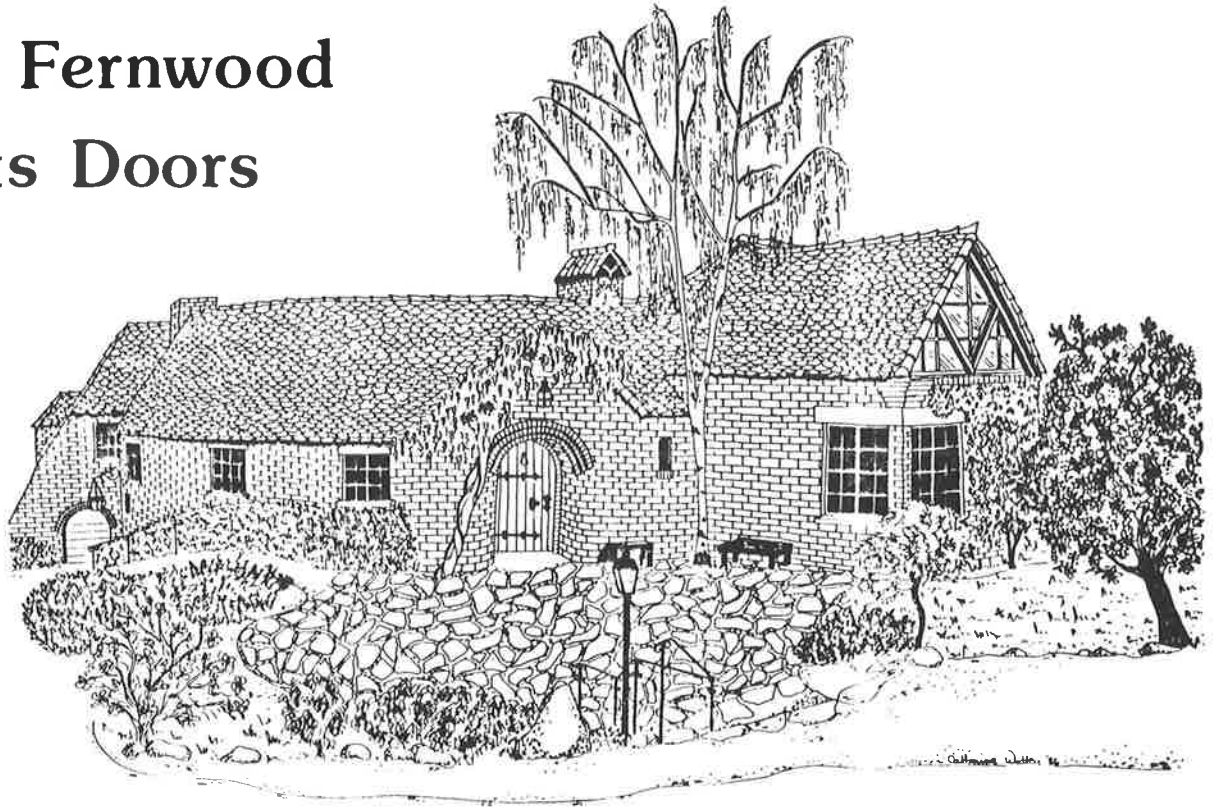


Historic Fernwood Opens Its Doors

* * *
HOUSE
TOUR
APRIL
6:
see
p. 2
* * *



The scene of Oakland Heritage Alliance's first house tour is "more than just another pretty place." The Fernwood community is indeed charming, with its creekside woodland setting and fairy tale cottages.— Behind those obvious, if secluded, attributes, the neighborhood has an unusually long and rich history, its earliest settlement coinciding with the 1852 incorporation of the Town of Oakland some four miles away. Much of the present character of the neighborhood was formed by events of the seven decades before the present "provincial revival" houses began to go up in the 1920s.

Fernwood lies astride the headwaters of Temescal Creek, near the intersection of Thornhill Drive and Mountain Boulevard, in what is now known as the Montclair district of Oakland. In the old days it was part of

1600 Fernwood Drive (Carr Jones, 1929): the neighborhood "castle," and a new City Landmark.

(drawing by Catherine Watters)

Hays Canyon, so called after Colonel Jack Hays. This colorful Tennessean, said to have been related to Andrew Jackson, had been the leader of the Texas Rangers before his arrival in the 1840s in California, where he was elected the first sheriff of San Francisco. In the East Bay, Hays and other investors bought most of the land holdings of Vicente Peralta. The Hays tract was strategically located on the logging road, by which the redwood timber was moved from the ridgeland forest down to the San Antonio wharf at 14th Avenue.

Colonel Hays built his home, "Fernwood," in 1852, at a point overlooking the creek, roughly where the Warren Freeway now passes the 1500 block of Fernwood Drive. After the

Fernwood House Tour

Take a Tour of the "Provinces" in Montclair
 Sunday, April 6, 1986
 12:00 - 4:00 P.M.

Sponsored by Oakland Heritage Alliance and Fernwood Community Club

Twelve homes in the Provincial and Colonial styles will be open on a level circuit of about one-half mile. Park once and enjoy a leisurely springtime stroll. Wine, cheese and fruit will be served in a garden along the way.

Donation: \$15 (tax deductible)

Discounts: \$2 off for OHA and FCC members
 \$1 off for advance reservations

ADVANCE RESERVATIONS REQUESTED; admission also available on the day at 1434 Fernwood. Please make checks to "Oakland Heritage Alliance." Send with stamped, self-addressed envelope to "Fernwood Tour," 15 Ashmount Way, Oakland CA 94610, by March 29.

DIRECTIONS: Go to intersection of Mountain Boulevard and Thornhill via Moraga Avenue or the Thornhill exit from Warren Freeway (13). Proceed one short block (in the Berkeley direction) to Fernwood Drive, turn left, proceed to 1434 Fernwood. Please park along the side of the street opposite from the houses.

TELEPHONE CONTACTS: General information 547-2097 or 428-0839
 Questions about reservations 465-9829

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: Free tours for those who will spend 2 hours as hosts in one of the homes. Call Dusty Miller, 658-3688.

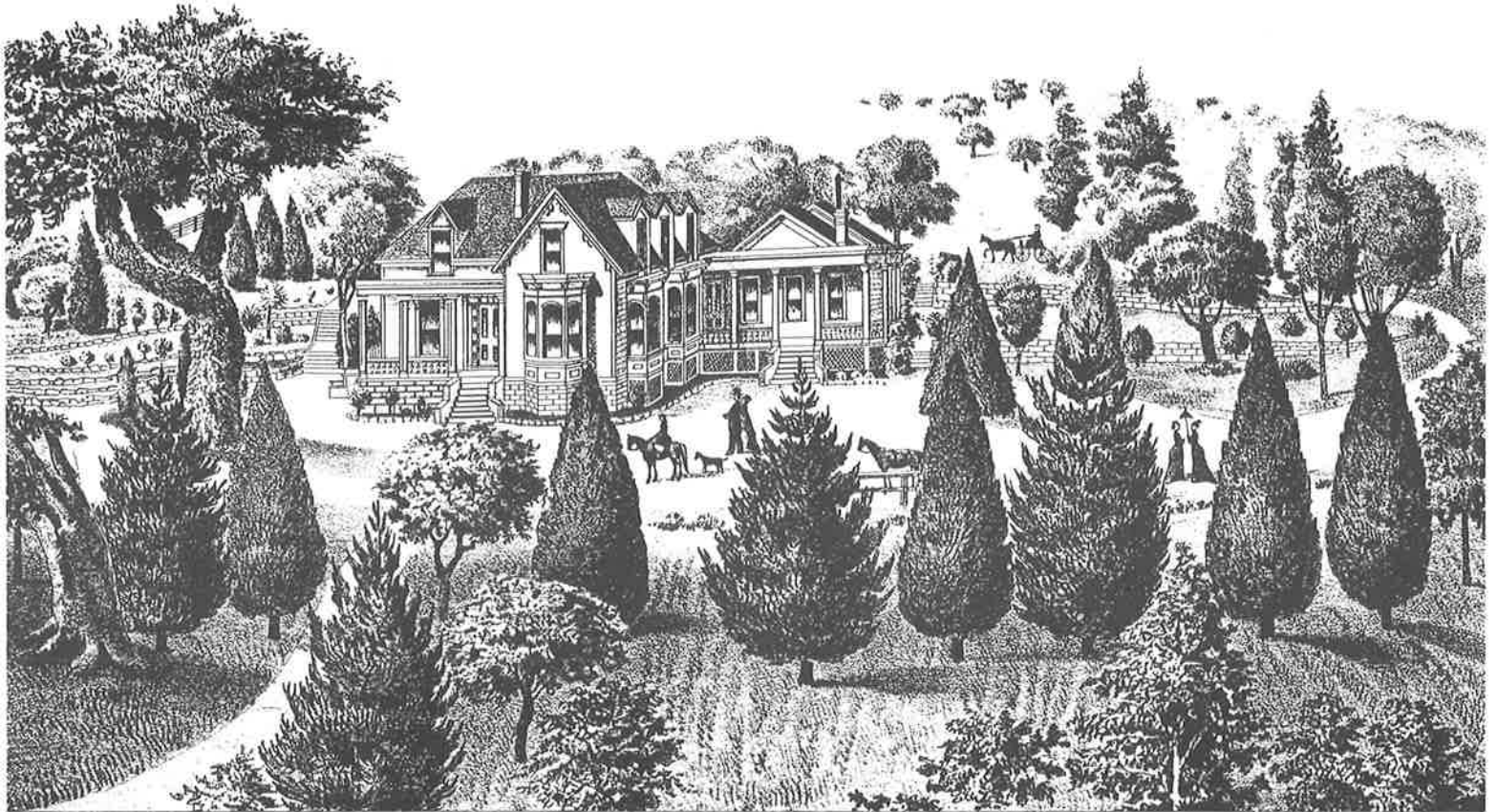


Fernwood's rustic charms.

(Survey photos)



1500 Fernwood (1926) in woodland setting.



RESIDENCE OF COL. JOHN C. HAYS, OAKLAND, ALAMEDA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

(Thompson & West, Historical Atlas of Alameda County, 1878)

1868 earthquake the home was reconstructed and enlarged in Italianate style. Hays died in 1883, having done well in the sale of lots in both central Oakland and Montclair.

By about 1885, the Hays tract had passed into the hands of real estate magnate William Dingee. This event tied Fernwood in with the stormy history of water delivery in Oakland, the rivalry between Dingee's Oakland Water Company and Anthony Chabot's Contra Costa Water Company. (Through eventual consolidation, these became forerunners of the East Bay Municipal Utility District.)

At the Hays homesite Dingee built a nineteen-room, turreted Queen Anne mansion known for its fine paneling and frescoes, as well as for all the modern advantages of gas, electricity, and steam heat. The estate was embellished by gardens containing fountains, terraces, statues, vineyards, and some 50,000 square feet of greenhouses. The lavishness of the gardens, in which Dingee is said to have invested a

quarter of a million turn-of-the-century dollars, is amply recorded in a photo album, "Views of Fernwood," which can be seen at the Oakland History Room of the main library. Fernwood's 19th-century heyday closed dramatically in 1899, as the Dingee home was consumed in a \$300,000 blaze. Dingee then built himself a "Diamond Palace" in San Francisco, but he ended his days in 1941 in greatly reduced circumstances in Sacramento.

Fernwood's modern history begins about 1900, when Dr. Nelson Percy built a "simple" log "cabin" which was featured in national magazines for its meticulous construction and its pioneering use of electric appliances. The stone fireplace is believed to have survived and been incorporated into the present house at 1600 Fernwood Drive. A greater legacy of the Percy family was the further improvement of the Dingee grounds--the creek was lined with rock, and the 38 acre site was enclosed by an iron fence to exclude roaming



Fountain and statuary grace the famous Dingee gardens, lost to development in the 1920s.

("Views of Fernwood," Oakland History Room)

deer. The Percys created "the greatest variety of plants in the Bay Area" (according to a later real estate brochure). Exotic species were transplanted from the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition. Many of the big trees in the community today survive from the Percy era-- examples are the Atlantic cedars and the Japanese redwoods which can be seen near 1450 Fernwood Drive.

By 1923 the Fernwood tract had been added to the thousands of hill area acres controlled by the Realty Syndicate, the land development arm of the Key Route transit system owned by Smith and Havens. Building



A Fernwood drive in the 1890s: neighborhood still has some of this character. ("Views of Fernwood", OHR)

lots were offered in 1925, with prices starting at \$1000. Promotion, by the Fred T. Wood Company, was aimed toward people of "average means." The ease of transportation was, in fact, one of the attractions touted to prospective buyers. The Oakland and Antioch Railroad passed within a few yards, and there was a bus (six cent fare) which shuttled to the end of the car line in Piedmont; total commute time to San Francisco: 44 minutes.

Building permit values for the houses built in the late twenties were mostly in the range of \$4000 to \$5000. A notable exception was the \$10,000 cost of the house built by William Chryst in 1929 at 1600 Fernwood Drive.



Carr Jones' William Chryst house, 1600 Fernwood Drive. Shaggy slate roof, multiple gables, and curving walls epitomize the picturesque. (Edward Phillips)

The Chryst house, known by the neighbors as "the Castle," was designed and built by Carr Jones (1885-1965). Not an architect himself, Jones did have the advantage of a period of study with Bernard Maybeck. Jones's style runs more to the picturesque than that of the master, and 1600 Fernwood is exemplary of some 50 houses Jones created around the Bay Area. His inspiration was said to come not from travel to Normandy and other European locales, but straight from the National Geographic. The Chryst house combines brick, slate, clay tiles, and iron hardware, all in unique juxtapositions. Among many notable interior features is the "pickled" treatment of the



1600 Fernwood combines Mother Goose styling with modern indoor-outdoor living and concrete construction. (photo by Edward Phillips)

wooden beams. Structurally the house features double brick walls, with concrete poured between, and steel girders. The Chrysts and their builder may have been influenced by recollection of the disastrous Berkeley fire of 1923.

The innovations and creativity of Carr Jones may not be equalled elsewhere in Fernwood, but the romantic spirit carries through. "Provincial Revival" is the dominant style of the neighborhood, no matter whether the specific models are called Tudor, Norman, or Jacobean. Even the styles derived from the colonial architecture of the United States and Mexico have roots in the European provinces. In the years after World War I Americans seem to have turned away from the more indigenous Prairie and Craftsman styles of the



Half-timbering is one of the characteristic period costumes for Fernwood houses. (Edward Phillips)



1508 Fernwood: another variation on the English cottage, designed in 1928 for Alvah Judson Rogers by an unknown architect. (photo by Edward Phillips)

early years of the century. In the design of both exteriors and interiors, a romantic nostalgia held sway during the era when most of Fernwood was developed. Leaded and stained glass windows, half-timber gables, wrought iron lanterns, and rough-textured walls all contribute to the European village atmosphere.

The large hillside house at 5533 Thornhill has long been a landmark to Montclair residents. It was a late '20s product of the prominent Bay Area architectural firm of Miller and Warnecke, whose name is still known for distinguished period revival houses as well as for major civic and commercial buildings. The Thornhill house has all the Provincial hallmarks, inside and out. In addition it has rustic elements which tie it to the Bay Region tradition, and thus make it particularly fitting to the woody setting of Fernwood.

Even more striking is the late architect Roger W. Blaine's own home at 5574 Florence Terrace. Behind the attractive white stucco and red tile exterior will be found neo-



Normandy turret on 5533 Thornhill (above);
Roger Blaine's handcrafted bricks and tiles at 5574
Florence Terrace (below). (Edward Phillips)



Moorish surprises including carved beams and an intricately painted ceiling, all executed by the architect himself. The living room features a floor of teak planks, and walls are set with tiles collected on the world travels of the Blaines. Along with the well-preserved garden, this home was an early example of modern indoor-outdoor living, and was Sunset's home of the month for August 1930.

Trauma came to Fernwood in the late forties, in the form of the Warren Freeway. The whole west side of Fernwood Drive was removed, and much of the community's sense of isolation was sacrificed, at least for a time. Some of the displaced houses were relocated to lots in the neighborhood, and thick vegetation now conceals the enclave from the eyes of passing motorists.

Today some 108 homes are located within the boundaries of the area served by the Fernwood Community Club. The area includes the 1300 through 1600 blocks of Mountain Boulevard (below surviving portions of the Percy fence), all of Fernwood Drive, and parts of Florence Terrace, Duncan Way, Thornhill Drive, and Capricorn and Grisborne Avenues. The residents are proud of the beauty and history of their little corner of Oakland, and they are happy to be able to share their pride with others through the means of the house tour, which they are jointly sponsoring with Oakland Heritage Alliance.

--Edward Phillips



1500 Fernwood Drive, 1926: California rustic cottage in wood and glass. (photo by Edward Phillips)



OHA Update

Letter From The President

As OHA moves into its sixth year, many of us see the organization at the proverbial crossroads: much has been accomplished that we can feel truly proud of, yet so much else remains undone that at times frustration can almost overwhelm the sense of accomplishment.

In five years, OHA's membership has increased from zero to approximately 450, with over 175 new members in 1985 alone. The newsletter continues to be published on a regular basis and continues to receive well-deserved praise for both substance and style. The walking tours remain popular, and varied and interesting programs continue to attract members and non-members alike. Issues of interest and concern to the preservation community in Oakland continue to be monitored and commented upon, and (we like to think, at least) OHA's opinion is increasingly sought and/or listened to by city officials, developers and others involved in the revitalization of Oakland's downtown.

Not content to rest on these laurels, some additional ambitious projects are planned for 1986: OHA's first house tour will take place in April (see cover story), a publication tentatively entitled The Broadway Book (tracing the history of the structures along the length of Oakland's most famous residential and commercial avenue) is in the works, and the Board has committed to locating permanent office space for OHA in the spring or summer of this year.

So where does the frustration come in? If all these things are being accomplished by an organization only five years old, what is there to feel frustrated about?

What many OHA members may not realize is that every single activity, and every single task, of the organization is performed by a small group of volunteers, Board members and others, who donate whatever time they may have available to assist in the furtherance of OHA's goals. Like many others, I'm sure, I was astounded to learn that the very readable and professional-looking newsletter is published entirely by volunteers, from

writing, to typing, to photography and editing. All tours and programs are planned and staffed by volunteers; all the work involved in raising funds, collecting dues, mailing announcements, and following preservation issues is done on volunteer time. It's an understatement to say that it is quite a job to keep OHA functioning on a week-in and week-out basis.

And this is where you, the OHA members, fit into the picture. To be blunt, those of us involved in the organization at an active level are working to capacity, and that is why many of us feel that OHA is at a crossroads: to keep the organization vital and moving in the right direction, help is definitely needed.

This is one of the reasons we scheduled the recent Volunteer Night. The turnout was encouraging, as many new faces not only turned out for the party, but signed up for OHA's various committees. We hope that this energy will develop into some solid volunteer support for OHA in 1986!

We realize, however, that many of our members do not have time to volunteer, much as they may wish to do so. But such members may be able to help OHA in another, very fundamental way: by making additional contributions to keep the organization functioning.

The Board of Directors feels very strongly that for OHA to survive, we will need the permanency afforded by an office, and a person--or persons--to staff that office, at least on a part-time basis. Presently, our mailing address is one of the Directors' homes, and the organization has no telephone number. An office and even minimal staff will give OHA a legitimacy and a presence in Oakland that it does not now have. But these things cost money, and OHA cannot commit to staffing without an additional infusion of capital. Therefore, if you are committed to the goals of Oakland Heritage and are in a position financially to help out, please respond when we come calling later this year.

We believe that OHA is a vital, worthwhile organization that is committed to Oakland. Together, we can move forward to making Oakland a better, more livable community that is able to look to the future without disregarding its past!

--Les Hausrath



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 Carolyn Douthat, 763-5370.

■ CITYWIDE SURVEY

"Is this a C or a Dc?"

"I say this is a definite E."

"Would you go for a 2 plus on this one?"

It is cryptic remarks like these which you are likely to hear in the city car that is slowly cruising Oakland these days. With the intrepid Chris Buckley, Assistant Planner, at the wheel, the car is making the rounds of all the buildings in Oakland while its occupants rate each building on the basis of architectural, aesthetic, historical or other cultural value.

Buckley, the project manager, is being assisted by the staff of the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey--Gary Knecht, Anne Bloomfield, and Betty Marvin. A team of two surveyors goes out in the field every afternoon armed with red pens and Sanborn maps, and applies a rather complex rating system to everything from a heavily remodeled 1880s commercial building to a 1920s auto repair shop.

The rating system is designed to apply to all structures built prior to 1946, estimated at approximately 50,000



1100 block of East 12th Street: survey provides dual ratings for outstanding but altered buildings like these.
(Survey photo)

throughout the city, and to note post-1946 properties which are outstanding. The highest rating categories are for buildings which appear eligible for the National Register or are of city landmark quality. The system also allows for dual ratings based on current (i.e. remodeled) condition and appearance if restored.

In addition to rating individual properties, the inventory will identify areas of primary and secondary importance, and rate the buildings in each area on the basis of their relation to the whole.

The Citywide Preliminary Historical and Architectural Inventory, as the project is formally known, is being conducted by the City Planning Department. According to a report to the Landmarks Board, the purposes of the inventory are to assist the future phases of the OCHS by locating concentrations of significant properties, and to identify potential city landmarks and National Register eligible properties and districts.

The survey will also provide a basis for implementing the Historic Preservation Element of the General Plan when it is adopted by the City Council. The element, which has been in the works for several years, is expected to be released in draft form for a public hearing by the Planning Commission in the not too distant future.

By necessity, this survey will be preliminary. In order to finish by June, the projected completion date, each building averages approximately thirty seconds of scrutiny. The time factor limits the criteria of the ratings to what can be readily seen and what may be known by the team about the building's historical associations. It is anticipated that these preliminary ratings will be revised as research into the architectural and historical aspects is completed by the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey.

Despite these limitations, the results will assist developers in locating properties and areas which may qualify for historic rehabilitation tax credits, and will be an important tool in the planning review process, providing a means for planning staff to spot potential negative impacts on historic resources without ever leaving the office.

--Carolyn Douthat



(1920s postcard)

■ STATE RECOGNITION FOR OAKLAND TECH

Oakland Technical High School is now a State Point of Historical Interest, unanimously designated by the State Historical Resources Commission on February 7. Commissioners remarked that they "get a lot of applications for a lot of reasons," but this was the first one written by a group of high school students, and they enthusiastically commended the project and the student committee. American Government teacher Tay McArthur, the students' sponsor, added that at last summer's National Education Association convention he had introduced a resolution promoting student preservation groups and pursuit of landmark designation for public schools and former schools. Dedication of a "not subtle" granite landmark marker in the shape of a "T" is planned for April, under the aegis of the Masonic Grand Lodge.

Tech was originally dedicated on February 27, 1915, and "Rededicated for Excellence" in 1981 and reopened in 1983 after 6 years of earthquake work. Designated a city landmark in June 1985, it is recognized for its architectural distinction, its exemplification of architect John Donovan's philosophy of school design, and its importance in the educational history of Oakland. The Students' Historical Landmark Committee of the Class of '85 filed a National Register application last June as well: that is expected to win its way through the paperwork in Sacramento and Washington and complete Tech's "triple crown" later this year.

--Betty Marvin

■ CATHEDRAL CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

This year the congregation of St. Francis de Sales Cathedral is observing the centenary of its birth. Oakland's second Roman Catholic parish was founded on January 29, 1886, the feast day of its patron saint. Reverend Thomas McSweeney, the congregation's first pastor, celebrated the first Mass in the Hanifin Block, which still stands at 19th Street and San Pablo Avenue, two blocks from the Cathedral.

A temporary church building was erected in 1887 on the present property at 21st and Grove Streets. The cornerstone of the permanent edifice was laid in September, 1891. The new church was financed largely by gifts from Mrs. Jane Canning, once a cook in the household of Oakland's co-founder and first mayor, Horace Carpentier. Her gifts made it possible to abandon plans for a wooden church and to build more grandly in red brick and terra cotta. The architect was Charles J.I. Devlin, who also designed San Francisco's St. Ignatius Church.

The completed structure was dedicated on July 9, 1893. Not only is a brick church in the Victorian Gothic style rare in the Bay Area, St. Francis is one of the few 19th century church buildings surviving in downtown Oakland. The exterior, now painted a cream color, is dominated by the 178-foot bell tower and steeple. The interior was greatly changed in 1966 in a Vatican II-inspired modernization. However, the baptistry retains the gilt trompe-l'oeil tracery and polychrome floral motifs which once also graced the sixty foot high nave.

In the early days St. Francis was a predominantly Irish parish, but the 1906 earthquake and fire sent Italian and Slavic families from San Francisco to this part of Oakland. Change continued with commercial expansion and city growth, and by 1940 St. Francis was considered to be a thoroughly "downtown" church, the more prosperous members having moved to newer parishes in outlying residential neighborhoods of the city. A new role was assigned to St. Francis de Sales in 1962 when it became the cathedral for the new Diocese of Oakland. ▶

The Cathedral's name honors an early 17th century Catholic theologian, Bishop of Geneva during the Calvinist ascendancy. He is also the patron saint of writers. In his own writings de Sales held that spiritual perfection is possible, not only for those who withdraw from society, but also for people active in the busy world. For an institution still ministering to the people of inner Oakland after 100 years, this seems an appropriate teaching.

--Edward Phillips



Altar and trompe-l'oeil tracery in sanctuary of St. Francis de Sales before simplification in the 1960s.
(Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey)

■ STATE CONFERENCE IN MONTEREY

The eleventh annual State Preservation Conference takes place May 1-4, 1986, in Monterey, California's first capital. The Conference is a yearly production of the California Preservation Foundation, co-sponsored by the State Office of Historic Preservation and Western Regional Office of the National Trust, with local cosponsors.

Sessions will cover a wide range of subjects from adobe conservation to historic resource protection in coastal planning. The heavy impact of tourism on historic communities like Monterey will receive special attention, while evening events will feature Monterey's historic neighborhoods, as well as the Design Awards, Three-Minute Success Stories, and Preservationist of the Year awards. Thursday night's opening reception, a candlelight tour of downtown adobes, should clearly demonstrate the value gained from concerted community effort to save a precious heritage.

J. Jackson Walter, president of the 160,000-member National Trust for Historic Preservation, will be the keynote speaker, focusing attention on national changes--from budget cuts to deficit fears--forcing community preservationists to become more creative and entrepreneurial.

Change in the world of preservation is the underlying theme of the conference. The rules for qualifying buildings for the National Register and for tax benefits are changing. There are changes in the way the Historic Building Code is applied and in the ways buildings can be made seismically safe; and there are changes in the program offerings of the State Office of Historic Preservation. The Conference will provide an up-to-date understanding of these new rules and new opportunities.

The California Preservation Foundation is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to the promotion of historic preservation statewide. The Conference is an important part of CPF's yearly program that includes workshops, publications, and special events. For conference information, contact CPF Executive Director John Merritt, (415) 527-7808. --CPF



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.

JANUARY

Thirteen properties, taken from those rated "A" on the Board's Study List, were considered as candidates for landmark status. Jenny Lind Hall, 2267 Telegraph Avenue (1915, Frederick Soderberg), and the Chapel of the Chimes, 4499 Piedmont Avenue (Julia Morgan, 1928) were dropped from consideration at the owners' request, the latter fearing that landmark status would draw tourists and/or suggest that their facility was no longer active. The Madison Street Temple (formerly Scottish Rite Cathedral) at 1429 Madison Street (1908-9, O'Brien and Werner) was not pursued because Board was not unanimous in enthusiasm for its Mission Revival architecture. (All these properties were returned to the Study List.) Resolution was prepared for designation of the Roos Bros. Building, 1510 Broadway/448 14th Street (1922, William Knowles).



Chapel of the Chimes (Julia Morgan, 1928): landmarking halted by fear of becoming museum piece. (1940s postcard)



First Baptist Church (Julia Morgan et al.): Board and congregation to discuss landmarking. (postcard c. 1910)

Action on the remaining items was deferred until February or a later meeting, to give owners time to respond, deliberate, or meet with Board members: First Baptist Church, 2201 Telegraph Avenue (1902-06, Julia Morgan et al.); the Chryst House at 1600 Fernwood Drive (1929, Carr Jones); residential property at 3034-40 Richmond Boulevard (1926, Frederick Reimers); The Overland House, 101-07 Broadway (1909, Christian Walton); Kahn's Department Store (Liberty House), 1501-39 Broadway (C.W. Dickey, 1912-13; E.A. Cannon, 1923-24); the Leamington Hotel building, 1800-26 Franklin Street/363-89 19th Street (1925-26, William Weeks); First Congregational Church, 250.1 Harrison Street (1923, John Galen Howard); First Presbyterian Church, 2601 Broadway (1913-14, William C. Hays with Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson); and First Church of Christ, Scientist, 1701 Franklin Street (1900-02, Henry Schulze).

Board endorsed City Planning Department's application to the State Office of Historic Preservation for a \$15,000 matching grant in order to conduct the next phase of the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey, covering West Oakland.

Board heard a report from Chris Buckley of the City Planning staff, describing the Citywide Preliminary Historical and Architectural Survey, a project undertaken to explore areas to be covered by the Cultural Heritage Survey in the future, to determine eligibility of individual buildings for the National Register, to outline historic districts and contribu-



Overland House, before recent rehab: landmark process initiated. (photo, Phil Bellman)

ting buildings, and to assist the City in protection of buildings that are possible candidates for the Board's Study List. Board mentioned Fruitvale and North Oakland as important neighborhoods for this portion of the Survey.

FEBRUARY

Board heard two presentations on Preservation Park. Architect Steven Farneth reported that drawings were complete for exterior restoration of all the buildings on the first block; front porches would be reconstructed, and back stairs and ramps added. Five already had roofs on, while 4 of the most recent arrivals still had to have their color palettes selected. Board asked about street signs, ownership, and tax credits, and suggested that the project could use more publicity.

George Saxon of Gestalt Development and Chris Patillo as project landscape architect presented the site plan for the two houses coming from Pill Hill to the northeast corner of the Pardee House block, which the board approved. On-site parking was minimized by planning for use of the future City Center parking structures; landscaping and accessories combined features from the houses' original site (some of the Pill Hill plants will be moved) and from the rest of Preservation Park (e.g. the picket fence).

The developer of Oakland Iron Works asked that the buildings be dropped from the Study List ("Take the handcuffs off"): since the accidental sandblasting of one of the buildings, the project was no

longer eligible for historic tax credits, and landmark-quality restoration was no longer feasible. Board reluctantly agreed.

Following January's discussion, 1600 Fernwood Drive, the Roos Bros. building, and 3034-40 Richmond Boulevard were recommended for landmark status and forwarded to the Planning Commission, and resolutions were initiated for the Overland House and Leamington Hotel. The attorney for the First Baptist Church (2201-11 Telegraph, 1903-08, Julia Morgan et al.) asked, and Board agreed, to have Board member(s) meet with a committee from the congregation, since there were questions about what landmark status meant, how it would "lock them in." Board discussed how to provide owners with more and better information--both historical about the buildings and legal about landmark status--to alleviate their recurring fears.

Secretary Richard Lloyd reported inquiries from zoning about whether the Metcalf House was still a landmark on its new site (yes), from the Port of Oakland about demolishing the old Carnation grain elevator, and from the First Unitarian Church looking for funding for remodeling.

--Kathy Olson & Betty Marvin



The Leamington: landmarking initiated. (postcard c.1930)



Book Review: Golden Gate Metropolis

Charles Wollenberg, Golden Gate Metropolis: Perspectives on Bay Area History, Berkeley, Institute of Governmental Studies, 1985.

History does not respect political boundaries; the chronicle of any city becomes, perforce, the chronicle of its neighbor. "If I were king," writes Wollenberg, "I would declare a moratorium on the writing of individual city histories of San Francisco and other Bay Area municipalities. Instead, I would direct local scholars to concentrate on the history of the region." Regional history, the history of those broad currents of development which transcend city boundaries and affect the entire Bay Area, is the subject of Wollenberg's book.

"Golden Gate Metropolis" encompasses the area from Santa Rosa on the north to Gilroy on the south, and from Antioch on the east to the Pacific Ocean on the west. This area shares a common geographical focus--the San Francisco Bay--and common historical roots, through the Indian and Spanish settlements, and through the early commercial and economic ties to San Francisco. These common geographical and historical roots are the principal focus of discussion in the Wollenberg volume.

Beginning with an analysis of the environment's impact upon the region's history, the author provides a general view of the life of the Bay Area's first inhabitants, the Costanoan Indians, and an account of the Spanish and Mexican periods. The great impact of the Gold Rush era is fully delineated, including the horrendous problems attendant upon land litigation.

Chapters ensue covering the San Francisco Bay port development, the interlinking of the counties through the rails and ferries, and the influence of the varied immigrant groups upon the region's development. A stimulating chapter titled "Two Remarkable Women" narrates the achievement of Mrs. Jane Stanford and Mrs. Phoebe Hearst in the establishment of higher education in the area. The changes wrought by the 1906

earthquake, the major water construction projects of the 1920s, and the impact of the automobile upon the economy and environment of the Bay Area receive full treatment.

The "Boom and Bust" years of the 1920s and 1930s are described, and the revolution brought about by World War II upon the economy and migration of people in the region is carefully recounted. Wollenberg analyzes the post-war housing, transportation, and racial problems, the growth of "regional government" through such organizations as ABAG, and the influence of the "Protest Decade" of the 1960s. The history and development of Silicon Valley is covered in some detail, and a concluding chapter, "A Tale of Two Central Cities," provides the reader with a current analysis of the problems of San Francisco and Oakland.

Throughout Golden Gate Metropolis, the writer is remarkably apt at not losing the forest for all the trees. Only the most salient historical details are stressed, thus enabling the reader to grasp the general threads of development. (Those accustomed to the delirious minutiae of "mug book" county histories will appreciate the measure of Wollenberg's achievement.)

The full significance of particular local events becomes clearer within the context of regional history. It helps, for example, to know that the 1928 Alameda-Oakland tube was constructed at a time when the automobile was becoming a major force in transportation planning in the Bay Area. The founding of the East Bay Municipal Utility District is more understandable when viewed within the picture of San Francisco's quest for water. The significance of the Key Route interurban line becomes more sharply focused when seen in connection with the other rail transit developments in the Bay Region. Instead of viewing the stream, we can now see the river from whence it flows.

Wollenberg concludes his work with the observation that "while the people may not share a common history, the place definitely does." It is to be hoped that Golden Gate Metropolis, the first regionally-oriented history of the San Francisco Bay Area, will be the harbinger of many more.

--William Sturm



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 Oakland Heritage Alliance.

Upcoming Activities

March 19, Wed., 7:30, lecture by Michael Crowe, "What is Art Deco? Where did it come from and how did it get here?" SFJCC, 3200 California; \$2 Art Deco & SFJCC members, \$3 general, 552-DECO.

March 23, Sun., 1:30-3:30, Marina District Art Deco Walking Tour with Michael Crowe; meet at Chestnut & Fillmore, no reservations needed. \$2 Art Deco & SFJCC members, \$3 general, 552-DECO.

March 27, Thurs., 8 pm, lecture by Gary Goss, "Work in San Francisco by East Bay Architects," Berkeley Architectural Heritage, 2105 Bancroft Way, 4th floor; free; 845-6591.

March 30, Sun., 1:30-3:30, Uptown Oakland Art Deco/Terra Cotta Walking Tour with Dean Yabuki; meet at Mary Bowles Bldg., 1718 Telegraph; \$2 OHA/Art Deco members, \$3 gen.; rain cancels.



March-April, TBA, OHA program on "Oakland's Neighborhoods and their Landmarks."



April-June, TBA, College Avenue Players, living history production on Jack London & his Piedmont circle; 843-9564 or watch for announcements.

April 6, Sunday, 12-4:00, FERNWOOD HOUSE TOUR, OHA and Fernwood Community Club; see page 2.



April 6 & 20, May 4 & 11, Oakland Museum lectures, "Bay Area Houses and Gardens: Tradition and Change," Sundays 4-6 pm; \$8.50 each, \$30 series. Panelists include Kenneth Cardwell, Henrik Bull, Vernon DeMars, Thomas Gordon Smith. Info. from museum.

April 8-13, Tu-Th evening classes & Sat.-Sun. tours, "Southern and Eastern Alameda County," Holy Names College local history course, Ed.X182.2, 1 unit, \$55; 436-0111/436-1503/436-1508.

April 11, Berkeley Historical Society Annual Dinner, speaker Dorothy Bryant, on the Berkeley publishing renaissance of the 1960s; Berkeley House Restaurant, time & cost TBA, 540-0809.

April 13, Berkeley Historical Society, tour of Alameda Historical Museum, 10 am; 540-0809.

April 16, Wed., 7:30 pm, lecture by Douglas Brookes, "Treasure Island -- Gem of the Golden Gate International Exposition," at Treasure Island Museum Building, sponsored by Art Deco Society, free.

April 17, Thurs., 8:00 pm, lecture by William Coburn, "Maybeck and his Legacy," in conjunction with BAHA house tour; Hillside Club, 2286 Cedar, Berkeley; \$3, 845-6591.

April 20, Sun., 12-5 pm, Berkeley Architectural Heritage house tour, "Maybeck and His Legacy;" \$15/\$18, reservations required, 845-6591

April 24, Thurs., 8 pm, lecture by Bill Kostura, "Two San Francisco Architects: Maxwell G. Bugbee and Louis Mastropasqua"; Berkeley Architectural Heritage, 2105 Bancroft Way; free; 845-6591.

May 1-4, Thurs.-Sun., State Preservation Conference, Monterey; see page 10.

May 31, Sat. (tentative), California Historical Society tour/program on Downtown Oakland.

June 6-8, Fri.-Sun., Festival At the Lake: OHA will have a booth.

June 17-21, Tu-Th evening classes and Sat.-Sun. tour, "Northern Mines: Coloma, Grass Valley, Nevada City, Malakoff Diggings," Holy Names College course, Ed.X182.6, 2 units, \$90; 436-0111.

Regularly Scheduled Tours

Oakland Tours Program. Old Oakland, City Center, Uptown, Pres. Park, Chinatown, Port. Ap.-Oct., free, 273-3234.

Camron-Stanford House. Wed. & Sun., free, 836-1976.

Paramount Theater. 1st & 3rd Sat., 10 am, \$1, 893-2300.

Dunsmuir House. Tours every Sunday, spring through fall; \$3. 2960 Peralta Oaks Court, Oakland. 562-7588.

San Francisco's Historic North Waterfront. S.F. Heritage walking tour, Saturdays at 10:30 AM. Meet guides (with blue ribbons) at cable car turntable, Hyde & Beach. \$3, under 12 free, 441-3000.

Regularly Scheduled Meetings

Oakland Heritage Alliance. OHA Board of Directors meets on the first Monday of the month, 7:30 pm. For agenda and location, please contact Les Hausrath, 834-5652.

OHA Preservation Action Committee: contact Carolyn Douthat, 763-5370, for time, place, and agenda. Meetings are open to all interested persons.

OHA Publications Committee, working on a guidebook/history called The Broadway Book, meets usually on Tuesday evenings--researchers, the publications-wise, and other interested participants call Ed Phillips, 465-9829, to find out how you can fit in.



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.

OFFICERS 1985-86

President..... Les Hausrath
Vice President.....Carolyn Douthat
Financial Officer.....Laura Niebling
Secretary.....Annalee Allen

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Annalee Allen.....654-6791
Patrick Anders.....658-0640
Julie Barron.....763-1865
Carolyn Douthat.....763-5370
Leslie Flint.....658-4915
Les Hausrath.....834-5652
Betty Marvin.....845-6591
William McLetchie.....655-6111
Laura Niebling.....658-1933
Edward Phillips.....465-9829
Deborah Shefler.....465-2660
Naomi Schiff.....835-1819

OHA NEWS welcomes contributions--research projects large or small, historic photos, reports on issues or events 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

EDITOR / PRODUCTION

Betty Marvin

EDITORIAL BOARD

Dean Yabuki (chair), Carolyn Douthat

CONTRIBUTORS

Phil Bellman, Carolyn Douthat, Leslie Flint, Les Hausrath, Betty Marvin, Kathy Olson, Edward Phillips, William Sturm.



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 (December through February) are as follows:

M/M Henry O. Benning, Rene Bolsvert, Jennifer Field, Gary Goss, Paul Hennessey, Eric/Kaye Herbranson, Virginia Kennedy, Elizabeth Krase, Joan Lamphier, Randolph Langenbach, Michael Natzke, Joel Sanders/Carol Bieri, Marcy Skala, Susan Southworth, Dick/Jean Spees, Liz Strauss, Tanis Walters.

© 1986, Oakland Heritage Alliance

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

Broadway Post Office

In 1851, Oakland's first post office was housed in the stage office of Eames' Oakland House on the southwest corner of First and Broadway. Through the remainder of the 19th century, the city's post offices were variously domiciled in grocery stores, saloons, drug stores and hotels.

Consequently, the opening of the U.S. Post Office on the corner of 17th and Broadway in August, 1903, became the occasion for much civic self-congratulation. "The new post-office is a model institution," piped the Oakland Tribune. "In point of beauty, completeness and richness, it has no superior in the United States."

Designed in Washington by James Knox Taylor, the building boasted a spacious lobby, with "floors of terrazzo with border stripes and geometrical figures formed with dark red Vermont marble....The woodwork of lobbies, vestibule and hall is quartered white oak, stained to a warm brown tone, richly ornamented with carving and finished in a dull gloss." The main floor provided public services and housed the postal workroom; the second floor sported the Brussels-carpeted offices of the Collector of Customs, the Postal Inspector, and the Collector of Internal Revenue. A reporter assured



(Oakland History Room)

his readers that "the Postmaster's office is provided with a private toilet room finished in marble and the best of modern plumbing." The opulence of the structure stimulated one writer to remark, "It betokens to any thoughtful observer a sufficiency, even an abundance, of money."

Prompted by the need to provide more accessible facilities for the growing East Oakland area and the air mail arriving from the new Oakland airport, a new post office--the present edifice--was opened at 13th and Jackson in 1932. The elegant Broadway building lingered in gentle decay, finally succumbing to the wreckers' ball in 1937.

--William Sturm

Oakland Heritage Alliance
5569 Lawton Avenue
Oakland, California 94618

Non-profit organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Oakland, California
Permit No. 31

Address Correction Requested

DATED MATERIAL — PLEASE
DO NOT DELAY DELIVERY