station: A mixed use project known as the "Wood Street Project" is proposed for the site of the 16th Street Train Station and the industrial land around it. The proposal includes rehabilitation of the interior and exterior of the Main Hall of the station and the nearby Signal Tower, but would demolish the baggage wing and the elevated tracks. Bea's Hotel would also be demolished. At the Oct. 20 Planning Commission hearing on the Draft EIR, many, many community members emphasized the historic value of

this station for Oakland railway history and advocated reusing the whole station complex. OHA submitted comments on the DEIR questioning adequacy of historic review for some parts of the site. We requested additional study of a partial preservation alternative that retains more of the extant railroad track and the baggage wing and, also, Bea's Hotel.

Holy Redeemer: The Holy Redeemer site off Golf Links Road is still in limbo. OHA is on record as supporting the reuse of the historic buildings on the site, which was a seminary and retreat center. While the site is not "on the market," the attorney (Michael J. Samis, 312-739-0900) encourages people to contact him with ideas. OHA has been attempting to pass the word to potential re-users, developers, park advocates, realtors and creek preservation people. There is some question as to how much

See **PAC** on page 10

Thank you to our members (old and new)!

It has been a banner year for OHA with a dedicated membership working incredibly hard. We are so very appreciative of the many hands making work light. (And check out our astronomical list of new members!)

WALKING TOURS

Annalee Allen, Diane Atwood, Renie Bartolini, Phil Bellman, Michael Bowen, Patti Busk, Barbara Bye, Bill Coburn, Deborah Cooper, Michael Crowe, Kathy Dadey, Patricia Dedekian, Kathleen DiGiovanni, Riley Doty, Dennis Evanosky, Kevin Flynn, Valerie Garry, Frank Hall, Linda Hall, Mary Harper, Bob Howell, Judy Jacobs, Sally Kemmerer, Steve Lavoie, Diane Levy, Ruby Long, Yorkman Lowe, Mary MacDonald, Pamela Magnuson-Peddle, Peggy Martin, Betty Marvin, Stacey Merryman, Ellen Michael, Sharon Moore, Anna Naruta, Marge Nicholson, Jason Patton, Kirk Peterson, Jane Powell, Marga Riddle, Joyce Roy, Naomi Schiff, Cynthia Shartzter, Barbara Smith, George Strauss, Calvin Tam, Joseph Taylor, Alan Templeton, Sandi Tillin, Everett Thomas, Sylvia Turner, Michael Willis, Valerie Winemuller, Randi Wood, Dean Yabuki, and Betsy Yost.

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DAY OF THE DEAD FESTIVAL &

FRUITVALE TOUR

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HOUSE TOUR

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Garry, John Gomes, Marie Guillard, Linda & Frank Hall, Daryl Halverson, Mary Harper, Esther Hill, Jim Hill, Roy & Joan Holman, Zhong Huang, Heidi Ingelfinger, Judy Jacobs, Dan Jepson, Marc Kagan, Sally Kemmerer, Carolyn Kemp, Robert Kessler, Peggy Kidd, Ann Killebrew, Terry Kulka, Sally Lappen, David Leimback, Gaye Lenehan, Dan Lenhart, Diane Levy, Pam Litke, Barbara Littwin, Arlyne London, Marianne Louri, Mary MacDonald, Shirley Mannette, Gloria Martin, Peggy Martin, Pat McClosky, Laura McDuffie, Lorce Monohan, Dawn Muller, Thomas Murray, David Nicolai, Diane Nicolini, Barbara O'Hara, Anita Pender, Aida Peterson, Kirk Peterson, Jeanne Porter, Rita Rhine, Joyce Roy, Lisa Ruhland, Naomi Schiff, Cynthia Shartzter, Barbara & Sam Skelly, Lisa Spearman, Jacqueline Tasch, Joseph Taylor, Natalie Taylor, Sandi Tillin, Don Tyler, Jim Wellenbach, Madeline Wells, Randi Wood, Connie Woods, Tom Wu, and Dean Yabuki.

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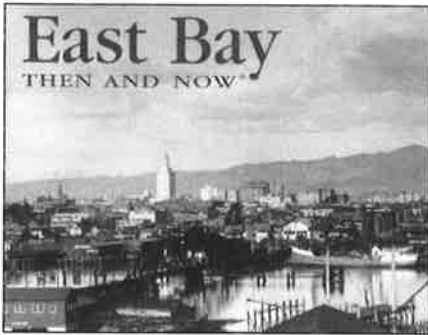
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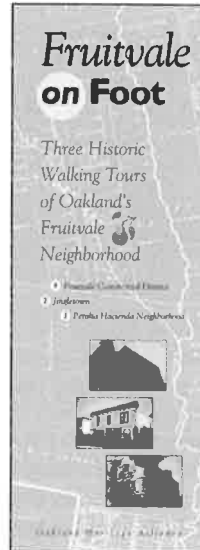
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Written by our members



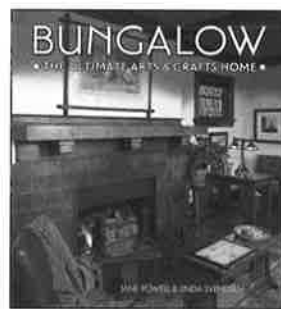
East Bay Then and Now, by OHA member Dennis Evanosky and writing partner Eric Kos, is a gorgeous hardcover photograph book showing historic views paired with modern images of the same spot. From Thunder Bay Press, it is 144 pages, \$17.95 and available Jan. 5 at local bookstores.

Fruitvale on Foot: Three Historic Walking Tours of Oakland's Fruitvale Neighborhood, by Pamela Magnuson-Peddle, is OHA's new walking guide of the Fruitvale neighborhood. The guide includes information on the Fruitvale Commercial District, Jingtletown, and the Peralta Hacienda neighborhood. Magnuson-Peddle is a past OHA president. For a copy, please send \$6.50 (inc. tax/mail) to OHA, 446 17th Street, Suite 301, Oakland, CA 94612.



Oakland Hills, by OHA member Erika Mailman, is a historic photographic book that looks at the early days of the neighborhoods that have sprung up in the city's hills. From Arcadia Publishing, it is a \$19.99 paperback with 128 pages. It is

available at local bookstores. Or you may send a check for \$23.15 (inc. tax/mail) to Erika Mailman, P.O. Box 2791, Oakland, 94602, including information about any desired inscription.



Bungalow: The Ultimate Arts & Crafts Home is written by past OHA president Jane Powell (featured on p. 8) and lushly illustrated with color photographs by Linda Svendsen. This

286-page coffee-table book provides a tour through 85 bungalow homes, examining the details that define them. A hardcover from Gibbs Smith publishers, it is \$50 and available at bookstores everywhere.

2004

Continued from page 2

indefatigable Valerie Garry, a terrific social hour and refreshments planned by event magician Pat Dedekian, and an opportunity to wander around the well-restored Rockridge Masonic Building, our gracious host and previous PiP winner. The hubbub of conversation and the animation and enthusiasm of the crowd was inspiring. Thanks so much to all who helped! Between the voice count and the mailed-in ballots, we received a sweeping affirmative vote electing Alison Finlay, Charles Crowder, James Corless and Joyce Roy to the Board of Directors.

In the midst of that meeting, Wycliffe DeLong of the DeLong-Sweet Foundation glided in and quietly gave us a grant for \$10,000 toward our work; we are dedicated to making the foundation's trust in us worthwhile! We are so grateful for this support.

We are making plans for a birthday celebration, but we are looking beyond, to our *fiftieth* birthday! There is a lot to do. We hope you will join us in whatever way feels the most comfortable: attend an event, walk on a tour, join one of our active committees, make a financial contribution, or invite friends to become members. Each of these is a way to safeguard and enhance Oakland's cultural heritage and built environment. We thank you for caring about our city!

Auto Row

Continued from page 6

LPAB, but it could be required by the Planning Director.

An area of concern regarding the proposed façade retentions is project phasing. The two buildings with plans for façade retention are on a portion of the project site not yet owned by the applicant (Parcel B), while the building previously proposed for façade retention at 449 23rd St. is currently owned by the applicant and is scheduled to be demolished before work starts on the other parcel.

Commissioner Colland Jang appreciated the efforts of the applicant and described preserving and enhancing historic properties on Broadway as getting the "best bang for the buck." Commissioner Michael Lighty indicated that although he found the new design of Valley/23rd Street corner building stronger than the original design that included the 449 23rd Street façade, he regrets the loss of the corner warehouse. Ideally, he said, redevelopment of the existing historic warehouses would be proposed, but this is not always an economically viable option.

According to Kimric Smythe of the Smythe Accordion Center, the project applicant did not make a strong effort to accommodate the two existing uses into the design of the new ground floor retail spaces.

Community members expressed disap-

See AUTO ROW on page 11

PAC

Continued from page 8

of the site could be developed, due to seismic, creek and auto access issues. OHA has been pursuing declaring the historic buildings a city landmark. Many community groups and local religious groups have long used the site for retreats and meetings.

The Altheim: Progress on the proposal by Citizen Housing Corporation for renovation of the existing structures and construction of three new buildings for senior housing was stalled for a few months but is now moving forward. As part of the process, the site will be landmarked and the group will apply for listing on the National Register for Historic Places.



Powell

Continued from page 8

war tract house in Larkspur for the program.

Props are a big part of any such production. For the “after” shots on Brookdale, a Craftsman light fixture was installed on the porch. Although it looked great on film, the front screen door couldn’t be opened without banging into it. The crew disassembled it and took it away after filming. Another prop was the house numbers affixed to the side of the house. “We couldn’t find the right numbers, so we just used random ones,” Powell confesses.

The shoots generally take a week and pay the designer \$500. The lucky homeowner

does a little better, with about \$2,000 worth of free materials and designer expertise.

Despite seeing the reality behind the shiny TV façade, Powell says she would still appear on the show again. After all, she has gotten contract jobs because of it, as well as some fans. “At conferences people want their pictures taken with Paul and me. They say, ‘You’re my two favorite people on that show!’” Duchscherer once had the surreal experience of flying cross-country with *Curb Appeal* as part of the in-flight entertainment. “Some friends came running down the aisle screaming,” he says. “I just thought, ‘Is the plane going to crash and I’m never going to be able to tell anybody?’”

The good news is, the *Curb Appeal* shows continually cycle, with even shows several years old still airing. With any luck, you’ll be able to catch Jane or Paul on a rerun.

When Powell’s not working on restoration for the camera, she’s doing it for a publisher. Her impressive collection of books is, in order, *Bungalow Kitchens*, which has sold 20,000 copies; *Bungalow Bathrooms*; *Linoleum*; *Bungalow: the Ultimate Arts and Crafts Home* (which came out Oct. 3) and *Bungalow Details: Exteriors* (which came out Nov.19). She’s at work on her latest, *Bungalow Details: Interiors*, coming out next fall.

To learn more, visit www.bungalowkitchens.com.

Auto Row

Continued from page 10

pointment with the displacement of 21 Grand and the Accordion Center (which will move to another garage behind God’s Gym) and felt some mitigation should be provided. However, such displacement is not considered a physical change to the existing environment and thus not an impact under CEQA. Additionally, because the project does not make use of any Oak-

land Redevelopment Agency funds, no relocation assistance is required.

The project is located next to the historic Saturn dealership building, which is considered eligible for the National Register individually and as part of the “25th Street Garage District”, an Area of Primary Importance. The Julia Morgan commercial building was built for the Dinsmore Brothers as an auto accessories store. A 1963 photo shows the building with a large awning covering the transom windows and in use as a furniture store. In 1964, a major remodel

resulted in the structure’s current appearance and connected it to the two brick buildings to the north.

At the recommendation of OHA, a new mitigation measure was added to the project approvals, requiring \$125,000 from the applicant for the city’s façade improvement program to be targeted at downtown area buildings. Additionally, the applicant will incorporate elements of the historic structures into the new buildings.

Demolition and construction for the project could begin as early as this spring.

Join OHA today!

One of the benefits of membership is the quarterly *OHA News*, an informative journal about Oakland’s preservation activities.

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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.

CONTRIBUTORS: Annalee Allen, Deborah Cooper, Kathleen DiGiovanni, Kevin Flynn, Jordan Harrison, Esther Hill, Allyson Quibell, Joyce Roy, Naomi Schiff, Alan Templeton

PRODUCTION: Erika Mailman

OHA News welcomes submissions, which may be sent to news@oaklandheritage.org.

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Madison Street Temple now Islamic Cultural Center

By Kathleen Leles DiGiovanni

“Everything old is new again” could be the motto of the Madison Street Temple, a perfect jewel of creative reuse tucked into a corner on the edge of downtown Oakland at 1433 Madison St. Known today as the Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California, the Madison Street Temple began its life in 1909 as the Oakland Scottish Rite Cathedral.

Oakland’s Scottish Rite Masons organized in 1883. Their first meeting place was the old Masonic Temple at 12th and Clay Streets. In 1896, the lodge purchased an old synagogue at 305 14th Street, making it the first Scottish Rite organization west of the Rockies with its own temple. Scottish Rite membership grew rapidly, and by 1905 a new site at 14th and Harrison had been selected. In April 1906, plans for a new temple building had been drafted by C.W. Dickey and accepted by the lodge. But by December, newspapers were announcing a new site and new architects for the project. Why the change of plans? The 14th & Harrison project turned on the purchase of an adjoining lot. The real estate boom following the 1906 earthquake put that lot out of reach, forcing the building committee to acquire a less expensive parcel a few blocks further from the central area.

Architects for the new project were Matthew O’Brian and Carl Werner. These San Francisco-based architects made a specialty of Masonic structures, designing lodges in cities

including San Francisco, Santa Rosa, Sacramento, and Petaluma. This Mission Revival style building was dedicated on March 15, 1909 amid Masonic pomp. The \$210,000 complex boasted a formal lodge room, billiard and card rooms, library, men’s and ladies’ lounges and dressing rooms, a banquet room, and full kitchen. Crowning the whole was a \$6,000 pipe organ.

By the 1920s, the Scottish Rite community had outgrown this building, too, leading to the construction in 1926-27 of the present temple on Lakeside Drive, another O’Brian & Werner design. The Madison Street building was used by Masonic organizations into the 1980s.

In the late 1980s, a group of Oakland and Berkeley Muslims organized to create a cultural center. The Islamic Association of Berkeley was formed to coordinate fundraising efforts for such a center. The Madison Street Temple site became available in September 1995, the sale closed in December, and on January 6, 1996 (15th Shabaan) the veteran building reopened to a new life as the Islamic Cultural Center of Northern California. Since that time the building has hosted a wide range of religious, educational, and cultural uses for the



FROM MASONS TO MUSLIMS: a vintage postcard of the Madison Street Temple.

local Islamic community. Building projects to date have included exterior painting, upgrades to electrical and heating systems, and restored hardwood floors. ICCNC Secretary Ali Sheik reported that the organization’s goal is to maintain the building as it is and improve it rather than to alter it.

The Madison Street Temple has not been landmarked by the city of Oakland but is on the city’s preservation study list and has an “A” rating from the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey. OCHS describes it as “Oakland’s outstanding example of Mission Revival architecture . . . distinguished by the boldness of its twin towers and by its unusual form.” And that pipe organ that cost \$6,000 in 1909? It’s still there and reported to be in working condition.



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