

Oakland's Wholesale Produce Market



A dozen men arrive for work at the southwest corner of Franklin and Fourth Streets every Sunday evening at 6 pm. They are "lumpers"--workers who unload fresh produce trucked from all over the West to Oakland and other Bay Area markets. There are just 12 lumpers in Oakland, nearly all related by blood or marriage. If one is sick or injured, only 11 will work that night. The lumpers own three forklifts and other equipment for moving pallets and boxes of produce around the market. Truck drivers can hire them to unload onto the

The Oakland Produce Market c.1930, looking northwest toward 4th and Franklin: only the trucks have changed. Will it last? Read on. (Oakland History Room)

sidewalks under the protective canopies of the wholesale produce houses. Or the trucker can unload perhaps five to ten tons of produce by himself.

Typically Sunday is the busiest night of the week, and by 6 pm there may be five to ten 18-wheelers lined up on Fourth Street waiting to make their deliveries. The lumpers don't get much of a rest until things slow up sometime after midnight. Incoming deliveries are finished by 6 am Monday when



Porters move produce within the market.
(Survey photo)



Distinctive signs are part of the market's unique character. (Survey)



Lumpers unload late-night cargoes of incoming produce. (Gary Knecht)

the lumpers' long "day" is over.

Between midnight and 3 am, owners and employees of the 20 wholesale houses arrive to prepare for another day of selling. A typical house will employ salesmen, porters, bookkeepers and secretaries. The sales force, which usually includes the owner(s), takes phone orders and sells to customers on the street. The porters move crates of produce with hand trucks and forklifts to customers' trucks parked nearby.

Customers of the wholesale produce market include restaurants, schools, hospitals, grocery stores, produce stores, buying clubs, and so on. Their bobtails, stepvans, pickups, and station wagons begin arriving at the market around 3 am. Lumpers are still unloading semis. Porters are still moving new merchandise into position. Salesmen are drinking coffee and taking orders. Sometime between 6 and 8 am a Union Pacific freight train comes down Third Street, blocking traffic in all directions for almost ten minutes. By 10 am the market has closed and appears deserted.

In some ways, not much has changed at the Oakland wholesale produce market during the 70 years it has been located along lower Franklin Street. Large deliveries are made to the produce houses at night, and sold to wholesale customers in the early morning. Trucks, trains, handtrucks, forklifts, pallet jacks, or horse-drawn carts--traffic at the market has always been chaotic and

always will be. The buildings occupied by most of the wholesale houses, designed as a group by Oakland architect Charles McCall, are simple, traditional, functional structures which have changed very little since they were built in 1916 and 1917.

Yet changes in the industry--grocers prefer delivery service, supermarkets buy directly from growers, truckers want loading docks, new market facilities are often in public ownership--combined with changes in the Jack London Square area--the Port of Oakland has begun major redevelopment efforts to create office, retail, and entertainment facilities adjacent to the market, developer John Toothman purchased over 60% of the market buildings and in many cases doubled rents--give rise to serious questions as to the future of Oakland's wholesale produce market: over 300 jobs on one hand, and more than 25 buildings on the other. Will the market survive the next ten years? If it goes, what will replace it? Does the history of the market hold any clues for its future?

One of Oakland's first produce commission businesses was founded in 1877 by Warren A. Rouse, a native of Michigan. Within a dozen years, the Grand Central Market and several other wholesale/retail grocery houses had located around Rouse at 11th and Washington Streets (now site of the Oakland Convention Center). By 1904 W.A. Rouse had moved to the Produce Exchange on 11th between Web-

ster and Harrison (now the site of Cochran & Celli's auto dealership). Among Rouse's 15 or so neighboring merchants were his nephews, Charles and Ulrich Hunt of the prominent firm Hunt, Hatch & Co.

When major downtown development began occurring nearby--1100 Broadway (F.H. Meyer) in 1911-12, City Hall (Palmer & Hornbostel) in 1911-14, Kahn's Department Store (C.W. Dickey) in 1912-13, Travelers Hotel at 11th & Franklin (Wm. Wilde) in 1913-14, and the Oakland Auditorium (Donovan and Hornbostel) in 1913-15--the merchants located in the 11th Street Produce Exchange found themselves becoming unwelcome neighbors. According to the Oakland Tribune's Annual Number of January 1918 (p.60):

"The time came when the produce and commission men had to be moved from their uptown location. The retail district of the City was rapidly growing around them and they became entirely out of place. The City Council was appealed to, to locate this class of trade by law, in some place where it would be convenient alike for customers

and merchants, and where the trade would not incommode other businesses."

Accordingly the Council enacted Ordinance No. 1168, N.S., effective March 15, 1917, "Permitting the Use of Sidewalks for Display and Sale of Merchandise, and...Awnings Over Sidewalks in a Certain Portion of the City of Oakland." The portion of the city designated was from Broadway to Fallon and the waterfront to 7th Street. This was an area of early homes, deteriorating and giving way to small-scale manufacturing and warehousing, especially after the inauguration of Western Pacific Railroad service along 3rd Street in 1909, and development of the Port after passage of \$2.5 million in harbor bonds the same year. By 1911 the Port could boast 15 publicly-owned and 15 privately-owned wharves. Improved transportation made the area advantageous for all kinds of warehousing businesses, and perhaps especially so for fresh produce which could be shipped from the valley to the Port of Oakland and then trucked to the wholesale houses.



The 11th Street Produce Exchange, c.1915: note Hunt, Hatch sign on tower. Mission-style market was built around 1904 and gone by the 1920s. 1100 Broadway and the Travelers Hotel are recognizable to the west on 11th; building east of them (at Webster) still exists but is wrapped in metal siding. (Oakland History Room, Vernon Sappers Collection)



On June 21, 1916--well before the market ordinance took effect--the Fruit and Produce Realty Company was incorporated, and quickly assembled some 38 lots--about 1.5 acres--along Franklin Street between 1st and 4th Streets, buying 33 from a variety of owners, leasing 5 others from Southern Pacific Railroad and Filomena Pierotti, and building around the two corner lots where owners were unwilling to move. By September 2, 1916, plans for the main market buildings had been filed with the city, and plans for the leased sites by the end of February, 1917. Total cost of construction was around \$71,600.

Fruit and Produce Realty was apparently a rather quiet real estate venture by a consortium of produce wholesalers from the 11th Street Produce Exchange--A. Galli Fruit Co., Hunt, Hatch & Co., C.W. Gallagher, A. Levy & J. Zentner, and L. Scatena & Co. were the original stockholders and occupants of the new market. They leased space to other produce merchants including W.A. Rouse & Co., Western Produce Co., San Francisco Produce Co., and Oakland Fruit and Produce Company.

The earliest and probably the largest of the Fruit and Produce Realty member companies to locate in the new market area, Hunt, Hatch was a shipping as well as pro-

duce business, founded in 1890 by Charles and Ulric Hunt and George W. Hatch. By the mid-90s they had "revolutionized the commission business of this city," shipping produce directly from the delta to their own wharf warehouses in their own fleet of riverboats, rather than going through the San Francisco produce market for Oakland's needs (Oakland Tribune, Alameda County Illustrated, 1898, p.161). The 1923 Tribune Year Book reported that "this firm also controls, either through ownership or lease, large acreage in various parts of California, which they cultivate themselves," and had branches in Oakland, Richmond, Fresno, and San Francisco. Co-ownership of the Oakland market buildings rounded out this produce empire.

Lorenzo Scatena (L. Scatena & Co.) was stepfather of A.P. Giannini, and from 1905 to 1915 was president of the Bank of Italy (now Bank of America), which was a significant stockholder in Fruit and Produce Realty. His produce company is no longer in business. Charles W. Gallagher (1871-1929), of a pioneer Santa Clara County fruit growing family, was a member of the Advisory Board of the Bank of Italy; his business merged with Hunt, Hatch in the 1920s. A. Galli Fruit Co. closed its doors for good in the 1970s; the firm of Levy & Zentner



Looking southeast from 4th and Broadway, c.1910. Produce Market site is the vacant half-block at upper left adjoining Union Machine Works. The gabled building left of the Empire Foundry on 3rd Street is the Central Free Kindergarten, which still exists, remodeled c.1918 to match the market buildings and again recently. (California State Library)

recently left the Oakland market but still operates out of the South San Francisco produce market. W.A. Rouse & Co., under different ownership, is still operating on Franklin Street.

Another original tenant in the Oakland market is Western Produce Co. at 323 Franklin. Although Italians dominated the wholesale produce business, Western Produce was owned by Joseph Y. Chew, reflecting the importance of the Chinese in Oakland's retail produce trade, from the 19th century "basket brigade" of San Francisco produce peddlers on.

In 1916-17, then, major Oakland produce merchants cooperating as the Fruit & Produce Realty Co. undertook a decisive move to establish a new wholesale produce facility capable of serving the entire East Bay. The ten original buildings of the Oakland Wholesale Produce Market were designed for them within a six month period by architect Charles W. McCall. They form the nucleus and visual symbol of what is still a thriving urban wholesale district. The buildings are unique examples in the East Bay of a highly conventionalized yet distinctive early 20th century utilitarian building type. They may be among the finest surviving examples in the nation, since such markets have frequently been relocated and demolished.

Architect Charles W. McCall was born in Oakland in 1878. His Irish-born father ran a grocery business on San Pablo Avenue. From 1886 to 1892 the McCalls lived in Guernsey, Channel Islands, and afterward Charles lived in England attending the Perkins Academy and the Bournemouth Institute of Science and Art. When he returned in 1897, he was a draftsman with Fred Voorhees and D. Franklin Oliver before opening his Oakland office around 1900. One of his earliest known houses (268 Park View Terrace, 1905) is the magnificent Tudor Revival/Arts and Crafts house he designed for George W. Hatch, president of Hunt, Hatch.

McCall's career spanned nearly 4 decades, and included dozens of downtown commercial buildings, apartment houses, residences, and industrial buildings still standing in Oakland, among them the Holland Building at 14th and Franklin, the Lake Merritt Lodge, and refined Craftsman and classical houses often mistaken for Julia Morgans.

His utilitarian work in another genre was



Early morning bustle turns to midday ghost town. Screened fronts, high transoms, bold signs, and corrugated metal canopies make the market buildings unique. (Gary Knecht; Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey)



Charles McCall, architect of the Oakland Produce Market buildings (Architect & Engineer, April 1910)

published in the January 1921 Architect and Engineer which described his garages as "invested with a charm of design not inappropriate to, but rarely found in industrial buildings." The produce market buildings lack the ornamental detail of the published garages, or of his commercial buildings of the same period--their interest is rather in their simplicity, tradition, and functional quality. The convention of canopies, truss roofs, and clerestories which worked well at the old 11th Street Produce Exchange was carried over in a modernized brick and concrete version to the new market. The success of the pattern is seen in the buildings remaining virtually unchanged since the day they were built.

The future of McCall's buildings and the future of wholesale market activity in



Canopies, posts, lighting, awnings, all unchanged from the Market's early years: compare p.1 (Survey photo)

Oakland are related but not identical issues. During the 1970s Fruit and Produce Realty Co. sold its real estate to C & V Properties, and went out of business. C & V was owned by the owners of Sun Valley Produce, one of the larger houses on the street until it went out of business in 1985. Its real estate was sold to Oakland Land Co. (owned by developer John Toothman) for \$2.44 million in April 1986. Although rents have doubled, the wholesale market continues to operate. The buildings have been repaired, repainted, and reroofed, but are basically unchanged.

OHA News asked several people for their thoughts on the future of the buildings and the market activity: will the market still be operating pretty much the same way in 5 years? in 10 years?

Hank Kammermeier, Director of Properties for the Port of Oakland (the Port Commission is responsible for development activity from the Estuary to 2nd Street), predicts that increasing property values will force owners to seek a "higher and better use" for their land--perhaps not in five years, but most likely in ten. He cites a variety of pressures working against survival of the wholesale market: 1) facilities such as loading docks are inadequate, 2) many produce house owners are getting older and their heirs are not interested in continuing the business, 3) restaurants and other activities are encroaching into the market, 4) railroad traffic on 3rd Street may increase to serve Port needs, and 5) the Port is planning up to \$100 million worth of development in the Jack London Square area.

Alvin James, Director of City Planning (the City Planning Commission is responsible for development activity north of 2nd Street) believes that the wholesale market is an appropriate use in its present location, but predicts that economic pressures will force owners to add a "retail component." He predicts that in 5 years the buildings will be unchanged, but new activities such as restaurants may appear. In 10 years he envisions a "food-related, historic environment" to complement Jack London Square. Although C-45 zoning permits taller buildings, James does not feel economic pressures will encourage them.

Bill Warren, owner of the Oakland Grill restaurant at 3rd and Franklin (the Oakland

Grill opened in June 1980, replacing Frank Ogawa's Commercial Plant Exchange) is a tenant in one of the few buildings not owned by Oakland Land Co. He predicts traffic and parking problems will get worse during the next five years, but believes that the future of the wholesale market "is up to John Toothman".

Franklin Chew, owner of Western Produce Co. (located on Franklin St. since 1917, and now a tenant of Oakland Land Co.) predicts the wholesale market will be relatively unchanged in 5 years, and, because the produce houses are not presently looking for a new location, he feels it is "more than likely" the market will still be there in another ten years.

Bruce McCoy, president of Lakeside Group (another division of Toothman Development Corp.) states that "the future is the present." The Produce Market buildings are 100% occupied; leases are for at least 5 years, some with 5 or 10 year options. "We have an institution that is going to function for many years to come." McCoy predicts that the wholesale market will continue in its present location 5, 10, and even 15 years with only gradual changes. "Ultimately there will be dual use, perhaps using sidewalk areas for retail merchants when the wholesale market isn't using them."

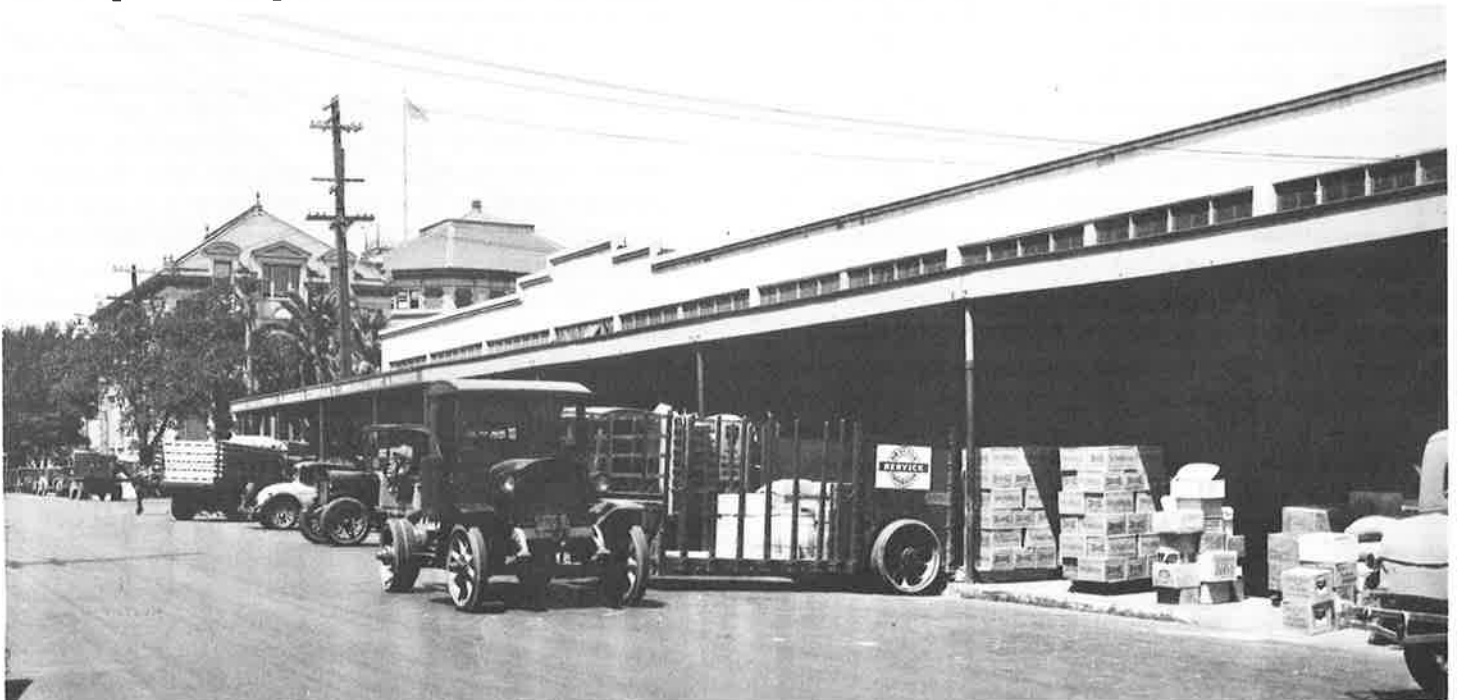
So it appears that wholesale produce activity is likely to continue in the same

facilities for at least the near future. Unless a depression hits or the Port fails completely with its development of Jack London Square, land values in the Produce Market district will increase. The wholesale merchants will probably continue to accept higher rents, but at some point owners may want to increase the number of square feet they have to rent. Some will want to build two, three, or four story buildings where smaller ones now stand. Others will look to "dual use" suggested by Bruce McCoy and Alvin James. Working with property owners, tenants, and concerned Oakland residents, the City and Port can take steps toward preserving for the next generation a valuable institution with both historical importance and economic viability. Otherwise history could repeat itself: as in 1917, the City could force the market to move to a new location.

--Gary Knecht

Gary Knecht works part-time in the City Planning Department as coordinator of the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey.

OHA News would like your opinion of the future of the Produce Market and the buildings which house it. Should OHA pursue some sort of landmark designation for the district? some sort of rezoning to limit building heights to one story? If we get enough letters we'll do a follow-up article.



Premises of G. Bonora & Co., Wholesale Fruit and Produce, at 4th and Franklin, c.1930. Building in the distance is the Hall of Records, which faced Broadway between 4th and 5th. (Oakland History Room)

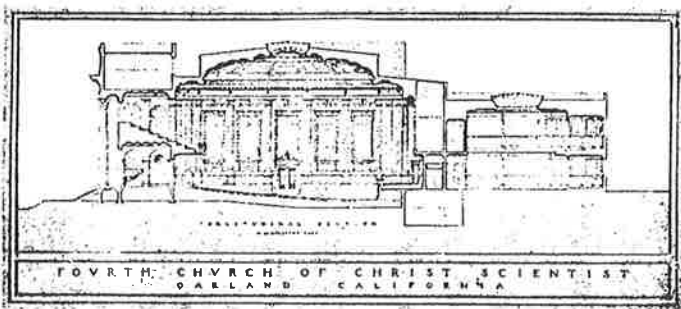
Oakland Briefing . . .

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.

■ CHURCH SAGA CONTINUES

The results of the Environmental Impact Study on the demolition and replacement of the former Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist at 1330 Lakeshore Avenue (see Winter OHA News) may become irrelevant as a result of a decision by the Landmarks Advisory Board, and the inconsistencies in the protections afforded architecturally and historically significant buildings. In an unprecedented and highly unusual action the Board decided that they will not now, nor ever in the future, consider the nomination of the church for landmark designation--despite the staff report which concluded that the building meets the criteria for National Register eligibility on a regional as well as local level, as a major work of a master architect of Northern California, and that it is a major focal point in a possible National Register District surrounding Lake Merritt.

Under existing city ordinances any building can be demolished, even though the impact of its loss as a historic resource is being studied by the city under the California Environmental Quality Act. There are limited demolition delays available for city landmarks, and for buildings on the Study List, which includes the church. However Planning Director Alvin James has stated that as a result of the negative determination by the Landmarks Board, he does not intend to invoke a stay



Section of Fourth Church drawn by architect Carl Werner, in the Beaux Arts tradition.

(Architect & Engineer, June 1923)

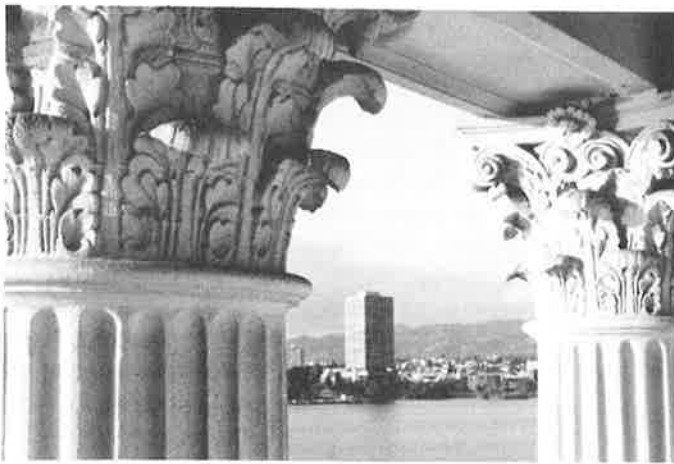
of demolition should a permit be requested.

A draft EIR has been prepared on the impact of demolition and replacement of the existing church, and the conclusions of the historic resource portion of the report, by Page, Anderson, Turnbull, confirm the significance of the building. The report has been under administrative review since January and is scheduled to be released for public comment in late April. The action of the Landmarks Board, however, may put the city in the awkward position of spending staff time and money on review of a possible demolition yet issuing a demolition permit before the review is complete.

Representatives from Oakland Design Advocates, Oakland Heritage Alliance, and the Lake Merritt United Methodist Church (owners of the building) testified before the Landmarks Board on the issue of landmark nomination. Although the owners do not contest the significance of the 1922 building, they maintain that it is unsuited to their needs and the image they wish to present, and that rehabilitation would be too costly. Chris Pattillo, for ODA, urged retention of the church and suggested that at the least preservation of the facade should be considered. OHA urged the Board to find the church eligible for landmark status, and to delay a decision until those concerned could meet with representatives of the congregation.

On April 3 OHA did meet with members of the church Building Committee, their minister and their architect, Terrill Wade. Despite urging from OHA to consider the importance of the building to the larger community and its significance to the Lake Merritt District, church members were not to be moved from their decision to build anew on the site. OHA's Randolph Langenbach and Alan Dreyfuss, both architects, suggested that less costly means of making the structure safe might be found with further study. However, there did not appear to be much sympathy for saving the building, regardless of cost considerations.

The decision to build a new church appears to be more philosophic than economic. According to church representatives, city populations have rejected the formality of traditional church practice, and in order to attract East Oakland residents to their congregation, a new, less formal facility is required. The existing building



Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist is an important presence on Lake Merritt. Colonnade along Lakeshore (Phil Bellman); columns framing Adams Point.

would, they feel, stand in the way of their outreach and they are hoping to build something "softer" that will "welcome in all the people of Oakland." At base the decision rests on the belief that the church cannot carry the Christian message successfully if it is operating in "that old building."

It is hoped that the old building will remain standing until the EIR can be considered by the public and the Planning Commission. --Carolyn Douthat

■ MORE REVIEW FOR DEMOLITION ORDINANCE

Portions of the draft demolition ordinance, under study by the Land Use Committee of the City Council (see Winter OHA News), have been referred to the Planning Commission for further review. A newly formed Planning Commission task force is reviewing those portions of the ordinance which will require amendments to the zoning

regulations, including the sections covering architecturally and historically significant structures.

The most recent draft of the ordinance severely restricted the definition of significant buildings to those which are city landmarks. Other changes included an exception to the concurrent demolition permit/building permit requirement for owners who intend to create a parking lot or vacant lot. Previous drafts, while containing the same exception, restricted an owner from building for a period of 12 months after demolition under the exception. The provision does not apply to residential buildings or significant structures. However, when coupled with the narrow definition of architectural and historic significance, it would allow the owner of a National Register building which was not a City landmark to demolish, intending to create a vacant lot, and then decide to build a replacement structure immediately thereafter.

At the same time that Council referred the draft to the Planning Commission, a motion was passed to extend until May 9th the moratorium on demolitions in Adams Point which was to have expired in mid-March. It is expected that the Planning Commission recommendations and a final draft will be presented to Council before the extended moratorium expires. The major point of debate which seems likely at the Council level is the requirement for a Major Conditional Use Permit for demolition of buildings containing one or more units of low/moderate income housing. Initial testimony from the Board of Realtors, the Chamber of Commerce, and the development community suggests there will be opposition to this even though it is a compromise from a previous draft which contained an outright prohibition on demolition of low/moderate income dwellings.

OHA has commented on the most recent draft, opposing the narrow definition of significant structures, and suggesting that it be expanded to include buildings located in historic districts (S-7 zones), National Register listed and eligible properties, State Historic Landmarks and buildings located in National Register districts. A member of the Preservation Action Committee will be representing OHA on the Planning Commission Task Force which will be meeting throughout April. --Carolyn Douthat

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 13 years since the Board was created.

JANUARY

No meeting was called for lack of business (despite the emergency moratorium on landmark nominations, pending review of rules and procedures: see Winter OHA News).

FEBRUARY

Conducted design review for the Herrick/Merriam houses (Gestalt Development Corp.), covering landscaping, restoration of existing handrails, 18 foot driveway (variance required), and paint colors. Reviewed staff report and report prepared by Basin Research Associates for the Port of Oakland, on the question of adding the Oakland Mole Train Tower and the Carnation Milling Company building to the Study List, prior to a determination of National Register eligibility. Port expressed willingness to preserve the 1900-11 train tower (in a different, more visible location, perhaps in the Port park), but had strong reservations about the Carnation building (1916, major alterations and additions c.1943) because of its apparently marginal National Register eligibility, possible structural problems, and conflict with the proposed redevelopment plans. Board voted to place the train tower on the Study List, as the last visible surviving remnant of the Oakland Mole complex (at one time the most important transportation center in Oakland and among the most important in northern California and possibly the western United States) but felt more information would be needed to qualify the Carnation mill for the Study List.

A special meeting was called for March 4 to review draft Rules of Procedure. Board expressed a desire for a concise statement



Carnation Plant, on Port's 7th Street redevelopment site: Board declines to consider for Study List.

of overall city preservation policy, e.g. from the Mayor's office, as an interim guideline until completion of the Preservation Element. Gordon Henderson was elected Chair for the remainder of David Hoard's term, with Jean Spees continuing as Vice-Chair. Secretary Chris Buckley reported that Oakland's Landmarks Board and ordinance have been approved for Certified Local Government (CLG) status, which may bring opportunities for funding.

SPECIAL MEETING, MARCH 4

Board discussed details of draft Rules of Procedure, as prepared by staff and subcommittee, including: failure of a motion in the event of a tie vote, requirement that boardmembers must have been present at previous Board deliberations and visited the site in order to vote on any matter, decision to tape meetings and retain tapes for two years, provision for 48-hour notice of cancellation of regular meetings, decision to notify owners by both first class and certified mail, requirement that boardmembers leave the room when involved in a conflict of interest, and restrictions on discussion of pending landmark, district, or design review applications outside of full board meetings.

Chair Gordon Henderson reported on a recent visit to San Antonio, Texas, where he discussed preservation with the mayor and city officials. He described an outstanding historic preservation program with extensive areas included in historic districts; a tax abatement program for rehabilitated historic structures that is

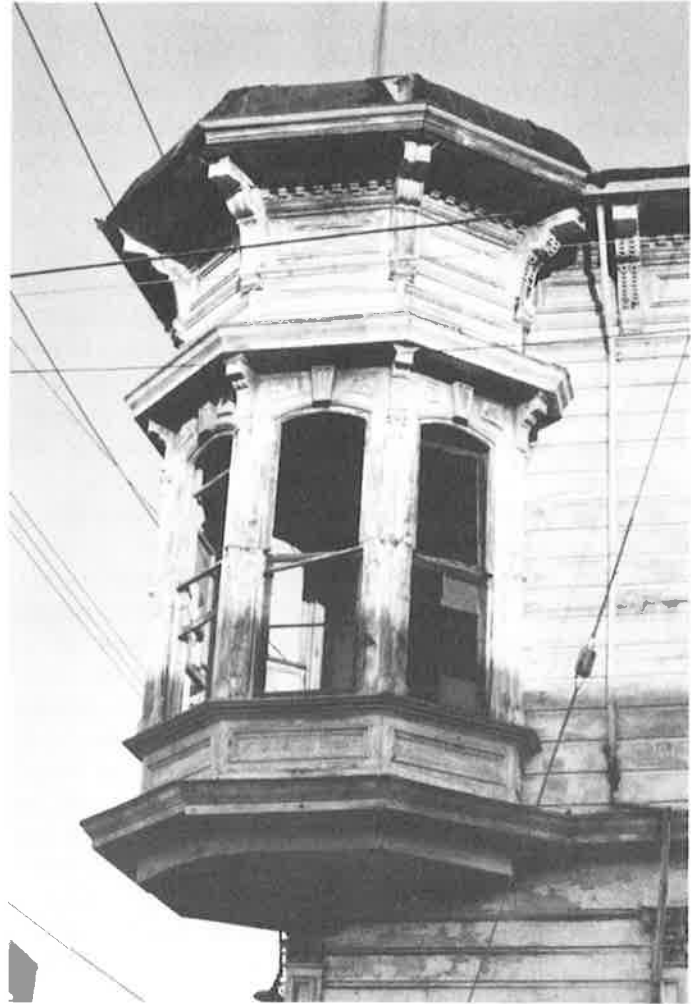
successfully revitalizing old neighborhoods and winning support from property owners, developers, and the business community; and increases in property values resulting from rehabilitation that more than offset the reduced tax revenues resulting from the abatements. Board suggested that Secretary Chris Buckley be sent to San Antonio to explore adopting its programs in Oakland.

MARCH

Board agreed to make an exception to the moratorium on new landmark initiations for the Western Market Building, so owners Jubilee West could use the Historic Building Code and proceed to obtain permits and insurance.

Acting on a "request from Director of City Planning for definitive action by the Board on whether to initiate landmark designation for former Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist at 1330 Lakeshore," Board majority (Henderson, Ortiz, Weldon, Bertolero; Spees opposed) affirmed statement made in November that they "had no intention or desire to designate this building a landmark." Speakers from OHA and Oakland Design Advocates argued that the building's architecture and presence on the Lake obviously met landmark criteria, and that the non-historical issues of owner consent and the new project were the business of the Planning Commission, not the Landmarks Board. They also questioned the appropriateness of the Board's signing off on the building midway through the EIR process and before OHA had had an opportunity to meet with the owners. Church members presented their need for a new building ("We've been wandering in the wilderness since July 4, 1981 and we'd like a home"): the existing church did not have the facilities or image they wanted, and seismic work would be prohibitively expensive. (Incidentally, this was the debut of a new rule requiring speakers from the public to line up "for" or "against" an item: architect Randolph Langenbach was not permitted to testify because he arrived after the "for"s had been heard.)

Board adopted the Rules of Procedure, and established a permanent rules committee as well as a fundraising committee; revised landmarks criteria are still being drafted. Tim Weldon and Jean Spees were named the



Western Market Building, 8th & Chester Streets (c.1876): Board waives moratorium on new landmarks at request of Jubilee West; Historic Building Code will be used for rehab. Related story on p.12.

Board's representatives to the Planning Commission committee on the Demolition Ordinance (see Briefing).

In response to the request for a statement of city preservation policy, Secretary Buckley reported that the Planning Director preferred the Board to await completion of the draft Preservation Element. Gordon Henderson expressed dissatisfaction with the position of an advisory board administering a program with no incentives to offer owners and questionable support from other city bodies. With programs like San Antonio's, a West Oakland historic district could be of great benefit to the city and the residents, but as it was the Board was expected to "arbitrarily tell people to preserve this and that, and the money isn't there." --Kathy Olson & Betty Marvin

Western Market Building

The State Office of Historic Preservation has recommended a grant of \$50,000 to help restore the 110-year old Western Market Building in West Oakland. The two-story Italianate at the southeast corner of 8th and Chester was recently bought by Jubilee West, Inc., a non-profit working in the neighborhood west of Cypress, which is also seeking landmark status for the building.

Insurance problems almost stymied plans to buy and restore the building, which was originally a meat market and later the Oakland headquarters of Father Divine's Depression-era Peace Mission. After close to a year of negotiations and fundraising, Jubilee West managed to obtain coverage for the badly deteriorated building. Once it is restored, the group plans to use it as a community center and offices for its housing, employment and outreach programs.

Built during the boom fueled by the arrival of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, the Western Market is an outstanding example of mid-Victorian commercial architecture, marked by octagonal turrets and ornamental brackets and window hoods. Its Oakland Point neighborhood was especially affected by the railroad with the ferry terminal at the foot of Railroad Avenue (now 7th Street) and the Southern Pacific yards and shops nearby.

The structure was built by or for Harry A. Zeiss, a San Francisco pork butcher who bought the site for \$2761.25 in 1876. Neither the architect (if there was one) nor the builder is known, but a photograph of a very similar building that once stood at 1700 8th Street suggests that the building's creator was active in the area.



Western Market: Jubilee West's latest neighborhood rehab project. (John Phelan/Jubilee West)

Zeiss operated the Western Market on the first floor and lived upstairs until 1880 or 1881 when he sold it to another German butcher, Johan Breiling. Johan's son Oscar, who with his brother Emil took over the business in 1887, served in the state Assembly and later became president of the West Oakland Bank and Trust Company. By 1898 Breiling Brothers' Market was one of the largest in the area. In later years it was operated by a Portuguese family.

About 1928 the building was bought by a fraternal organization referred to only by the initials U.N.P.A. This group, which identified itself on its building permit application as a "secret order," converted the building to a lodge room, dining room, and offices, and was probably responsible for removing the large shop windows that once flanked the front entrance.

In 1935 Father Divine, whose Harlem-based civil rights movement then numbered close to 50,000 followers, chose the building as the center of his Oakland activities. Long-time neighborhood residents recall that the Mission provided dormitory accommodations and a dining room where meals could be obtained for a few pennies. The movement began to decline after the start of World War II and the Oakland center closed its doors sometime around 1943.

Until the early 70s the building was occupied by several black churches. Later its condition deteriorated and in 1985, after complaints from neighbors, the City ordered it demolished. After Jubilee West expressed interest in the building almost a year ago, city staff were able to postpone action on the demolition order.

Kahn/Mortimer/Associates, an Oakland architecture and planning firm, are architects for the project, which has an estimated cost of over \$600,000. To date Jubilee West, which has already rehabilitated 51 low-rent units in the neighborhood, has raised more than \$350,000 for the project. In addition to the state grant, the Clorox and Irvine Foundations have each agreed to provide \$100,000 and other grants have been received from the Haas, Irwin, and San Francisco Foundations. Donations may be sent to Jubilee West, Inc., 1448 10th St., Oakland 94607. For further information contact Vivian Kahn at Kahn/Mortimer/Associates, 451-5954. --Vivian Kahn

OHA Update

HELEN LORE BECOMES OHA STAFF

The OHA Board is delighted to announce the appointment of Helen Lore to the new position of Office Manager. Helen comes to us in mid-April after retiring from Oakland's Office of Parks and Recreation where she has worked in various capacities for the past 22 years, most recently as Recreation Supervisor, Centers and Playgrounds Division, primarily in East Oakland. Helen has extensive experience with various community districts, particularly Fruitvale where she was involved in the development of the Peralta Hacienda Historical Park.

Helen comes glowingly recommended as a "self-starter with a great deal of energy and enthusiasm, exceptionally well thought of and accepted within all neighborhood communities in which she works," and "a disciplined, effective professional who has the respect of her employees, colleagues, and citizens." Helen is a longtime Oakland resident and has been active in the League of Women Voters, Mills Alumnae Association, Friends of Parks & Recreation, Sierra Club, Nature Conservancy, and Oakland Museum, to name a few. We look forward to the skills and experience she will bring to OHA, and also thank the other fine candidates who applied for the position.

--Annalee Allen

SPRING PROGRAM: OPEN HOUSE - SLIDE NIGHT

On March 18th OHA held its official office-warming reception at the Camron-Stanford House. After viewing the office and sampling light refreshments by Ron Gamba and Daryl Halverson, everyone moved downstairs for the slide presentations. Ken Cardwell showed photos of Oakland residences from the 1887 San Francisco Illustrated News's ongoing feature on "Artistic Homes of California", juxtaposed with slides of the same sites 100 years later. Quite a sobering exercise! Painter Polly O'Grady presented a slide essay of personal favorite buildings. Sam Skelly made a humorous presentation of what's involved in a home restoration project (such as slicing a bathtub apart to get it out of a tight

space). Attorney John Bush showed the interior of his well preserved West Oakland Victorian: a job transfer is taking him away and his home needs a new appreciative owner. And Board member Fred Mitchell showed the extensive work done on the Arlington Hotel in Victorian Row.

Programs Committee would like to thank the speakers, the Camron-Stanford House Preservation Association for use of the space, Sharon Kidder of Sunshine & Flowers for the floral arrangements, and Fit to be Framed for framing the door-prize Necklace of Lights poster.

--Annalee Allen

OFFICE FUNDRAISING LAUNCHED

OHA wishes to thank the following members for their contributions (through 3/28/87) to OHA's general fund which in 1987 will go toward support of our new office space at the Camron-Stanford House and our new staff person, Helen Lore.

\$5.00-49.00

Eunice M. Andersen
Robert/June Batterman
Marty Blake
Adeline Brohm
Bois Burk
Yvonne Cam
Virginia Carter
Robert Chastain
A.W. Childs
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Warren/Helen Tryon
Oraville Jane Tuttle
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R.M./Norma Wells
Edith White

\$50.00-99.00

Maureen Dunn
Sara/Joseph Evinger
Alberta Hankenson
Ren Henerlau
Norma Hill
David Hoard
Gertrude Hudson
Eric Klatt

John/May Blaisdell
Aimee/Ben Bradley
Gallagher & Burk
Harlan/Esther Kessel
Lorraine Knight
Gaye Lenahan
John/Renate Woodbury

\$100.00-500.00

Gary Knecht
Virginia Leach
Diana Loggins
Theodore Lyman
Dolly Marshall
Margaret Martin
Earl/Hilda McMullen
Robert/Loretta O'Dell
Stuart Offer
Joel/Barbara Oseroff

Phil Bellman/Betsy Yost
Robin/Gilman Johnson
Dorothy Knecht
Robert Maynard/The Tribune
Tamara Patri
Eugene Peck
Mrs. Helen Rogers
Mabel McCamman Winkelman
Myron Zimmerman

Thanks also to Storek & Storek for the use of their office for the fundraising phonathon, and to Wendel Lawlor Rosen & Black for donating an electric typewriter to the office.

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

through May 5, Mon.-Fri. 9-4, "Liberty: The French-American Statue in Art and History," national touring exhibit, Chevron Art Gallery, 555 Market St., S.F.

through May 31, Fri. & Sun. 1-4 pm, "Beaded: An exhibition of beaded purses and selected beaded costumes," Richmond Museum, 400 Nevin Av., Richmond, 235-7387.

April 21, Tues., 8 pm, John Beach Memorial Lecture, Richard Longstreth, Drive-In-Markets of Southern Calif. 1925-1940; Northgate Hall, U.C., \$3, BAHA, 841-2242.

April 22-25, Wed.-Sun. (sessions Thurs.-Sat.), Society of Architectural Historians conference, Sheraton-Palace SF; \$60/\$50 SAH/\$25 student; registration on site.

On April 26 OHA is sponsoring a tour for SAH conferees, led by Kirk Peterson, visiting the Oakland Museum, Cohen House, Victorian Row, and other Oakland showplaces. *For those interested in meeting members of this national organization of architectural historians, a reception Friday, April 24 at Wurster Hall, UC Berkeley, 6:30 to 8 pm is open to all OHA members.

April 24, Fri., 7:30 pm, "Berkeley: Changing Times," historic films 1906-60s, Berkeley Historical Soc.; 145 Dwinelle Hall, UC, \$3; reservations 524-9880.

May 7, Thurs., 8 pm, lecture on Julia Morgan by Sara Holmes Boutelle, Julia Morgan Center, 2640 College Av., Berkeley, \$3, BAHA, 841-2242.

May 10, Sun., Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association house tour, Julia Morgan; 12-5 pm, \$15/\$20; 841-2242.

May 16, Sat., Alameda Victorian Preservation Charity Ball, Alameda Hotel, \$25; AVPS, Box 1677, Alameda 94501.

May 21-25, Thurs.-Mon., Second Annual Art Deco Weekend by The Bay: Treasure Island reception, architectural tours, Captain's Gala, festival & sale: 552-DECO.

June 4-7, Thurs.-Sun., 12th Annual State Preservation Conference, Coronado; archaeology, downtown revitalization, technical preservation; \$75/\$65, 527-7808.

June 5-7, Fri.-Sun., Festival at the Lake, Lakeside Park.

July-Aug., OHA Neighborhood Walking Tours, details TBA.



Sept. 13, Sun., Alameda Victorian Pres., Day In The Park.

Sept. 27, Sun., Preservation Fair, Camron-Stanford House.

To mark the 10th anniversary of the Preservation Fair, there are plans to expand the Fair to include other Oakland historic sites. The City Council will be asked to designate "Oakland Preservation Week" and other organizations and sites will be encouraged to hold their own events. If you can contribute time or ideas, leave a message for chair Elaine Oldham at 836-1976.

Sept. 27, Sun., Berkeley Rose Garden 50th anniversary



Oct. 15, Thurs., OHA annual dinner, Fratellanza Club, details TBA, mark your calendar now.

Regularly Scheduled Tours

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

Camron-Stanford House. 1876 Italianate on Lake Merritt. Tours every Wed. 11-4 & Sun. 1-5 pm., free; 1418 Lakeside Dr., 836-1976.

Paramount Theatre. Art Deco movie palace, 2025 Broadway. Tours 1st & 3rd Sat., 10 am, \$1, 893-2300.

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

Black Diamond Mines. Somersville Rd., Antioch; Sat. & Sun. 10, 11, 1:30, 2:30; reservations required for mine tour, 757-2620; \$2 + \$2 parking.

Ardenwood Historic Farm. Park open April-Nov., Thurs.-Sun. 10-4; house tours hourly Sat. & Sun./variable Thurs.-Fri., \$4-\$1.50 dep. on age & day, tour extra; Ardenwood Blvd. or Lake Blvd., Newark; 796-0663.

San Francisco Heritage weekly tours; \$3, info.441-3004. Historic North Waterfront, Sundays 10:30-12, meet at kiosk near cable car turntable in Aquatic Park; Victorian & Edwardian Pacific Heights, Sundays 12:30-2, Haas-Lilienthal House, 2007 Franklin; Haas-Lilienthal house tours, Sun. 11-4:30, Wed. 12-4

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, contact Les Hausrath, 834-5652.

Preservation Action Committee: contact Carolyn Douthat, 763-5370, for time, place, and agenda.

Publications Committee, working on guidebook/history The Broadway Book: Ed Phillips, 465-9829.



Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board. 3rd Wednesday, 3:30 pm, usually Room 221, City Hall. For agenda, date, location, contact City Planning, 273-3941.

City Planning Commission. Every other Wednesday, 3:30 pm, Room 115, City Hall. Agenda & dates, 273-3941.

City Council. Every Tuesday evening, 7:30, Council Chambers, City Hall. Agenda & information from City Clerk, 273-3611.

Oakland Design Advocates. 2nd Wednesday, 7:30 am, Lake Merritt Buffet, 336 Grand Av.; 893-6834.



1986 Golden Gate walking tour group includes (center) Ed Phillips as guide, Gary Knecht, and Helen Lore. If there's a neighborhood you'd like to see--or show--this summer, contact the office or Programs Committee.



Oakland Heritage Alliance

P.O.Box 12425, Oakland, CA 94604 763-9218

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 1986-7

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Vice President.....Annalee Allen
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Secretary.....Edward Phillips

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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 (January-March 1987) are as follows:

Tom/Carolyn Armour, Gerald/Ginny Axtell, David B. Berlin, Craig/Harriet Buchanan, John/Mary Canham, Jim/Myrna Gavin, Anthony Holdsworth, Julia London, Gary/Kiki Pound, Chris/Lee Rutter, Michael Thompson, Jesse Warr, David Wigley, Gloria Will, John Wood, Fred Zierten.

Oakland Heritage Alliance News

CONTRIBUTORS

Annalee Allen, Phil Bellman, Carolyn Douthat, Leslie Flint, Vivian Kahn, Gary Knecht, Betty Marvin, Kathy Olson, William Sturm

EDITORIAL BOARD

Carolyn Douthat, Dean Yabuki

EDITOR/PRODUCTION

Betty Marvin

OHA NEWS welcomes contributions--research projects large or small, historic photos, reports on preservation issues or events, what have you. Contact Betty Marvin, 849-1959, or Dean Yabuki, 832-5355.

■ SPECIAL OFFER FROM OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL

OHA members and friends can save 22% on subscriptions to *The Old-House Journal* and help support OHA at the same time. Under this special offer, a one-year subscription is just \$14 (regular \$18), and half of that \$14 is kept by OHA. OHA also becomes eligible to win a \$1000 grant from *The Old-House Journal*. This well-known publication presents how-to articles on restoration and maintenance of pre-1939 houses, as well as features on house styles, period decorating, and old-house living.

Checks for \$14 payable to OHA may be sent to OHA, Box 12425, Oakland 94604, and we will enter your subscription to *The Old-House Journal*. Please give name, address, phone, and whether new subscription or renewal.

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

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

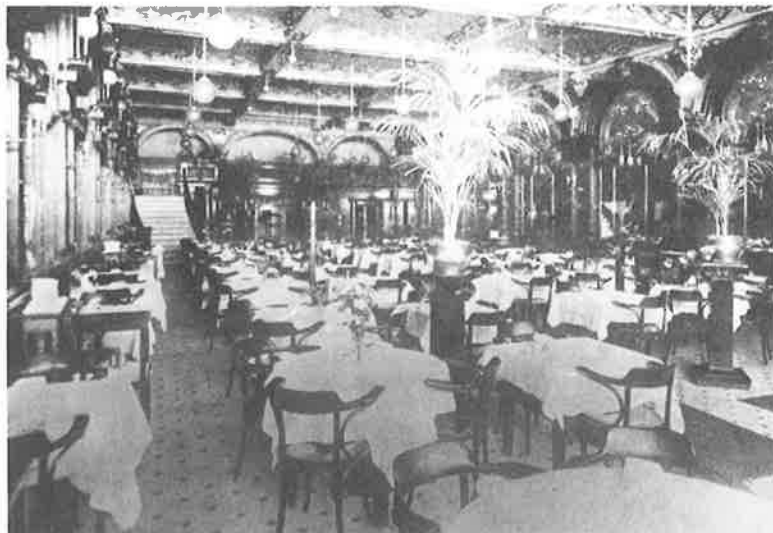
Oakland History Notes

The Forum Cafe

When, in 1908, the Forum Cafe first opened its doors at 1312 Broadway, it soon acquired the enviable reputation of being one of the city's finest restaurants. Sporting a 65 foot long bar, a banquet room seating 250 persons, and a grand staircase sweeping up to a music gallery whence floated the mellifluous strains of an orchestra, the Forum could truly boast of itself as Oakland's "premier cafe."

Located in the heart of downtown, adjacent to the opulent MacDonough Theater, the restaurant was at the center of Oakland's cultural and economic activity. Catering to the well-heeled businessman and the elegant theater-goer, the cafe was presided over by the bespectacled, silk-cravatted Mr. Gustav Mann. Observed one writer in 1911, "It is in the evening that it presents a fascination with its gay throngs of diners, which continues until the last of those who linger at the after-theater suppers take up their departure.... While retaining all the atmosphere of the Bohemian, it is conducted on the highest plane and in point of service it has no superior on the Pacific Coast."

By 1918, the MacDonough and other nearby theaters had converted into motion picture houses. Lovers of the stage began flocking elsewhere for entertainment, and the Forum lost its Thespian carriage trade. By the 1920s the cafe had yielded to the less



(Oakland History Room)

regal and more prosaic pleasures of Leighton's Co-operative Cafeteria and Dairy Lunch Co., succeeded after 1947 by Holger's Coffee Shop. Through the years following the demise of the Forum, the building which housed the restaurant became transmogrified beyond mortal recognition. In 1937, the 1880s Italianate structure received an Art Deco facade; in 1964 a fire which damaged over 50% of the edifice forced further remodeling.

Since 1967, the building has been home to De Lauer News Agency. Somewhere, somewhere in De Lauer's remain the faintest traces, the most fragile aromas, of the magisterial Forum Cafe, Oakland's finest restaurant from the age of gaslights, carriages, and ostrich plumes.

--William Sturm

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