

Mills College

Mills College will celebrate its centennial this October. This Oakland institution has maintained a tradition of excellence in education which has established it as one of the finest liberal arts colleges for women in this country. Though October 7, 1985, marks the 100th anniversary of the granting of its charter, Mills' history goes back well beyond that date. Founded in Benicia in 1852--the year Oakland was chartered--as the Young Ladies' Seminary, this private non-denominational institution provided educational opportunities for women in California's early years. Contemporary newspapers commented that it "yielded a vast influence for good upon the mental, moral, and social growth of our young state."

In 1865 a pair of transplanted easterners, Dr. Cyrus Taggart Mills and Susan Tolman Mills, purchased the seminary from its principal, Miss Mary Atkins. It was the dream of these former missionaries and world travelers to establish a college for women on the Pacific Coast which would rival those of the East.

Within a few years, seeking a larger and more centrally located site, Dr. and Mrs. Mills purchased 60 acres in the rural foothills east of Oakland, and in June of 1870 broke ground for the new campus. Mills Hall was completed the following spring. This building, still at



El Campanil, in the popular Mission Revival styling of the turn of the century, was one of Julia Morgan's earliest independent commissions (postcard, c.1910)

MILLS COLLEGE WALKING TOUR OCTOBER 19

A walking tour of Mills College is scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 19, 10 am to 1 pm. This tour was developed for OHA by Aaron Gallup, who is Architectural Historian for the State Office of Historic Preservation in Sacramento. It will be led by Aaron and OHA tours coordinator Dean Yabuki. The distinct phases of the campus's architectural development will be explored, and a number of significant interiors will be visited.

Meet promptly inside the campus gate at MacArthur Blvd. and Richard Road. This is a long hilly walk so wear comfortable shoes. In case of rain the tour will be canceled. \$3 OHA adult, general public senior or youth; \$2 OHA senior or youth; \$4 general.



Susan Tolman Mills and Cyrus Taggart Mills, founders of Mills College (photo: Mills College Library)

the heart of the campus, housed the entire educational institution, now renamed Mills Seminary. Susan Mills assumed full leadership of the seminary in 1884 after her husband's death. The institution was re-organized a year later as Mills College, and its charter granted on October 7, 1885.

By the turn of the century, Mills' campus was rapidly developing toward the 127 acres it now occupies on its East Oakland site at 5000 MacArthur Boulevard. The present wooded campus gives little indication of the original nature of the site: early photos show scattered oaks and alders along the streams, with dry grassy rolling hills forming the backdrop. Today's landscaping is the result of years of continued planting, which has created a park-like setting in the midst of a now-urban neighborhood. Dr. Mills' interest in horticulture resulted in the introduction of many exotic species, including some brought back from a trip to Japan. The many eucalyptus trees are especially notable; a guide to the plants of the campus, available at the college bookstore, makes a pleasant companion for an afternoon stroll.

The magnificent landscaping forms an appropriate setting for a remarkable collection of buildings which encapsulate more than 100 years of Bay Area architectural development including works by many of the region's most notable architects. A 1928



Mills Hall by S. C. Bugbee & Sons, 1870-71, is still the symbolic center of campus (postcard c. 1920)

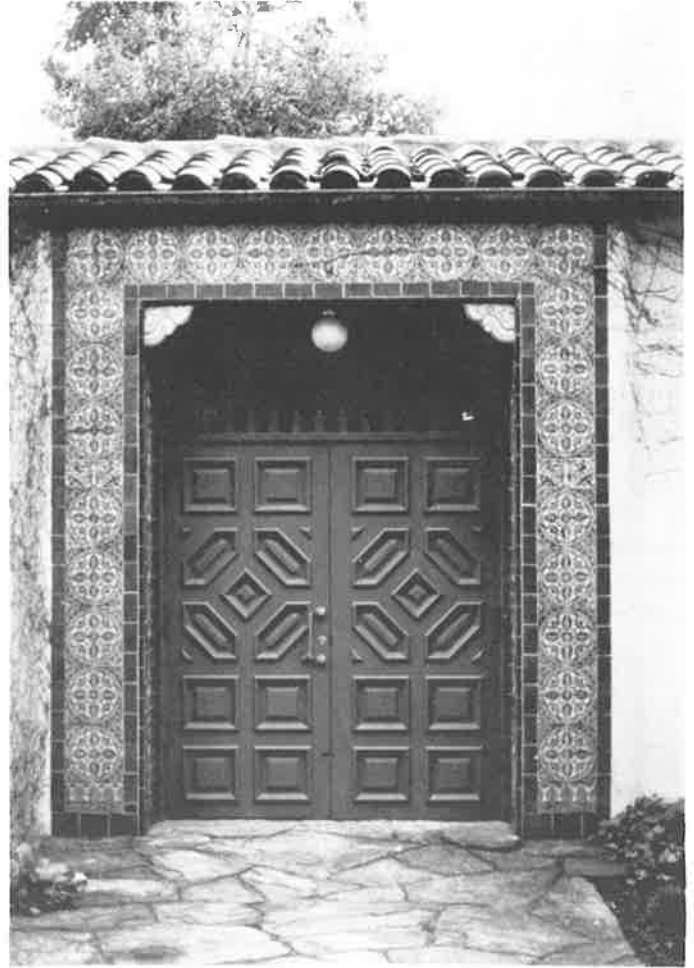
article in the Pacific Coast Architect described Mills College as "a museum of Western architectural history from 1870 to the present day." That observation remains true, with the addition of works of several major firms of the mid-twentieth century. In addition to Mills Hall, the campus's major monument of 19th century design, four important structures by Julia Morgan remain, as well as vestiges of Bernard Maybeck's master plan of 1918, and buildings by Bakewell and Brown, Walter Ratcliff Jr., Clarence Mayhew, Callister and Payne, Ernest Kump, Gerald McCue, and Skidmore, Owings and Merrill.



This striking sculpture, executed in 1937 by Fanchon Martinson, a graduate student at Mills, stands in the entrance court of the former Health Center (1930), now the Children's School. (photo: Dean Yabuki)

The historic heart of the campus is the Oval, the location of Samuel Bugbee and Sons' monumental Second Empire/Italianate Mills Hall, which now serves as the Administration Building. Directly across the Oval stands one of the earliest works of Julia Morgan: El Campanil, the belltower of 1903-04. Its construction marked the beginning of a Mediterranean design tradition which now gives the campus so much of its character, and was also pivotal in the career of the architect. Following her return from the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris in 1902, Julia Morgan worked for John Galen Howard before establishing her own practice. It is significant that her earliest independent commissions came from a women's college; a close working relationship with women's institutions continued throughout her career. The Mission Revival belltower, an early reinforced concrete structure, was designed to house a set of bells cast for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago and used again at the San Francisco Mid-winter Fair the following year. Funds for the tower were donated by Mr. and Mrs. Francis Marion (Borax) Smith.

El Campanil is complemented by Julia Morgan's 1905-06 Library at the eastern edge of the Oval. Although the college trustees requested a design in "California Mission," the building shows more formal Renaissance Revival imagery. The library and belltower withstood the earth-



Oriental detailing on Julia Morgan's Alderwood Hall, 1924, recalls its origin as Chinese orphanage.

(photo: Dean Yabuki)

quake of 1906; their survival called attention to the architect's skill and helped firmly establish her career. She designed several additional buildings for the campus over the next decade: a gymnasium in 1910 (demolished in 1960), and the Alumnae House of 1916, now the Student Union. This contains a remarkable interior in the redwood vocabulary of the First Bay Tradition. Another Morgan building, the former Ming Quong Home for Chinese Orphans (1924), was annexed to the college as a dormitory in 1936. Renamed Alderwood Hall, it stands adjacent to the western entrance to the campus, and shows Morgan's skill in using exotic imagery to express a building's intended purpose. Its Chinese imagery includes ceramic tiles and other traditional detailing, and a walled central courtyard.



The Library, 1905-06, shows the historicism of Julia Morgan's Beaux Arts training (postcard, c. 1910)

In 1916 the college began a period of accelerated growth and development under the vigorous leadership of a new president, Aurelia Henry Reinhardt. New building shifted toward the west in 1917 with construction of a major dormitory, Warren Olney Hall. Architects for the project were Bakewell and Brown, best known for the San Francisco Civic Center, who had remodeled an 1860s farmhouse on the property a year earlier for use as the president's residence.

With expansion under way, the development of a master plan became critical. Phoebe Apperson Hearst, long interested in the welfare of women's institutions, funded the creation of a general plan by Bernard Maybeck in 1918. This was an impressive Beaux Arts composition with major and minor axes defining grand vistas terminated by monumental neoclassical buildings. However, only a small portion of the plan was realized: a divided boulevard from Wetmore Gate to the Oval. Now even this access has been closed, and a portion of the new Physical Sciences Building truncates one arm of the former roadway.

As the campus grew, it continued to expand to the west. Two additional dormitories, Orchard House (1919) and Meadow House (1921), were added by Bakewell and Brown. In 1922, the college's board of trustees formally established a policy of Mediterranean design for all new con-



The impressive Romanesque portal to Walter Ratcliff's 1928 Music Building (photo: Phil Bellman)



In the east loggia of the Art Gallery (1925), carved column capitals represent historical figures of art and literature. (photo: Dean Yabuki)

struction. The noted Berkeley architect Walter Ratcliff Jr. was appointed to the new post of campus architect and planner. Though known up to that time primarily for English Tudor Revival designs, Ratcliff developed a high level of skill in the Spanish Colonial Revival as well. To familiarize himself with the roots of Spanish Colonial architecture, he embarked upon a trip to Mexico. His mastery is apparent in the Art Gallery (1925), Ethel Moore Hall (1926), and the Music Building (1928). Several earlier buildings, including the campus auditorium and Bakewell and Brown's dormitories, were "hispanicised" in the 1920s to conform with the emerging Mediterranean campus character. Building slowed from the 1930s to the

1950s. The campus grew by annexation: the Ming Quong Home in 1936, the Home For Aged and Infirm Colored People site (see Spring 1985 OHA News) in 1938. The first major postwar construction projects were the new Life Sciences Building (1947) and an addition to the library (1954). Both were in modern styling which broke with the Mediterranean tradition.

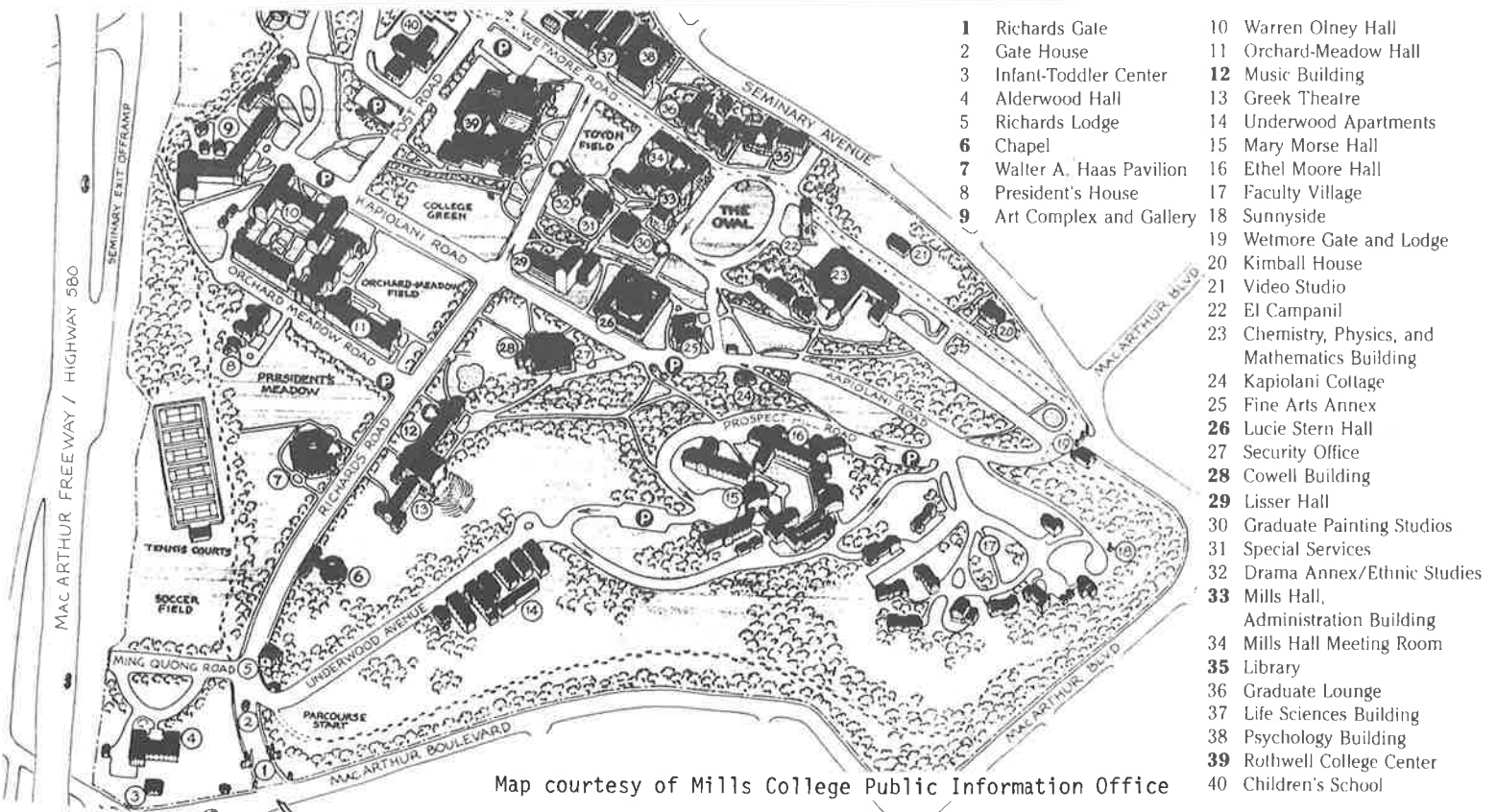
Building on a larger scale commenced in 1965 with Ernest J. Kump's Lucie Stern Hall at the western edge of the Oval near Mills Hall. Kump's use of tiled roofs and white stucco walls related to the earlier campus buildings, both here and on his Cowell Health Center (1966) and Walter Haas Pavilion (1971). Other modern buildings on campus include the 1969 Psychology Building and the 1970-71 Physical Science Building, both by Gerald McCue and Associates, the Rothwell Student Center by Chan/Rader and Associates (1969), and the Founders Commons (1970), a hillside dormitory complex by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill.

Perhaps the most notable building of this later period of development is the college chapel of 1967 by Callister and

Payne. These architects' fascination with traditional Japanese influences is seen clearly in this building, which also incorporates elements reminiscent of the designs of Frank Lloyd Wright. A series of indoor-outdoor spaces gives the building a strong relationship with its site; semi-enclosed courtyards and glassed doorways open the building into the wooded landscape. The entrance has the feeling of a ceremonial gate, and opens into a passageway which conducts the visitor from the street into the soaring interior space of the circular sanctuary. It is an exceptional statement of Bay Area regional design during the 1960s.

Throughout its history, Mills College has shown a commitment to quality in education and design. Sensitive environmental planning has characterized the development of the campus; Mills has been slow to discard its past, and has been careful to integrate the present into the campus. Displayed in a park-like setting, this distinguished collection of buildings by some of the region's most notable architects sets the college apart as an architectural environment of special quality.

-- Aaron Gallup



Map courtesy of Mills College Public Information Office

- | | |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1 Richards Gate | 10 Warren Olney Hall |
| 2 Gate House | 11 Orchard-Meadow Hall |
| 3 Infant-Toddler Center | 12 Music Building |
| 4 Alderwood Hall | 13 Greek Theatre |
| 5 Richards Lodge | 14 Underwood Apartments |
| 6 Chapel | 15 Mary Morse Hall |
| 7 Walter A. Haas Pavilion | 16 Ethel Moore Hall |
| 8 President's House | 17 Faculty Village |
| 9 Art Complex and Gallery | 18 Sunnyside |
| | 19 Wetmore Gate and Lodge |
| | 20 Kimball House |
| | 21 Video Studio |
| | 22 El Campanil |
| | 23 Chemistry, Physics, and Mathematics Building |
| | 24 Kapiolani Cottage |
| | 25 Fine Arts Annex |
| | 26 Lucie Stern Hall |
| | 27 Security Office |
| | 28 Cowell Building |
| | 29 Lisser Hall |
| | 30 Graduate Painting Studios |
| | 31 Special Services |
| | 32 Drama Annex/Ethnic Studies |
| | 33 Mills Hall, Administration Building |
| | 34 Mills Hall Meeting Room |
| | 35 Library |
| | 36 Graduate Lounge |
| | 37 Life Sciences Building |
| | 38 Psychology Building |
| | 39 Rothwell College Center |
| | 40 Children's School |

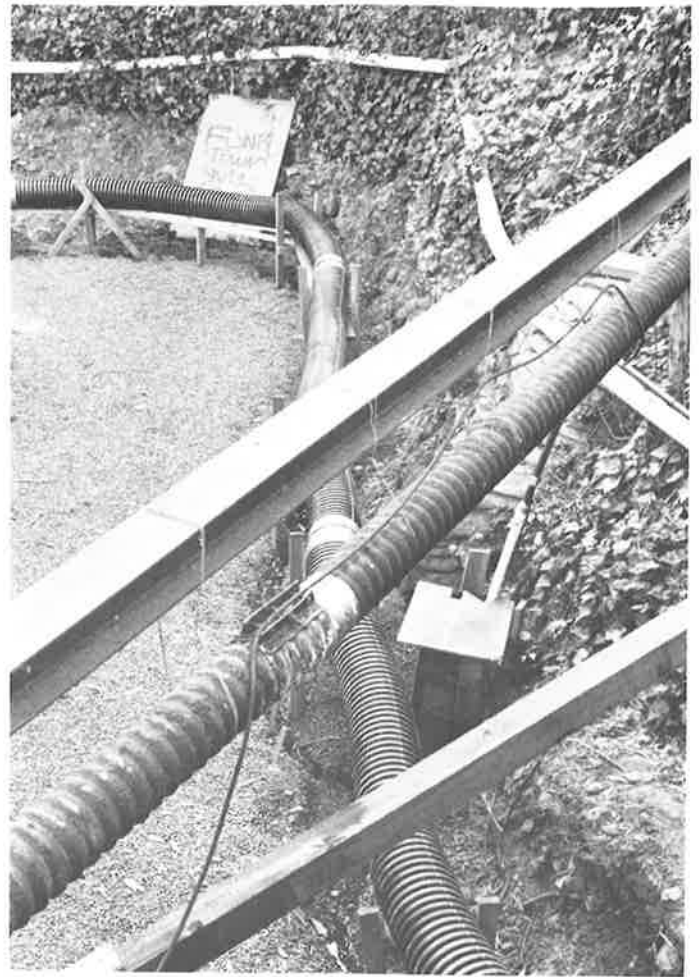
Glen Echo Creek Preserved

A small section of Glen Echo Creek running from Glen Avenue to Monte Vista off Piedmont Avenue was recently "under attack." On June 26, 1985, neighbors woke up to bulldozers brought in by a contractor for Alameda County Flood Control. Over the next few days, they ripped out everything on the west bank of the creek and bulldozed to bottom and sides. The plan was to replace the natural bank with a two-level concrete wall twelve feet high, and a partial concrete creek bottom as well. Only three property owners of the seven adjoining the creek had been notified that "maintenance work" was needed; no notice was given to other creek neighbors or the community at large.

A coalition of neighbors, including an OHA Preservation Action Committee member, creek friends such as Urban Creeks Council and the Sierra Club Urban Creeks Task Force, and PANIL (Piedmont Avenue Neighborhood Improvement League, the local neighborhood organization) succeeded in stopping the work temporarily while alternate solutions were sought. The coalition worked closely with Alameda County Supervisor Bob Knox. PANIL pointed out that as far back as 1978 the neighborhood had expressed the strong opinion that the creek should remain as natural as possible.

Flood Control was unable to demonstrate why such a drastic solution was needed for a minimal erosion problem, especially since it admitted that flooding was never a concern, except from debris collected at the mouth of a culvert, a problem easily solved by regular maintenance. The damage done by the concrete would almost certainly be worse than any past erosion problem. Once concrete covers the earth along a stream, revegetation is difficult. The groundwater recharge level is reduced drastically and trees, vines, even grasses have a hard time establishing and maintaining themselves. And since nothing can grow on unbroken concrete, the actual bank of the creek would be always barren, and this small bit of wild old Oakland would be gone forever.

At a public meeting held by Flood Con-



Glen Echo Creek diverted into plastic pipe, 1985
(photo: Phil Bellman)

trol on July 10 in response to public and political pressure, neighborhood residents strongly protested the project and asked that alternate solutions be investigated. On July 18 Flood Control responded with five alternatives to the concrete wall. After some close questioning they admitted that only two of these were truly viable, but at least one was a minimally structural solution that had promise. The neighborhood consulted an independent hydrologist and A. L. Riley of the State Department of Water Resources, an expert in natural erosion control. Working together, these experts and Flood Control's, with input from the neighborhood, have come up with a design that is more natural and aesthetic, yet just as effective for erosion control as the concrete wall.

There will be two different solutions



for the reach since there are different physical characteristics upstream and downstream of a bridge over the creek. For the upstream portion, the entire creek "toe" (where the creekside meets the creek bed) will be lined with one row of three foot high gabions. A gabion is a square wire basket filled with rock, and in this case soil too. The gabions will be planted with seeds and seedlings at the time of construction. Because gabions (unlike concrete) are open structures, they allow water to be absorbed by the soil all around them, an important part of creek ecology. Gabions provide excellent erosion protection, yet allow plants to grow not only in them but behind and above them as well.

The steep banks cut by the bulldozers in June will be regraded to a gentler slope. Where a steep terrace had been cut, a second row of gabions will be placed to insure stability of the hillside. Certain maintenance requirements of Flood Control made it impossible to regrade the entire slope, but the most that can be done will be done. At least the second row of gabions will provide a stable terrace for more plantings, the key to any erosion control project.

Downstream from the bridge, the creek is quite narrow and the exposed earth wall is nearly vertical and therefore unstable. Here, Flood Control will install a timber and steel beam wall set on concrete pilings. The pilings will be about three to four feet apart and will be placed under the level of the creek bed. Since these are just pilings and not a continuous concrete wall, the permeability of that section will not be affected, soil hydrology will remain stable, and plant growth will still be possible. The timber wall will have small blocks between the planks to insure permeability and provide space for plants to cascade down its face.

The creek bed will be lined with crushed rock, and a few gabions placed across its width. This is to slow the flow of the water somewhat, to reduce its ability to erode and to help the creek re-establish itself more quickly to a natural state.

Revegetation is the next step after construction. Flood Control is required by the State Department of Fish and Game

to revegetate the area as a mitigation measure for the loss of habitat to all the small creatures (usually unthought of and unnoticed by most of us) who live in and around the creek. Fish and Game wisely requires replacement of all lost vegetation with native species. The present plan, again arrived at by Flood Control, neighborhood representatives, and outside experts, calls for a mix of trees and smaller riparian species along the creek banks, and species usually found in drier areas for a small street level area near Glen Avenue. Flood Control will install an irrigation system that will be active for two years. After that it will either be turned off, allowing some plants to die off while others establish themselves, or the neighborhood group may take over responsibility for the irrigation system.

This project, which started out as a disaster, has ended up as a model of how a public agency, and Flood Control in particular, can work with a community to meet the needs and desires of both the agency and the neighborhood. The result is that everyone is happy with and can be proud of these stream restoration plans.

--Marlene Wilson



Glen Echo Creek: bridge in Oak Glen Park, designed by Oscar Prager in 1910 (Survey photo)

Oakland Briefing . . .

The "Oakland Briefing" column is prepared by the OHA Preservation Action Committee. If you would like to help monitor preservation issues in Oakland, please call Les Hausrath, 658-1083, or Carolyn Douthat, 763-5370.

■ GRAND LAKE EXPANSION

Construction crews have been working 14 hours a day to complete two new theaters at the Grand Lake, one of several Bay Area movie houses operated by Alan Michaan's Renaissance Rialto Theatres. Each of the new theaters will continue the movie palace tradition of the original, featuring elaborate decoration and special "atmospheric" effects. The Grand Egyptian, which opened earlier this year as theater #3, is decorated on the theme of an Egyptian palace garden. Murals of desert scenes line the walls above rows of gold hieroglyphics. The screen is surrounded by lavishly painted plaster reliefs, and topped by a winged head of King Tut. Special lighting treats the movie goer to the experience of an Egyptian sunset before the main feature. Theater #4, yet to be completed, has been

dubbed the Grand Moresque, and will be done on a Moroccan theme, according to Dusty Dillon. Dillon, head of the crew of artists and artisans responsible for the decoration, says Michaan's aim is to bring back the air of luxury and fantasy characteristic of movie theaters in their heyday.

All of this work is a sort of proving ground for Michaan's next project, the Fox Oakland. The theater has been purchased by Marlin Industries of Los Angeles, and earlier this summer received approval for a loan from the City of Oakland. The Fox, which has for years been a concern to both preservationists and downtown development interests, will be restored, according to Michaan. Renaissance Rialto will lease the theater portion of the building, including the marquee facade, and plans an extensive restoration of the main theater as well as creation of several smaller film "palaces." It is anticipated that the purchase should be completed by late September, and work begun on the theater portion of the building late this year. Michaan is looking toward a grand opening celebrating the rebirth of the theater around Easter.

■ WESTERN PACIFIC DEPOT, 3RD & WASHINGTON



A stop-work order was issued after alterations to the exterior of the first building designated a city landmark were begun without review by the Landmarks Board.

(photo: Phil Bellman)



OAKLAND PRESERVATION FAIR
FREE A Celebration of Renewal

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1982 12 p.m.-5 p.m.

■ ADAMS POINT NEEDS SURVEYORS



Adams Point mystery house: 421 Bellevue first appears in tax records about 1910, when it belonged to A. S. Larkey; yet it has no building permit on file, and its shingled tower and gambrel roof led field surveyors to date it 1890s. Was it moved? remodeled? Are there early photos somewhere? Are you the alert Adams Point surveyor or who will solve this riddle? (Survey photo)

■ PRESERVATION FAIR

Oakland's 8th annual Preservation Fair gets underway at noon, Sunday September 29, at the restored 109 year old Camron-Stanford House in Lakeside Park. This free public event offers continuous entertainment, ethnic food, an ice cream social, antique cars, media shows, authentic costumes, boat rides and house tours. Over 70 exhibits on the lawn surrounding the house will offer gifts, crafts, and information. This yearly tradition brings community groups, preservation organizations, and craftspeople together to show what they are doing to preserve Oakland's rich heritage. The Fair exists to increase awareness of the many facets of urban rejuvenation in the Bay Area and to encourage cooperation among preservationists.

Stop by OHA's booth and learn about upcoming OHA activities and events. The Oakland Preservation Fair has come to mean a day of celebration and pride for Oaklanders who are rediscovering their city. See you at the Fair. (For more information, call the Camron-Stanford House, 836-1976.)

Preservation depends on information, and the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey seeks volunteers to help document all of Adams Point's pre-1945 buildings before they are considered condo sites like this attractive 1907 Colonial Revival cottage on Jayne St. Learn the mysteries of building research, interview old-timers, take photographs and field notes. To participate, call 273-3941 (City Planning) and talk to Survey staff-- Gary Knecht, coordinator, Anne Bloomfield, or Betty Marvin.





■ BAMFORD HOUSE, 1235 EAST 15TH ST.



A proposal for a 5 unit development for this site is stalled until the owner presents his plans for this 1850s landmark, once the home of Dr. Bamford, Robert Louis Stevenson's physician.

■ HOUSEWIVES MARKET CELEBRATES

Thousands of potential shoppers turned out for the 1st Annual Housewives Market Celebration on August 10, sponsored by the Office of Economic Development and Employment to publicize the rejuvenation of the market at 9th and Clay Streets.

The market was started in 1908 by George Roeth who rented open-air stalls to produce merchants at 6th and Washington. The market moved to 9th and Clay in 1954 when



Housewives Market, 9th & Clay, before its most recent upscale paintjob (Survey photo)

the Nimitz Freeway was built. Since then it has been a source for all manner of meats, spices, and hard to find specialty foods, and until the construction of the Acorn Shopping Center at 7th and Market, was one of the few large markets serving downtown and West Oakland residents.

With the closing of Swan's Market at 10th and Washington last year, there were fears that Housewives would meet the same fate, and be closed to make way for new development. After appeals from the vendors, many of whom have been at the same stand for years, the city purchased the building last year. Over the next two years there are plans to renovate the building and increase the variety of foods available. Hopes are that the celebration and publicity will attract new customers from the ranks of downtown office workers to this lively and unique marketplace.



work in progress at Preservation Park (Phil Bellman)



■ FREMONT HOTEL, 524-30 8TH ST.



(1909, C.F. Mau; 1929 add. by A.M. Milwain)
 The Office of Economic Development and Employment has proposed a mixed use project for this site, as well as the rest of the block behind Ratto's: a multi-level parking garage bordered on the north and south by housing and commercial space.

■ NEW PROPOSAL FOR HOTEL TWO SITE?

A Los Angeles developer and the Oakland Tribune have made a \$250 million proposal to build a world trade center in the middle of Oakland's redevelopment area. Plans for the 750,000 square foot project call for the construction of a major hotel, an office building, a shopping galeria, and an exhibition center.

The project is proposed for the two blocks fronting on Broadway between 11th and 13th Streets, across from the existing City Center office complex. While OHA has

not seen details of the plan, it would appear that the Bank of America building at 1212 Broadway is slated for destruction, along with virtually all other structures in the two-block area with the exception of the Key System Building at 11th and Broadway.

As reported previously in the OHA News, another proposed hotel project (called Hotel Two) is presently pending for the Broadway block between 11th and 12th Streets. The City is still revising the final EIR for Hotel Two, which is expected to be released soon. In addition, the City Council recently granted Force Ltd. exclusive negotiating rights for the Hotel Two project. However, financing has been difficult to obtain, and it is not clear whether Force Ltd. will be able to complete the proposed hotel project.



Key System Building, 1100 Broadway (F.H. Meyer, 1911), spared in new proposal for Hotel 2 site (Phil Bellman)

City Landmarks Board Actions

The **Oakland Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board** meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 3:30pm in Room 211, City Hall. Meetings are open to the public. Designation of city landmarks is recommended by the Board to the City Planning Commission and City Council. Landmarks are subject to a 240-day delay in issuance of demolition permits and require design review by City Planning staff for exterior alterations. Final approval or denial of alterations is determined by the Board. Over one hundred landmarks have been designated in the ten years since the Board was created.

JULY

Reviewed restoration plans for the Thornton and Higgins houses in Preservation Park (on their original sites, the north side of 13th Street), calling for replacement of porches in their original character, painting, and asphalt roofs. Pat Cashman, representing OEDE, reported on progress at Preservation Park: \$1.7 million in public improvements including landscaping scheduled to be complete by the end of September; the Hoover house (1079 12th Street, where Herbert Hoover lived in 1896) will not be moved to Preservation Park unless seriously threatened in its present location; the Bamford house, as a "pioneer" house of an earlier period, is not considered an appropriate architectural example for the late-Vic-



Herrick House, Hawthorne & Webster. The OEDE plans to move this 1885 house, designed by well-known architect Clinton Day, to Preservation Park (Phil Bellman)

torian Park, but the Herrick house on Pill Hill will be accepted along with an adjacent Colonial Revival, and placed at the southwest corner of 12th and Grove, side by side, complying with dictates of the Department of the Interior that buildings should retain the same compass orientation after removal. Board Secretary Richard Lloyd reported further on the Hoover house: City Councilor Aleta Cannon had suggested that removing it from the landmarks list might encourage investors, since it has been advertised all over the United States without finding a buyer. It would still cost \$100,000 or more to rehabilitate, too expensive for private residential use, while the neighborhood opposes commercial use.



The Hoover House, 1079 12th Street: endangered, but not endangered enough (photo: Phil Bellman)

Gary Knecht, coordinator of the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey, announced completion of the Central District survey and presented copies of the Survey's forms and maps identifying buildings, building groups, districts, and landscape features which appear to be eligible for the National Register. Survey information has been used by developers of the Fox Oakland, Liberty House, and Preservation Park.

Board approved preparation of landmark designation resolution for the White Building (327-49 15th St./1464-66 Webster).

New chair David Hoard reported his hope to establish a liaison between OHA and the Board, and make contacts with the Board of Realtors, Chamber of Commerce, and the Mayor. Board discussed the design competition for City Hall Plaza, and announced a special neighborhood meeting with residents of the proposed Oak Center Historic District. At this meeting (July 27) 16 of about 20 residents present voted to approve the proposed designation; none voted to oppose. The contributing buildings were identified during a walking tour.

AUGUST

Approved designation of the White Building (327-49 15th Street at Webster; 1924-25, Clay N. Burrell, architect) as a city landmark. Owners Ritchie & Ritchie requested permission to eventually add 3 compatibly designed upper stories, to make the property more economically viable; to change its name to the Ritchie-White Building, the historic lettering style to be retained in the new sign; and to add additional night lighting to the presently dark street scene. Approved in concept, though with no guarantee that a future Board would allow the additional stories; lettering of the new sign to be no larger than the existing, and lighting to be presented for review.

Reviewed the situation at the Western Pacific Depot building (3rd & Washington; 1909, W.H. Mohr, arch.), where restaurant space is being converted to offices with exterior alterations which were not presented to the Board for design review. Board assessed the changes made so far,



The White Building at 15th and Webster (Clay Burrell, 1924-25), new city landmark (Survey photo)

and made extensive recommendations to the contractor.

Reviewed and approved plans for continuing work on the Remillard House and Ginn House/Nile Club at Preservation Park. Voted to hold another meeting in the Oak Center neighborhood before taking action on the proposed district. David Hoard reported on his meeting with the mayor, who insisted that no building should be designated a landmark over an owner's objections and that the ordinance should be changed accordingly. --Kathy Olson



Work proceeds at Preservation Park (Phil Bellman)

OHA Calendar

The OHA Calendar lists events, activities, and meetings related to history and preservation that may be of interest to OHA members. To submit items for listings, contact Dean Yabuki, 644 Longridge Road, Oakland, CA 94610, 832-5355.

Upcoming Activities

Oct. 6, Sun. 1:30-3:30 pm, Uptown Oakland Art Deco Terra Cotta Walking Tour, Sharon Moore & Dean Yabuki. Meet at Mary Bowles Building, 1718 Telegraph. \$2 OHA/Art Deco members, \$3.50 general.

Oct. 19, Sat. 10 am-1 pm. Mills College Walking Tour, Aaron Gallup & Dean Yabuki. Meet at campus gate, 5000 MacArthur Blvd. at Richard Road. \$3/\$2/\$4.



Nov. 2, Sat. 6:00-9:30 pm. OHA Annual Dinner Meeting, at the dazzlingly restored California Ballroom, 1736 Franklin St. (Wm. Weeks, 1926), adjoining the Leamington Hotel. 6-7:00, no-host cocktails; 7-9:30, dinner and short business meeting, elections, update on preservation in Oakland, and celebration of OHA's fifth anniversary. Music, door prizes, and an opulent '20s rococo interior. Members and non-members alike are welcome. Announcements will be sent in early October, along with ballot for next year's board.

Sep. 29, Sun. 12:00-5:00 pm. Preservation Fair, Camron-Stanford House & grounds, Lakeside Dr. at 14th Street. Food, information, entertainment.

Sep. 29, Sun. Art auction to benefit Orinda Theater. 1:30 pm, Orinda Community Center (preview at noon). Videra Fine Arts Gallery, 547-8015, or Nina Horn, 254-5962/947-6612.

Oct. 6, U.C. Campus Creek Walk, led by Sally Sachs;

Oct. 13, South Campus Victorians, and a restoration in progress, led by Steven Johnson;

Oct. 20, Cragmont Neighborhood, by Trish Hawthorne: Berkeley Architectural Heritage neighborhood walking tours, Sunday afternoons in October (morning tours will be added as needed); \$10 series, \$4 single tours; info. & reservations, 845-6591.

Nov. 19, Tues. 8 pm. Berkeley Architectural Heritage and the Royal Oak Society present Angus Sterling of the British National Trust, speaking on "Treasure Houses of Britain." University Christian Church, 2401 LeConte. Tickets & info., 845-6591.

Regularly Scheduled Tours

Oakland Tours Program. These regularly scheduled free walking tours include Old Oakland, City Center, Uptown to the Lake, Preservation Park, Chinatown, and Port of Oakland, and are offered from April through October. For further information, contact Tricia Freitas, Oakland Tours, 273-3234.

Camron-Stanford House. Free tours are offered Wednesdays 11am-4pm and Sundays 1-4pm. 1418 Lakeside Drive at 14th Street, Oakland, 836-1976.

Paramount Theatre. Tours are offered the 1st & 3rd Saturday of the month, 10am-Noon. 2025 Broadway at 21st Street, Oakland. \$1.00. Meet promptly at the box office entrance on 21st St, 893-2300.

Dunsmuir House. Regularly scheduled Sunday house tours \$3. 2960 Peralta Oaks Court, Oakland. 562-7588.

Regularly Scheduled Meetings

Oakland Heritage Alliance. OHA Board of Directors meets on the 1st Monday of the month, 7:30pm. For agenda and location, please contact Ed Phillips, President, 465-9829. OHA Preservation Action Committee meets on the 3rd Monday of the month, 7:30pm. For location and agenda, please contact Carolyn Douthat, 763-5370. Meetings are open to all interested persons.

NEW! OHA Publications Committee, brainstorming on a project currently thought of as The Broadway Book!, meets usually on Tuesday evenings--researchers, the publications-wise, and other interested participants call Laura Niebling, 658-1933, for time, place, and sales talk.

Oakland Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board. The board usually meets on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, 3:30pm, City Hall, Room 221, Washington & 14th Sts, Oakland. For agenda and dates, contact Oakland City Planning Department, 273-3941.

Oakland City Planning Commission. The commission usually meets every other Wednesday, 3:30pm, City Hall, Room 115, Washington & 14th Sts, Oakland. For agenda and dates, contact Oakland City Planning Dept, 273-3941.

Oakland City Council. The council meets every Tuesday evening, 7:30pm, City Hall, Council Chambers, Washington & 14th Sts, Oakland. For agenda and dates, contact Oakland City Clerk, 273-3611.

Oakland Design Advocates. ODA meets on the 2nd Wednesday morning of the month, 7:30am, Lake Merritt Coffee Shop (formerly Tom Lovely's Restaurant), 336 Grand Avenue, Oakland. For agenda and dates, contact ODA, 893-6834.



Oakland Heritage Alliance

5569 Lawton Avenue, Oakland, CA 94618

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 and conservation of the city's archaeological, architectural, cultural, environmental, and historical resources. Membership dues and contributions are tax deductible.

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OHA News welcomes contributions--research projects large or small, historic photos, reports on events or issues related to preservation, announcements, opinion, what have you. Contact Betty Marvin (845-6591, 849-1959, 273-3941) or Dean Yabuki (832-5355)

Oakland Heritage Alliance News

644 Longridge Road, Oakland, CA 94610

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Betty Marvin

EDITORIAL BOARD

Dean Yabuki (chair), Carolyn Douthat

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New OHA Members

The Officers and Board of Directors of **Oakland Heritage Alliance** wish to welcome and thank all those concerned citizens who have shown their interest in Oakland's history and preservation by joining **OHA**. **OHA's** new members (July through August) are as follows:

Abdu A. Adam, Martha Baber, Lena Beek, Herbert Boese, Barbara Bream, Karen Carlson, Bennett/Arlyn Christopherson, Nancy Curns, Karen/Philip/Leah Cushman, Thomas Disher, Howard Egerman, Bertha Foster, Alan Garretson, Robert Glidden, R. Hargreaves, Ren Henerlau, Robin/Gilman Johnson, Mr./Mrs. John Kendall, Lorraine Knight, Charles Kopke, Diana Loggins, Helen Lore, Douglas Scott MacDonald, Barbara Mackowiak, Robert/Caroline McConnell, Mary K. McConnon, Dario Meniketti, Richard/Beth Merritt, Elaine Murakami, Jack Murphy, Polly O'Grady, Leslie Robin, Carol Russell, Celeste Scanlon, Steven de Cuir Schaefer, Mr./Mrs. Peter Schultz, Jeanne Marie Sexton, Martha Siedler, Mary Swift, Peter S. Tannen, William Vederman, Suzanne Waligore, Jacqueline Walpole, Suzanne Wilson, Charles H. Winkler, John/Renate Woodbury.

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Oakland Heritage Alliance, 5569 Lawton Avenue, Oakland, California 94618

JOIN OHA TODAY! Your annual tax-deductible membership dues include the **OHA News** and announcements of all OHA activities. Additional contributions and your active participation will make OHA a more effective organization.

Name _____ New Renewal
 Address _____ Change of Address only
 City, Zip _____ \$5 Senior/student/limited income (1 vote)
 Phone Numbers (H) _____ (W) _____ \$10 Individual (1 vote)
 I would like to serve on the following committee(s): Membership Programs \$15 Family (2 votes)
 OHA News Publicity Landmark Nominations Landmark Assistance \$25 Organization (1 vote)
 Preservation Action Summer Tours Development, Fund Raising other \$100 Sponsor (1 vote)
 \$ _____ Additional contribution

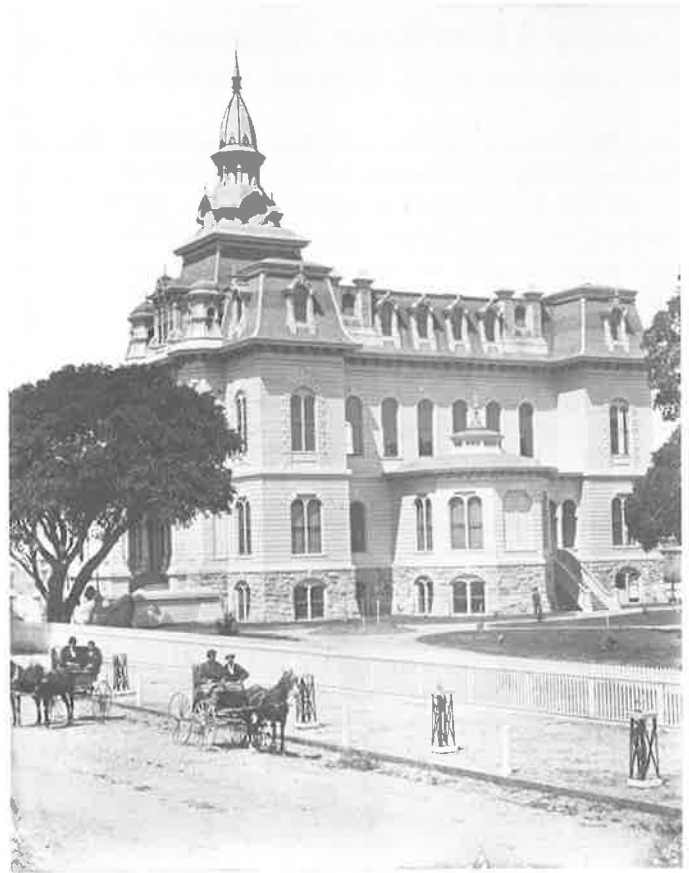


Oakland History Notes

City Hall #3

Oakland's first city hall was housed in an unprepossessing two-story wooden structure on the east side of Broadway between 3rd and 4th Streets. From 1852 to 1867, the city fathers held their august meetings in this edifice until moving to more commodious quarters at Shattuck Hall on the southwest corner of Broadway and 8th Street. A commercial building, the Hall stood near a livery stable, the sounds and smells of which must have spurred the city council to greater efforts to secure a city hall more befitting the dignity of a growing town.

After much quibbling over costs, the council awarded a \$24,000 building contract in 1869 to the architectural firm of S. C. Bugbee and Sons. Facing south upon 14th Street near Washington, the three-story city hall was completed in January 1871. Standing at the northernmost point of commercial development along Broadway and Washington, the new hall sported a handsome mansard roof and a 30 foot high cupola. The basement housed jails, the city physician, the Board of Health, and the fire warden. The first floor provided accommodations for the city assessor, the city clerk, the police court, the superintendent of public schools, city council offices, and the city engineer. The grounds surrounding the building displayed nicely graded walks, lined with shrubbery and flowers.



(photo: Oakland History Room)

A magnificent sign that Oakland was coming of age, the hall was the great pride of its citizenry until, on the evening of August 25, 1877, an arsonist reduced the building to rubble. The following year, a new hall arose upon the ashes of the old. This building functioned until Oakland's fifth and present city hall opened in 1913.

-- William Sturm

Oakland Heritage Alliance
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