

## Mountain View Cemetery 1863-1906



Nestled at the base of Oakland's foothills is a 200-acre parcel of rolling hillside on which rests a forest of marble and granite called Mountain View Cemetery. While some Oaklanders have never ventured inside its gates, many regularly stroll the roads and walkways between the gravestones and monuments that have been accumulating for well over a century, each with his own purpose and his own private view.

For the historian, the cemetery is a treasure house for the study of material culture. From the time of the Civil War until the earthquake of 1906, Mountain View Cemetery was a Victorian landscape. It reflected the culture of the Victorians.

Frances Schmidt's monument (1911), surrounded by floral tributes: sculpture in the pensive-angel genre, and Olmsted's grassy hills and cypresses. (Oakland History Room)

Their ideas of family, death, and art are written in stone for us to see. This article will describe some of the 19th century artifacts of Mountain View and try to decipher their messages.

Western civilization has always provided burial places for the dead, but the cemetery as we know it is a rather recent development. In Europe at the beginning of

OHA is offering a walking tour of Mountain View on Sat., Aug. 1, at 1:30 pm. See Calendar for details & tour series.



Mountain View today, seen from above Millionaires' Row.  
(Jane Anders)

the industrial age, burial in the church or near the church was common. But with the rapidly growing urban populations, church floors and churchyards became as crowded as the surrounding city slums, and alarmed the public with pestilential fumes and rumors of disease. The resulting invention was the "rural cemetery," a special area set aside for burial of the dead in pleasant surroundings in a dignified and sanitary fashion. This was part of a wider growth of urban improvements, such as water and sewer systems and public parks.

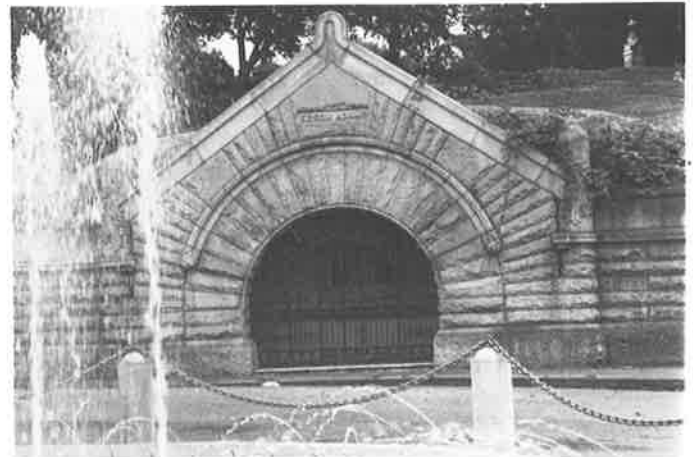
By the mid-19th century many great cemeteries (the term "graveyard" was no longer in use) were flourishing in Europe and America: Pere-Lachaise in Paris, Kensal Green and Highgate in London, Mount Auburn in Boston, Green-Wood in New York, and countless others. Mountain View was, in fact, one of the later garden cemeteries. When it opened in 1865 there were already at least 66 rural or garden cemeteries in the United States.

Like other American cities in the last half of the 19th century, Oakland in 1863 was confronted with the problem of providing pure water, light and power, transportation and parks. A thriving center of trade and commerce, Oakland had outgrown its two small, "unhealthy" and unsightly graveyards in the center of town. California had passed a Rural Cemetery Act in 1859 and in the tradition of Boston's Mount Auburn, leading business and professional men of Oakland determined that the time had come to establish a garden cemetery for Oakland in the nearby countryside. They bought land two miles north of town, incorporated a Cemetery Association and named the site "Mountain View."

The trustees had their first meeting in December 1863 and by April 1864 were corresponding with Frederick Law Olmsted in Bear Valley. Olmsted, who had come to California in 1863 for the Mariposa Mining estates, was already famous as co-designer of Central Park in New York. As a result of this visit to the West, he was in the forefront of the movement to conserve Yosemite, and consulted on the site plan for the University in Berkeley as well as on parks for San Francisco.

In September 1864 the trustees "ordered that...the Topographical Survey...be forthwith sent to Mr. Olmsted...with a request of him to name his terms for laying out the grounds." At the March 30, 1865 meeting "Mr. Olmsted, being present, [gave] his views at length." After viewing the Bay Area's barren, scorched summer landscape, rather than imitate the eastern cemeteries he chose Italian cypress, cedars from Lebanon, stone pines of Italy, along with the Monterey pine and native oak. He could not have foreseen that Anthony Chabot would bring ample irrigation water to the area a few years later or even that the local creek would be dammed, making two ponds for cemetery watering needs.

He emphasized the vital importance of maintenance. Not for Olmsted the romantic ruins and decay of Gothic literature: "Nowhere is dilapidation so inappropriate and offensive, and therefore so much to be guarded against, as in a cemetery." For Olmsted, recreation was not a proper use for a cemetery landscape. He recommended parks for the living so that recreation



Romanesque tomb of Oakland founder Edson Adams (1824-1888), with fountains unforeseen by Olmsted. (Phil Bellman)



The second Mountain View gateway, 1885-1923. (Oak.Hist.Rm.)

would not invade the place of reverence for the dead. His idea was that "the brooding forms of the coppices and the canopy of the cedars would unite in the expression of a sheltering care extended over the place of the dead, the heaven-pointing spires of the immortal cypress would prompt the consolation of the faith." Olmsted worked all his life to provide parks so that people could escape urban congestion, but he never wavered in his conviction that cemeteries were not parks. The trustees of Mountain View have been faithful to that point of view for 120 years.

Olmsted's report was submitted to the trustees (with a bill for \$1000) in 1864, and, after dedication ceremonies, the first interment took place in July 1865: "Jane Waer, age 43, who died of bilious fever."

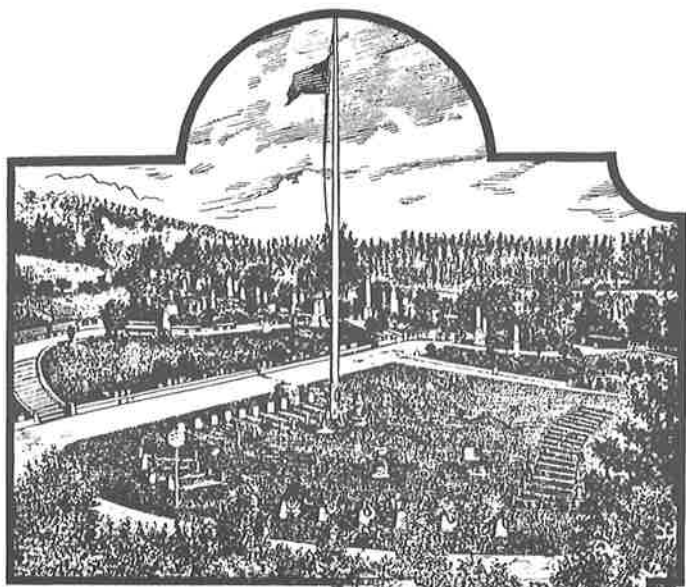
Mountain View Cemetery is the only Bay Area plan of Frederick Law Olmsted fully carried out and still in existence. In fact, for some years the trustees continued to consult Olmsted, who had returned to New York in response to constant demands for his services. Twenty-two years later he went again to California to work on site plans for Stanford University. Whether he took the opportunity to check on Mountain View is not known. If he had, what might he have seen almost a quarter-century after he submitted his report?

What had been an all-day trip from town

to the cemetery along country roads had become a short ride on the Piedmont Horse Railroad that operated from Seventh Street along Cemetery Road (now Piedmont Avenue) to the very gates of Mountain View. A classic stone gateway was erected in 1885, with great urns atop the outer edges and a broken pediment holding a large bronze bell which tolled the passing of each funeral procession. At the time of the bell's purchase in 1882 it tolled for about 40 funerals a month. By 1876 2000 burials had taken place; by 1885 there had been 6000.

A number of handsome monuments would have been in place to greet Olmsted, but only a handful of family mausoleums had been completed. Anthony Chabot had contributed his flume and fountain in 1877, and two more fountains were added to the main avenue in 1879. The hills, so dry and barren in 1864, were by the 1880s "embowered in dense foliage," and the "heaven-pointing spires" of cypress replaced by magnolias and orange trees. The main avenue was lined with roses, geraniums, and lilies for the half mile to the great receiving vault built in 1873 for the temporary storage of up to 150 bodies. Livestock pastured in the cemetery grounds and ripening crops of barley and carrots tempered the sorrowful and reverent atmosphere during the 1870s.

Outside the gates a number of stone and



G. A. R. PLOT—MOUNTAIN VIEW CEMETERY.

The GAR plot (Union Civil War veterans) at Mountain View, depicted in the Oakland Enquirer 1888 special edition (OHR)

marble businesses were thriving. One was the Amador Marble Works, "filled with splendid slabs and shafts from the foothills of the Sierra Nevada...; also steps, coping walls, etc." The stonecutters' and engravers' handiwork could be seen in the many marble shafts and granite sarcophagi as well as in the early family mausoleums.

The Tubbs family tomb, tunneled into a south hillside in 1866, was one of the first of these. Unlike most, it is still in

use, contains dozens of interments, and was recently renovated. Hiram Tubbs was one of the original trustees of the cemetery and owner of the Tubbs Hotel in Brooklyn (East Oakland) where many of the Cemetery Association meetings were held.

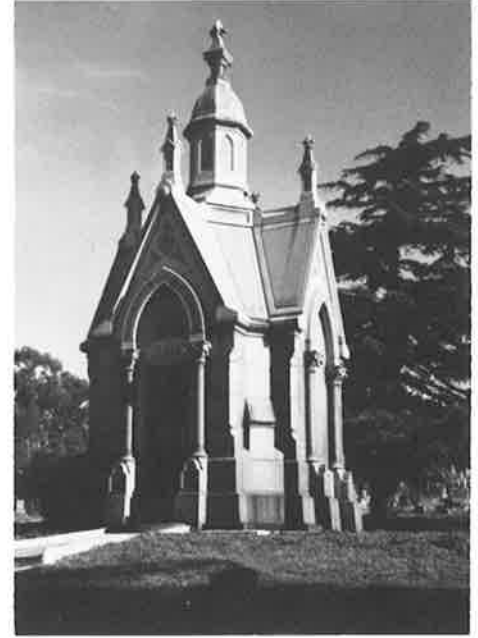
Not far from the gates, a newly completed Great Pyramid housed the remains of California's first senator, William M. Gwin. Farther up the hillside Mrs. "General" David C. Colton had erected a Greek temple in marble to "our beloved," legal counsel to the Big Four, on a site plainly visible from her Nob Hill residence in San Francisco. Some distance below Colton's tomb Charles Main--owner of the first sidewheeler on the Sacramento River--was laid to rest in a Gothic chapel reputed to have cost \$50,000.

Both Main's and Colton's tombs were designed by Fulgenzio Seregni, whose repertoire was extensive to say nothing of eclectic. Main's mausoleum is pure Gothic Revival with buttresses, pointed arches, finials, solid bronze doors, and stained glass windows. A native of Milan, Seregni had been a "designer of artworks of a memorial nature" in Italy, New York, and, since 1858, San Francisco. His monuments in New York included one for financier Jay Gould. He would later build another chapel, almost a twin to Main's, for Frederick Delger, Oakland's first multi-millionaire and developer of the block of offices now

Tree-lined drive in Mountain View, photo dated 1894. Tubbs mausoleum is at far right. (Oakland History Room)







Tombs of Tubbs, Colton, and Main (left to right) display the eclecticism of Mountain View's funerary art. (Gaye Lenahan)

undergoing restoration at 9th and Broadway. Seregni's signature can be seen on the granite shaft over the grave of Oakland's Mayor Selby.

San Francisco owes its Ferry Building and other pre-Fire architecture of Arthur Page Brown indirectly to Mountain View, since Mary Crocker sent to New York for an architect to design the tomb for her husband, the first of the Big Four to die. Family mausoleums seem often to have been designed by family architects. Charles Mau of Oakland designed tombs for J.W. Coleman and Edward Kreyenhagen, as well as a house on the Mountain View grounds.

Architects were the elite of the largely anonymous ranks of cemetery artisans. Granite and marble had to be cut, polished, and then carved with words, symbols, and even portraits. Stained glass, art glass, and beveled glass were de rigueur for respectable middle class homes--and tombs--from about 1870 onward. Despite extensive vandalism, good examples can still be seen today. In the mausoleum of David Hewes, who lived in the Camron-Stanford house and designed the Golden Spike, there are stained glass windows on three sides and a matching skylight. Charles Camden's tomb has a delightful clear glass window with an all-over beveled pattern which was done by a slow and laborious process of hand grinding with a flat wheel, before invention of

a beveling machine in the early 1900s.

Metalwork is represented at Mountain View by the mausoleum doors and gates in both Victorian and Art Nouveau styles. Often referred to as wrought iron, they are in most cases bronze, for the good reason that unlike bronze, iron rusts and corrodes.

Most indicative of Victorian sentiment and style are the pale, weathered remnants of memorial sculpture. Marble or granite angels of every sort are ubiquitous in all sizes and poses. They can be seen guarding a mausoleum gate, weeping over a gravestone or lounging on the edge of a sarcophagus. Little stone lambs and cherubs abound on the graves of children. These graves were



Opalescent art glass, marble, and metalwork in the Barker family vault. (Gaye Lenahan)



The Piedmont Memorial Co. of J.G. Tittu and E. Marttila: one of about 9 monument works that once lined Piedmont Avenue just outside the gates. Amador Granite and Marble, founded in 1874 and one of the oldest continuous businesses in Oakland, is now the only survivor.

(James & Robert McCarthy, Amador Granite & Marble)

most numerous before the 1880s when science had yet to make inroads on childhood diseases. According to James McCarthy of the Amador-East Bay Memorial Company, families ordered most of the sculpture from samples at the monument works or out of catalogs, and it was generally carved in Italy.

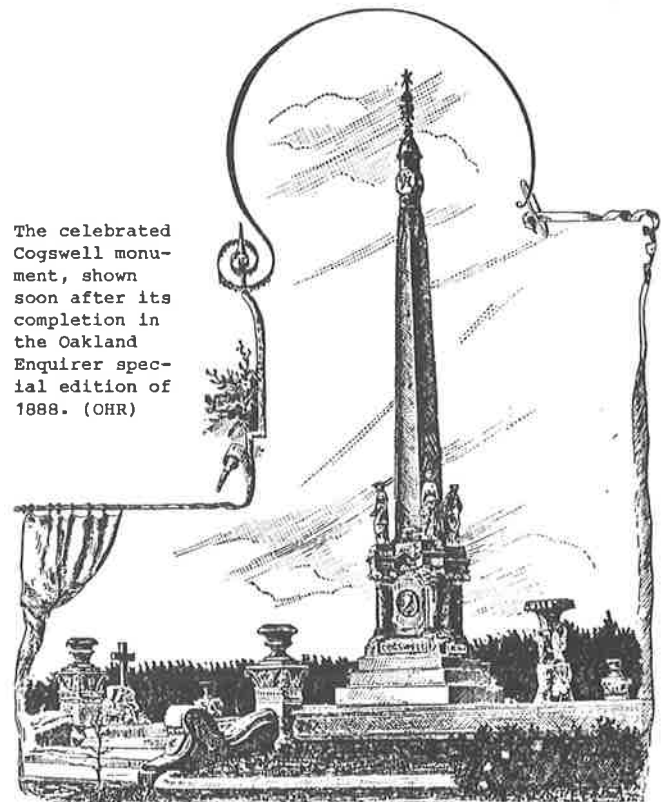
No history of Mountain View Cemetery would be complete without a look at the first major monument erected there by and for Henry David Cogswell. In August 1887 local people went in numbers to the cemetery to watch the work in progress, and the Oakland Enquirer, in several articles, recorded the amazing affair. In an interview Cogswell described his future monument. It would be a granite obelisk 70 feet high, topped with a small dome, copied from the nation's capitol, supporting a ten-inch crystal star. The granite pieces weighing 329 tons were at that very moment on their way to California on 38 freight cars and constituted the "heaviest shipment ever made at one time across the continent." Mr. McDonald, the builder, explained that the monument was earthquake-proof because of the way the stones were to fit together.

Transporting the stone from the railway proved to be an awesome task. The 30-ton obelisk was placed on a special wagon shipped from the East, but the 24 horses hitched to it could not pull together. A capstan used in moving houses got the giant stone as far as the intersection of Broadway and Cemetery Avenue before it broke down. A traction engine ferried over from San Francisco finally completed the job.

Henry Cogswell was a Rhode Island dentist who made and lost several fortunes while promoting positive thinking, education (including Cogswell College), and temperance. He gave numerous water fountains crowned with larger-than-life statues to the city of San Francisco. The statues were of Cogswell himself with a temperance pledge in one hand and a water goblet in the other. "When so much was said about the bad taste inherent in placing himself in effigy, Cogswell retorted that all he wanted was a representation of a fine specimen of non-alcoholic manhood, and that he was surprised indeed when he saw the first metal casting to note the likeness to himself. The result, he assured his critics, was entirely an accident."

The 19th century American lived closer to death than Americans of the 20th century. The afflicted usually died at home and were made ready for burial by the women of the family. People expected a proper funeral and the wearing of mourning attire, and later to pay memorial visits to the grave with its marker appropriate to the wealth and calling of the deceased.

By the early 20th century people died in hospitals; undertakers and funeral "homes" took over the care of the dead. Families



The celebrated Cogswell monument, shown soon after its completion in the Oakland Enquirer special edition of 1888. (OHR)

COGSWELL MONUMENT, MOUNTAIN VIEW CEMETERY.



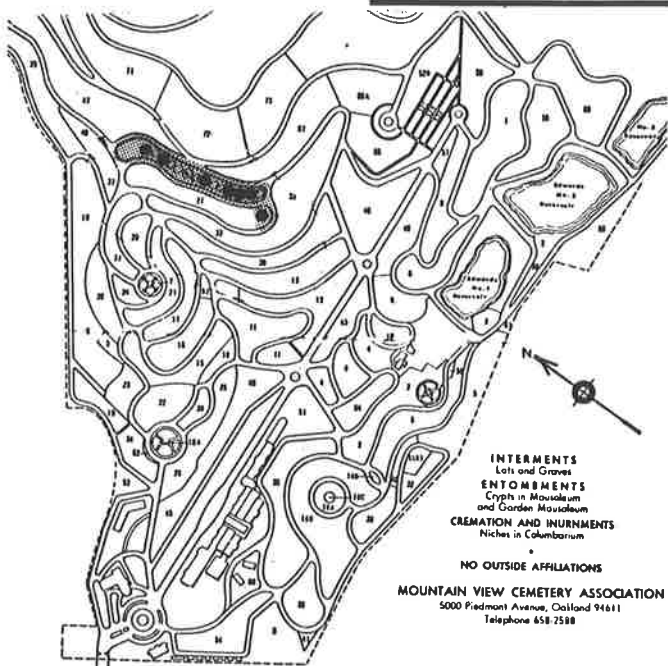
The third Mountain View gates, built in 1923 and truncated to the present pillars in the mid-50s.

(James & Robert McCarthy, Amador Granite & Marble)

moved and separated; family plots became impractical and unvisited. Fashions changed, gingerbread carving vanished from homes and from tombstones. Philanthropic foundations replaced massive monuments. The garden cemetery was replaced by the well-manicured memorial park. But not everyone agrees with the new fashions. The elaborate, vividly inscribed markers of many Asians, East Europeans, and Latin Americans still tell a story the marble angels would understand, a story of family ties, celebration of death and the need to remember.

The cemetery continues to mirror the

society around it, continues, like an outdoor museum, to collect new cultural artifacts while neglect, dilapidation, and vandalism erode the old. In older areas of the cemetery there are high weeds, crumbling walks, and smashed and broken monuments that would dismay Frederick Olmsted. But many Victorians found decay, dilapidation, and ruins romantic: perhaps the spirit of the Victorians lingers on and is satisfied with things as they are at Mountain View. --Gaye Lenahan



## Millionaires' Row

"Millionaires' Row" is the popular name for the neighborhood of impressive mausoleums at the top of Mountain View Cemetery. Here are clustered the tombs of early Oakland's founders and builders, and some great names of wider California history. A profile drawn from the average of all these achievers would be something like this: Born along the Atlantic seaboard, he came to California as a bachelor in his mid-twenties during the Gold Rush, worked for a while in the mines without much success, then went into business, married and raised a family, and died near the end of the

Millionaires' Row is at upper left, Piedmont Ave. entrance at bottom of map. Adjoining Mountain View on the northwest (left of the map) are Catholic and Jewish cemeteries of similar date. (Mountain View Cemetery Association map)



North to south along the Row, Borax Smith's bank-like vault with caryatids; Charles Crocker's classic temple, with Delger's Gothic chapel behind; George Perkins's obelisk with Samuel Merritt's Romanesque tomb beyond. (Jane Anders)

Victorian era, a wealthy man.

Proceeding north along the Row, here are short biographies of some of the self-made millionaires who now reside on the top of the hill.

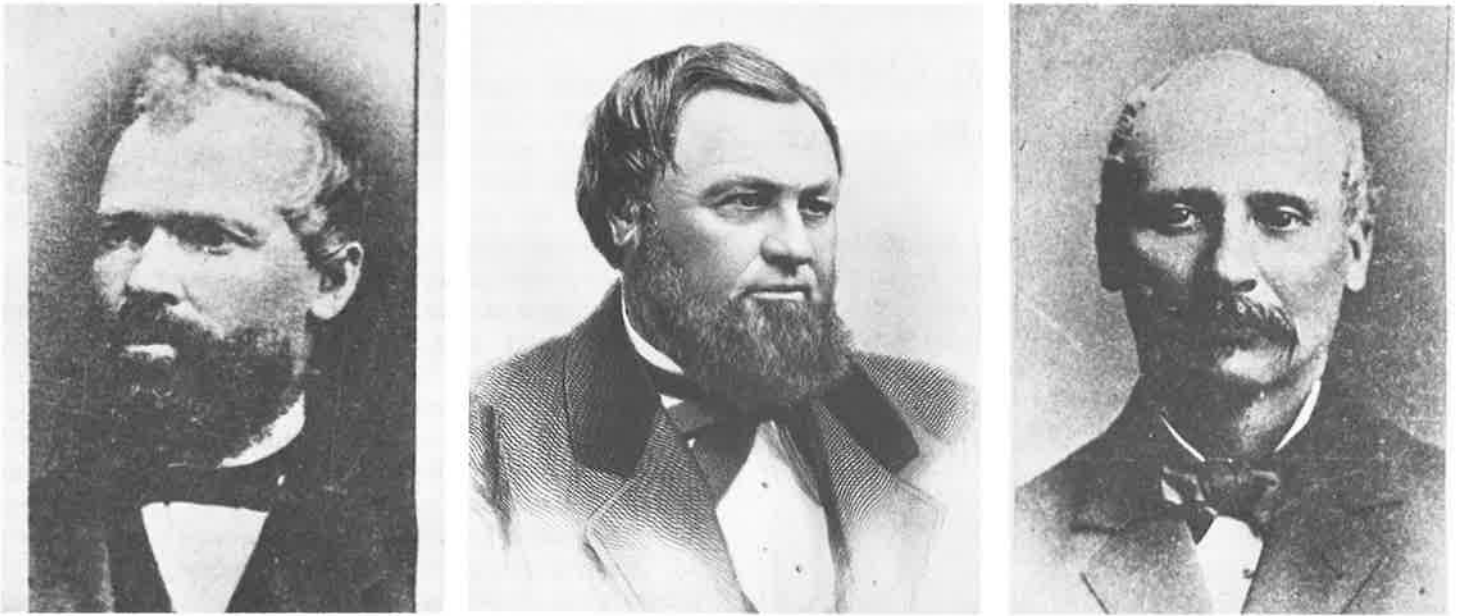
George C. Perkins (1839-1924): Resident of Adams Point and namesake of Perkins Street, Perkins was born in Maine and grew up on a farm there. When he was 13 he ran away to sea on the clipper ship Galatea to San Francisco. He went to the mines, but unable to make a living there, he worked for steamboat passage to Sacramento and then walked to Oroville. He saved his money working as a store porter and driving a mule team, and eventually bought a ferry at Long's Bar and built a flour mill. He married in Oroville in 1864 and had seven children. His later business interests included shipping, banking, and railroads. In 1879 he became governor of California, and was elected senator in 1897 and 1903.

Dr. Samuel Merritt (1822-1890): When Samuel Merritt was a young physician in Plymouth, Mass., his skill attracted the attention of Daniel Webster, who encouraged him to go to California: "Go out there, young man, go out there and behave yourself, and as free as you are from family cares, you will never regret it." Merritt bought a ship, and arrived in San Francisco in May 1850, the day after one of the recurring great fires, which assured that his general cargo would sell at a good

price. He started a medical practice in San Francisco and as well became a pioneer in the Puget Sound lumber trade. In 1852 he started buying and selling real estate in Oakland and San Francisco, including a large acreage along the shore of what is now Lake Merritt. This he subdivided to build several "elegant" homes, among them the Camron-Stanford House. Merritt was a San Francisco supervisor, a member of the Vigilance Committee of 1856, Mayor of Oakland in 1868, a Regent of the University of California, and a founder of the Oakland Bank of Savings and California Insurance Company. He was described as standing 6'3" and weighing 340 pounds when at his best. Diabetes complicated by uremic poisoning brought him to Mountain View in 1890.

Charles Crocker (1822-1888): Born in New York, Crocker worked from the age of 9 at such jobs as peddler and ironmaker. He had little formal education but was eventually able to help his family buy a farm in Indiana. He left there in 1849 for California where he tried gold mining, with little success. He turned to merchandising, prospered in dry goods in Sacramento, and became one of the "Big Four" who built the transcontinental railroad. Ironically for a railroad man, he died because of a fall from a horse-drawn carriage. His wife, their son George, and George's wife are buried along with Charles Crocker at Mountain View. The Crocker monument was des-





Millionaires all in a row: left to right, Frederick Delger, Samuel Merritt, and Peter Remillard. (Oakland History Room)

igned by prominent architect A. Page Brown.

Frederick Delger (1822-1898): Delger left Saxony for New York in 1847, married, and in 1853 came to San Francisco via Cape Horn with his wife and child. In 1855 he opened a retail shoe store and as business prospered moved on to the wholesale trade. In 1860 he moved from San Francisco to Oakland and became the city's first multi-millionaire. He owned ten acres from Telegraph to San Pablo between 17th and 20th Streets (20th was once called Delger Street and 19th was Frederick). "He could offer his guests, at his fabulous Telegraph Avenue estate, the visual treat presented by his collection of camellias and azaleas, after which they might divert themselves in his commodious aviary twittering with birds of rare and brilliant plumage."

Francis Marion "Borax" Smith (1846-1931): Smith went west to Esmeralda, Nevada, where he started mining. He turned to contracting timbers for the mines and while out searching for lumber he traveled to areas where borax was being discovered (borax was used for preserving meat and as a disinfectant). In 1872 he developed a borax claim of his own, and in 1880 with partner William Coleman bought a rich claim in Death Valley. His Oakland home was near 28th Street and 9th Avenue, and was a huge estate with a bowling alley and a zoo. Its avenues of palm trees are now a city landmark. Over-speculation in real estate caused his

financial and transportation empire to collapse in 1910, and his palms now shade tract homes of the teens and '20s.

Remillard family: There are six members of the Remillards entombed here. According to cemetery records the mausoleum was built in 1904, and those who had died earlier were moved here. The Remillards were the leading brickmakers in the Bay Area in the period following the Gold Rush. Eleven of the twelve members of this French-Canadian family eventually came to California. The oldest brother, Hilaire (1834-1902) learned brickmaking in Boston and in 1864 some of the brothers established a Remillard Brick Co. in East Oakland with later brickyards in San Jose, Pleasanton, and Greenbrae. Peter Remillard (1837-1904) was the inventor of a new brick process. His daughter Lillian (the Countess Dandini, 1850-1973) tutored Jack London in French and later owned the famous Carolands mansion. Peter Remillard's house stands in Preservation Park at 654 13th Street.

Simon Henry Dikeman (1829-1907): A native of Prussia, Dikeman made his fortune as the president of the Excelsior Ditch and Canal Co. in Rough and Ready, California, in the 1850s. His kitchen from Rough and Ready has been reassembled in the history gallery at the Oakland Museum. His wife Anna Maria and several other family members are also buried here.

--Jane Anders, with Barbara Smith

## Amazing Grace: An Oakland Earthquake Memoir

This Oakland 1906 earthquake narrative is compiled from notes dictated by Mrs. Grace Hanush, who turns 99 this August. She has a remarkable memory for names and places, and vividly portrays what was happening in Oakland that morning in 1906.

--Daphne G. Favila



1906 earthquake scenes in downtown Oakland: passers-by survey the damage at Heeseman's clothing store; refugee tents in City Hall Plaza. (Oakland History Room)

I know that I shall never forget that dark morning of April 18, 1906, when suddenly it occurred to me that God's infinite patience with the world might possibly have come to an end.

I was sixteen, and the oldest in the family, and because Mama had been quite sickly for a number of years with consumption, I was put in charge of the children by my father. That morning, my beautiful little three year old sister Azalea, shiny blond curls clinging to her forehead, was fast asleep in my bed, while my eight year old elfin brother William slept peacefully in his trundle bed.

I distinctly remember the low ominous rumbling sound which woke me, and the clock on the wall reading 5:34 AM. Strange, I felt like I was suspended in mid-air, while my own bed swayed back and forth eerily underneath my body. Then I realized that the knob on my bedroom door was turning frantically, and I could hear Grandma calling, "Gracie! Gracie! Put your clothes on quickly, and wake the others, before it shakes harder! Earthquakes always come in threes, you know, and the next one will be much worse. Do try to open this door from your side, as it is jammed."

After some hard pulling and tugging, I finally managed to open the door, and there stood my poor grandmother, Eleanor Richardson, her face an ashy green color with fright. (It was only later that I realized that Grandma never really got over the earthquake; her health started to fail, and she died one year later.)

Hardly had Grandma finished speaking and stepped into our bedroom, when my trunk, chiffonier and two rocking chairs all slid to the center of the room with a loud boom, waking up William, who promptly fell out of bed and lay there yelling loudly. I retrieved William and started to dress him and sleepy Azalea, when-- all of a sudden it seemed like a huge giant had taken hold of our big old wooden house, and was shaking it to pieces. I thought, surely it was the end of 684 32nd Street in Oakland. The shaking lasted about thirty seconds, when we heard a sickening crash. It was the chimney falling through the roof and land-



ing on the kitchen floor, filling the house with bricks and swirling dust and ashes. Hurriedly Grandma helped me finish dressing the children and we exited to the front porch for fresh air.

I saw my neighbor Mrs. Appling sitting on the curb in front of our house, with one child on each side of her. I managed to wave feebly at her, she looked so scared, and she nodded to me.

Our neighbor on the other side was young John Slavich, who was about 18 years of age. He was sitting on his lawn on a mattress, with his parents, who were looking in awe at the two houses across the street, which had loosened somehow and were askew on their foundations. One had actually turned completely around from the front to the back. At that time, I had no idea that my young neighbor John Slavich would become Mayor of Oakland in 1924, and marry a beautiful girl also named Grace.

About nine o'clock in the morning the last shake came, and everything in the medicine cabinet fell into the wash basin. (A mild incident.) My father, William Sanford, a real estate broker in Richmond (for whom Sanford Avenue in North Richmond is named) came out of the house looking very confused, and ordered William and Azalea to go into the house and carry out all the bricks from the kitchen, and stack them neatly in the backyard. I can still see their sooty little hands and faces. There was no water to wash with, as due to a broken main the Water Company had shut it off for the day.

Our nice neighbor in the back, Mrs. Fulmer, had a little gas, and cooked some breakfast for our family, but her gas gave out later in the day. Then my father and a neighbor carried out our old wood and coal stove from the kitchen into the yard, and gave me the task of cooking for the family. We took turns chopping wood, but the six weeks I cooked seemed like six years.

Every night we slept in the house, until father found us another house to move into.

I share this earthquake story of Oakland devastation, because it did happen here, and can again. Only time can tell.

--Grace Sanford Hanush

## 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.

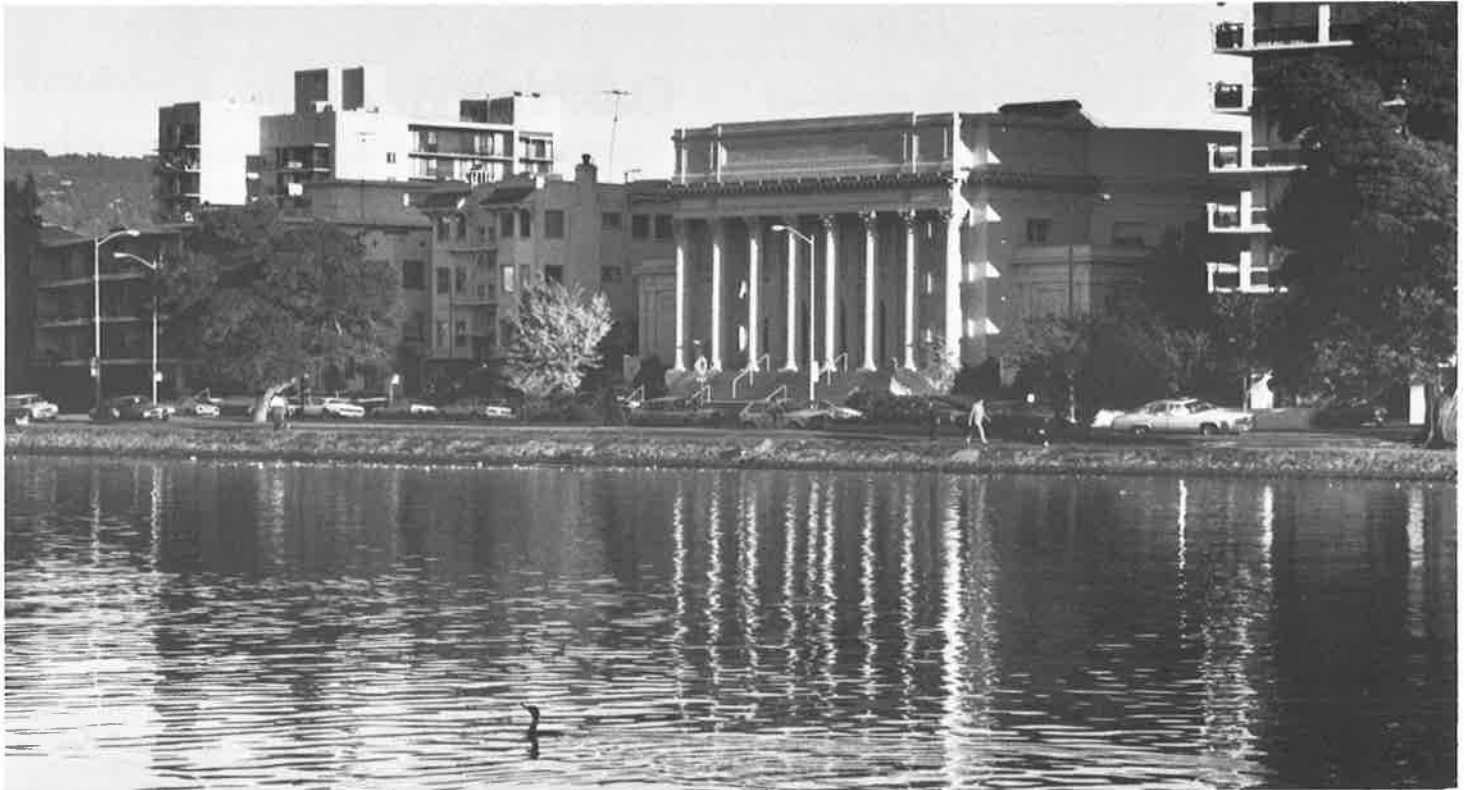
### ■ O.H.R. ACQUIRES BLOCK BOOKS

The Oakland History Room has recently acquired County block books for portions of Oakland which previously could only be researched by a time consuming and eye-straining microfilm title search. The "new" books cover some of the years between 1880 and 1902 for portions of Oakland which were annexed in the early 1900s--parts of Rockridge, College Avenue, Dimond, Laurel, Fruitvale, and points east.

OHA assisted in locating and removing the volumes from their previous home, the green tiled reaches of the old surgery at Highland Hospital. The books, along with acres of court records and county receipts, were apparently left there in the 1960s when the area was used for microfilming. Along with the books were several boxes of the microfilm, which it is hoped will return to the County Recorder's office for public use.

Rumors about these old county records have been circulating among the ranks of local historians for years. Several years ago on a tour of the old Highland complex, OHA member Carolyn Douthat saw the microfilm area and noticed the boxes of block books. Later, at the request of OHA, she and Bill Sturm were permitted to examine the records with a view toward transferring some of them to the library. In May the county decided to free up the storage space by disposing of the contents, and thanks to county records manager Reedy Williams, Sturm and his entourage carted out several truckloads of block books. Volumes covering South County, Alameda, Berkeley, and duplicates of OHR holdings went to local historical societies (including OHA) and the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey.

--Carolyn Douthat



■ **FOURTH CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST:  
WHAT SECRETS LURK WITHIN ITS WALLS?**

As OHA members are probably aware, a full set of Carl Werner's original plans for the Fourth Christian Science Church were found in the attic of City Hall, through OHA research in the old building permit index. The plans, which were found just a few days before the public hearing on the draft EIR for the proposed new Methodist church, show extensive steel reinforcing throughout.

On the strength of the plans, and information on construction practices in 1922 when the church was built, OHA argued before the Planning Commission that the owners' x-ray tests for reinforcing in the building were done without reference to complete plans and that their cost estimates for alternatives to demolition were therefore based on inadequate information about the stability of the building. Planning Commissioner Ed Sue, an architect, questioned the church's engineer at some length about the testing and the structural properties of concrete. Of particular interest to the Commission was the engineer's failure to test the columns for reinforcing and his subsequent conclusion that the colonnade would have to be completely re-

Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist: the plot thickens--  
what is holding this building up? (Phil Bellman)

constructed if it were to remain in place.

The hearing was part of a process which will continue until at least August when the Planning Commission will consider certification of the final EIR and design review of the proposed new project. In the meantime the EIR consultants will respond to the show of public concern evidenced by some 30 comment letters, and address more fully the issues of cost of retaining the building and alternatives to demolition.

A week after the public hearing, on June 2, OHA submitted an application to the National Trust for a Preservation Services grant to conduct further engineering studies. OHA felt that the grant could assist the church with project costs, provide more substantive information on the condition of the building, and benefit other preservation efforts in earthquake country.

Kathy Burns, director of the Western Regional Office of the Trust, indicates that the Trust is interested in this type of project, but concerned about the church's apparently inflexible stand. In an effort to work out a solution, the Trust plans to sponsor a meeting between church representatives, City Planning Department, and OHA



to discuss the possibilities for further analysis of the structural questions.

Thanks to all OHA members who took the time to write comment letters. Support like this is crucial in convincing politicians, developers, and the public that there is broad support for preservation in Oakland.

--Carolyn Douthat

Following are excerpts from a letter by a San Francisco structural engineer well known for seismic work, in the City Planning Department's public file of comments on the Fourth Church EIR.

"There are several points in the draft EIR that are difficult if not impossible for me to accept. These points deal with: Selection of an appropriate building code for seismic analysis; absence of an engineering analysis of the existing building using as-built drawings which clearly show reinforcement; the estimated costs for demolition and removal and new construction vs. renovation.

"Our experience with concrete buildings, and especially a building as late as 1923, is that these buildings, per se, include reinforcement steel throughout. The EIR is skewed to a presumed assumption that minimal reinforcement, if any, exists.

"Historically we have found that vintage 1920s reinforced concrete buildings, which by inspection of the drawings this is, once analyzed for lateral load carrying capabilities, can generally be regarded to comply with the 1969/1972 Uniform Building Code.

"Furthermore, since there is no change in occupancy, there exists a good chance that nothing need be done to the existing church in the way of structural strengthening, i.e. contrary to the EIR, no potential liability exists. Prudence would dictate a lateral load engineering design review of the existing building, and a determination then made as to code adequacy.

"Cost estimates: According to the EIR, the existing church has a floor area of 18,500 square feet. The EIR states that it will cost about \$3,614,000 to make it safe. Our experience with strengthening as discussed [in the EIR] indicates a dollar per square foot cost in the range of \$20 to \$30. The estimate prepared for Gillis-Judson-Wade suggested a cost ten times greater than the lower end of the range. We find

little justification for such a number.

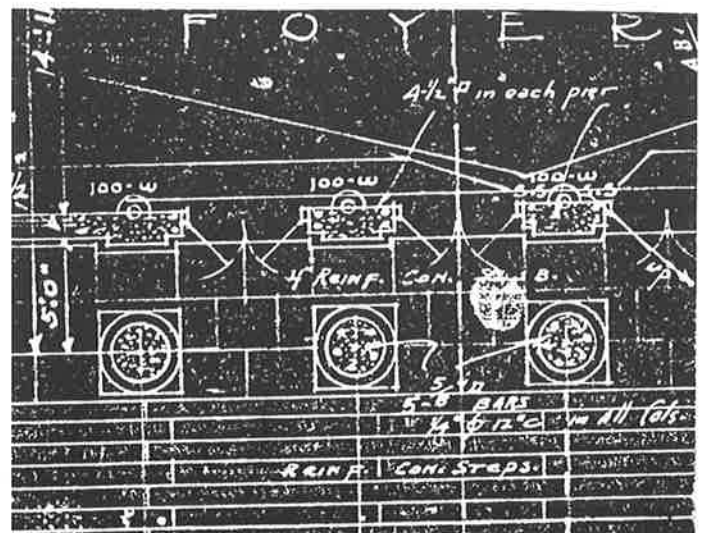
"On the other hand, the new church, with floor space of 21,844 square feet, is going to cost only \$3,123,000. That is to say the existing, massive church can be demolished, all debris removed and a new and bigger church, indeed with some 8800 square feet of underground (!) parking and meeting space, can be built for less than it costs to renovate an existing building. I am reminded of Eliza Doolittle in *My Fair Lady*: 'What do ya take me for, a fool?'

"The report would have you believe only \$160,000 is required to demolish and prepare the site, i.e. \$8.65 per square foot to prepare a level lot. Our judgment suggests a value perhaps three times greater.

"What the cost estimate appears to do is act in the service of swaying a vote, through the manipulation of cost data, to destroy a unique building on Lake Merritt.

"In closing, I want to share with you an alternate concept for structural strengthening which is being used on the old Federal Reserve Bank building in San Francisco. This 1920s building, of steel frame construction with stone facade, will utilize a lateral load carrying system of tubular steel grillages attached vertically to the interior walls...[at] approximately \$10/square foot of floor space.

Yours very truly,  
Peter Culley & Associates  
Arnold Luft, SE, President"



Detail of original blueprints showing reinforcing steel in Fourth Church. Each column is shown to have a skeleton of 5 vertical bars 5/8" square, tied together by 1/4" bars at 12" intervals; walls and cornice have similar. EIR calls columns unreinforced. (City of Oakland Building Dept.)



## ■ DEMOLITION ORDINANCE GOING TO COUNCIL

Recommendations from the Planning Commission Task Force on the draft demolition ordinance have been adopted by the City Council's Public Works Committee, and the ordinance is scheduled to be brought to the full Council for consideration on July 7.

The major features of the original draft--a concurrent building permit/demolition permit requirement, a conditional use permit requirement for demolition of significant structures and low/moderate income housing, and stiff penalties for violating the ordinance--remain in the final draft.

The task force met throughout April and May to work on the technical aspects of use permit criteria and defining historically and architecturally significant properties. Attendance at the meetings varied, with a healthy contingent representing real estate interests, as well as housing representatives, Oakland Design Advocates, and OHA.

Under the recommendations adopted, a building must be a designated city landmark, in an S-7 district, or, if it is on the Study List, must be designated a city landmark within 75 days from the demolition application, in order to trigger the conditional use permit requirement.

The Study List will be used to identify those buildings which will be subject to review for landmark status after a demolition permit application is filed. The List will initially be defined as those buildings rated at least C+ by the Cultural Heritage Survey system, and will also include the potential districts identified by the Survey in the Central District and Adams Point. The Study List is to be officially adopted by the City Council, and Council action will be the only way to have buildings or districts added to the list. In addition, because of the new restrictions on existing landmark buildings which would result from the ordinance, the task force recommended that owners of buildings which are presently landmarks be given the opportunity to have that designation reconsidered.

OHA members who are interested in the ordinance may call Carolyn Douthat (763-5370) for more information.



Robert Simpson House, 524 23rd Street: may be moved or demolished for a housing project. The Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey found it eligible for the National Register (a "B"), for its architectural interest and association with the early family that developed the Simpson Tract in North Central Oakland. This is the sort of building that would be subject to Landmarks Board review under the proposed Demolition Ordinance. (Planning Dept. photo, 1963)

## City Landmarks Board Actions

The **Oakland Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board** meets on the **SECOND MONDAY** of each month at 4:00pm in Room 115, 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.

### APRIL

Board approved the resolution initiating the Western Market Building at 8th and Chester as a landmark, enabling the owners, Jubilee West, to use the Historic Building



Code and obtain permits and insurance (see Spring OHA News).

Voted to confirm the Director of City Planning's action, in response to a letter from a concerned neighbor, adding two vacant houses at 3148-54 Fruitvale to the Study List. Among the oldest surviving in the Dimond neighborhood and good examples of Victorian architecture, both buildings received "C" ratings from the Citywide Preliminary Survey and together may be eligible for a small S-7 historic district.

Rules of Procedure were submitted to the City Attorney's office for approval, and Board discussed inviting the Mayor and Planning Director to the meeting where the Rules of Procedure are finalized.

#### SPECIAL MEETING

Discussed new Guidelines for Determination of Eligibility for Landmark Designation. Following a slide presentation on the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey's evaluation system, Board reviewed the evaluation forms used in Oakland and San Francisco. They proposed a composite of the two, more like San Francisco's in format, which they found easier to read, but with more emphasis on history.

#### MAY

Board reviewed and approved a proposal from Bay Area Partnership and neon artist Lee Champagne for installing the word "imagine" in yellow neon letters on the north wall of the Cathedral Building, 1615 Broadway, as part of a larger project using light to enliven downtown Oakland.

Board reviewed paint and roofing colors for the landmark Bowman Brown Building, 8th and Washington (the old McKee Pharmacy), leaving final details to Planning staff.

Board requested that staff contact the attorney for the estate that owns the two houses at 3148-54 Fruitvale (see April) expressing the Board's interest and concern and noting that they are considering landmark designation.

Secretary Buckley reported on the Planning Commission Demolition Ordinance Task Force, where the current proposal was that "historic properties" under the ordinance only include designated city landmarks, properties listed on the National

Register of Historic Places, and properties in S-7 historic districts. Since new controls on landmarks would be more stringent, prohibiting demolition outright and levying higher fines for violations, redesignation of all existing landmarks and districts was being recommended.

#### JUNE

Meeting was adjourned for lack of a quorum. Special meeting on July 1 completed June agenda, reviewing and approving Old Oakland Company's proposals for storefronts and awnings on the LaSalle and Arlington Hotel buildings at 9th and Washington.

Board discussed changing regular meeting time to avoid conflicts with the Planning Commission, which now meets every other Wednesday, and settled on the second Monday, 4 pm, in Room 115 (beginning Aug. 10).

Almost half the Board's membership is changing again. Following expiration of Peter Scott's term, Marji Shaw has been appointed to the architect's seat. Mitch Hardin is leaving to serve on the Off-Street Parking Commission. Celso Ortiz has been appointed to the Planning Commission, but the Mayor's Office has asked him to remain on the Landmarks Board as well until a replacement is appointed. New appointees will be introduced in our next issue.

--Kathy Olson



Cathedral Building and neighboring rooftops: using light to enliven downtown Oakland (see May)  
(Phil Bellman)

## OHA Update

### NEWS FROM THE OFFICE

Well into its fourth month of operation, the OHA office in the Camron-Stanford House is proving a valuable asset for the organization.

Helen Lore, office manager, reports coordinating and expediting many OHA projects, including the Christian Science preservation effort, Mills College tour, summer Neighborhood Walks, Festival at the Lake, and Preservation Fair in September. Office hours are 1 to 5 pm, Tuesday through Friday. A message machine handles calls at other times. OHA's phone number is 763-9218.

The office is the repository of a large cache of old block books formerly stored at Highland Hospital (see Briefing) and rescued from disposal by Carolyn Douthat, Betty Marvin, Dean Yabuki, and Gary Knecht. In need of proper storage, OHA would welcome lumber or construction donations for a bookcase. Please call the office or any board member if you can help with this.

The Camron-Stanford House Preservation Association reports a new president and board of directors for 1987-88. Architect Robert G. Davidson heads a board composed of Robert C. Field, Bert Gordon, Robert Nielsen, Elaine Oldham, Suzanne Perkins, Frankie Rhodes, Judy Rowe, Sister Ethel Mary Tinnemann, Terrill Wade, Elizabeth Way, and Roxanne Ramos-Camparone.

--Helen Lore

### OLD-HOUSE JOURNAL OFFER EXTENDED

OHA members and friends have until the end of November to 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 Journal. Please give name, address, phone, and whether new subscription or renewal.

### PRESERVATION WEEK: A DARING NEW CONCEPT!

Elaine Oldham of the Camron-Stanford House board is coordinating the 10th Preservation Fair, set for Sunday, September 27, plus a new Preservation Week, Sept. 19-27. Since, she reasons, there is seldom time to see all the exhibits, entertainment, and lectures during the traditional Preservation Fair, why not a whole week to celebrate all of Oakland's strides in preservation and active use of historic buildings?

Representatives of Storek & Storek's Old Oakland, the Black Chamber of Commerce's Preservation Park, and the Rotunda are all participating in the planning. There will be shuttle buses on the day of the Fair to carry celebrants to these downtown locations. The Pardee House may offer a garden tour, since the house is not ready for full tours. Volunteers for Oakland, Oakland Tours, and OHA have joined in: to volunteer, call 836-1976.

--CSHPA



Camron-Stanford House, where OHA is open for business Tuesday-Friday afternoons. Come see us sometime. (Phil Bellman)



■ O.H.A. AT FESTIVAL AT THE LAKE

OHA, Camron-Stanford House, and Dunsmuir House had a joint presentation at Festival at the Lake on June 4-5-6 (in a booth donated and assembled by Julie and Earl Barron). Response was very favorable to our landmarks exhibit and announcements of upcoming programs including the summer walking tours and Preservation Fair.

Those who stopped by were encouraged to fill out postcards to be sent to Mayor Wilson and the City Council urging them to do what is necessary to save the Fourth Christian Science Church. Here is a sample of people's sentiments:

"Please preserve this beautiful building. Oakland should show it values its historical and architectural treasures."

"The former Christian Science church as all great landmarks adds not only character to the city but a living visible piece of history. I urge preservation."

"Please do what you can to preserve some of the beautiful aspects of our society and city. In a day of plastic and throwaway we need to preserve our heritage."

"If this is torn down there will be another empty hole in our past."

"This building is such a lovely landmark. As a child I used to come to Lake Merritt and it brings back fond memories. I would hate to see it go. Is anything really earthquake proof?"

"I like the Christian Science Church just where it is in Oakland. I live here and would like this building to stay in Oakland completely intact."

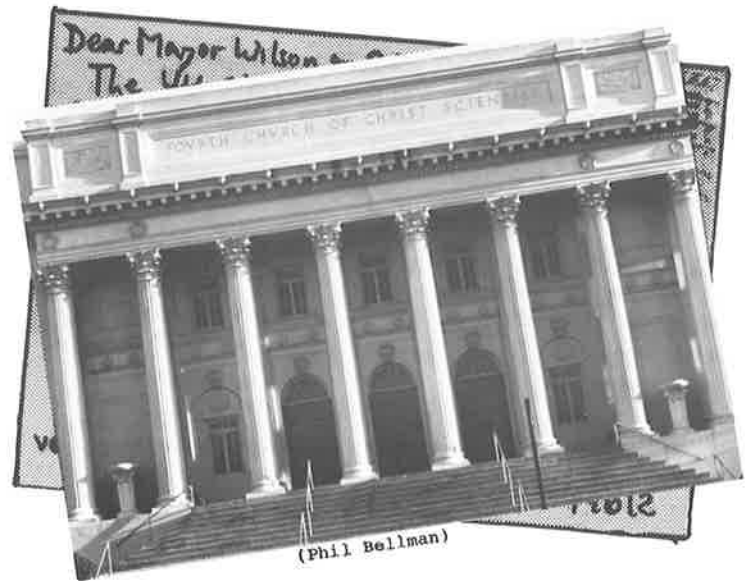
"It is a beautiful addition to an increasingly appreciated Lake Merritt. Please hear the Oakland residents on this one."

"There are too few preserved homes in the area. Do what you can to save the old Christian Science Church."

"Please help save the beautiful old buildings of Oakland. Once they are destroyed, they can never be returned."

"Please re-examine the EIR. Certainly a building constructed so soon after the '06 earthquake would have plenty of structural steel."

"As an architect living and working in the East Bay, I encourage you to do whatever is in your power to preserve one of



the choicest architectural treasures around Lake Merritt and the city of Oakland. I feel public money, either local or federal, would be well invested by helping the current owners serve the community in making this church seismically safe."

"What a waste! When will Oakland stop trashing itself? Please take steps to insure that some serious consideration is given to saving this building, and to the various aesthetically responsible compromises that have been suggested. So far they've just been brushed aside, and we expect more than that from our elected representatives."

"We support keeping the Christian Science Church--it's an important building! It's beautiful. We live in Oakland and we vote!"

--Annalee Allen

OHA Calendar, cont'd - 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. 2nd Monday, 4:00 pm, usually Room 115, 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.

# 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 Aug. 15, "Gee, Remember..." photos & memorabilia of Hayward Union High School, "the most beautiful high school in the world," 1913-1967. Hayward Area Historical Museum, 22701 Main Street, Hayward, M-F 11-4, Sat. 12-4. Donation \$1; 581-0223.

through Sep. 15, "Oakland by Rail: The Story of the City's Streetcars," photos, tickets, timetables, & memorabilia, 1860 to the present. Oakland History Room, Main Library, 125 14th St., Tu/Th 12-8:30, WF 10-5:30, Sat. 1-5:30; free; 273-3222.

through Sep. 30, "Chinese and Japanese in California," exhibit at Bancroft Library, U.C. Berkeley. M-F 9-5, Sat. 1-5, closed Aug. 15 & 22, Sep. 5-7; free.

July 18, Sat., 10-12:00, San Francisco Heritage, Liberty Hill walking tour led by Judith Lynch, \$6/with box lunch \$12; info. & reservations 441-3000.

July 19, Sun., 10-12:30, Oakland Museum bicycle tours of Oakland history. Free, space limited, 273-3514.  
\* Also Aug. 16, Sep. 20, Oct. 18. \*

July 25, Sat., 1:30-3:30, "College Avenue," OHA Walking Tour led by Sharon Moore. Meet at Rockridge BART, College & Keith. \$3/\$5, rain cancels, 763-9218.

July 26, Sun., 1:30-3:30, "Trestle Glen Residential Area," OHA Walking Tour led by Ed Phillips & Deborah Shefler. Meet at Crocker School, Longridge & Hubert. \$3/\$5, rain cancels, 763-9218.

Aug. 1, Sat., 1 pm, San Francisco Heritage house tour & reception, Russian Hill; \$30; 441-3000.

Aug. 1, Sat., 1:30-3:30, "Mountain View Cemetery," OHA Walking Tour led by Barbara Smith & Michael Crowe. Meet in front of Chapel of the Chimes, 4499 Piedmont Av. \$3/\$5, rain cancels, 763-9218.

Aug. 2, Sun., 1:30-3:30, "Diamond District." OHA Walking Tour led by Doug Brookes. Meet at Altemheim gate, 1720 MacArthur Blvd. \$3/\$5, rain cancels, 763-9218.

Aug. 8, Sat., 1:30-3:30, "Oak Center," OHA Walking Tour led by Sister Ethel Mary Tinnemann. DeFremery House, 1651 Adeline. \$3/\$5, rain cancels, 763-9218.

Aug. 9, Sun., 1:30-3:30, "Brooklyn," OHA Walking Tour. Meet at corner of 10th Av. & E. 21st St. \$3/\$5, rain cancels, 763-9218.

Aug. 15, Sat., 1:30-3:30, "Adams Point," OHA Walking Tour led by Harlan Kessel & Francine Leatherwood. Meet at Lakeview Branch Library, El Embarcadero bet. Grand & Lakeshore. \$3/\$5, rain cancels, 763-9218.

Aug. 16, Sun., 1:30-3:30, "Produce Market & Lower Broadway," OHA Walking Tour led by Leslie Flint. Meet at corner of M.L.King Way & Embarcadero (1st & Grove). \$3/\$5, rain cancels, 763-9218.

Aug. 22, Sat., 1:30-3:30, "Rose Garden Neighborhood," OHA Walking Tour led by Marlene Wilson. Meet at Monte Vista & Vernon. \$3/\$5, rain cancels, 763-9218.

Aug. 23, Sun., 1:30-3:30, "Lakeside Drive," OHA Walking Tour led by Leslie Flint. Meet at Camron-Stanford House, 1418 Lakeside. \$3/\$5, rain cancels, 763-9218.

Aug. 29, Sat., 1:30-3:30, "Uptown Art Deco," OHA/Art Deco Society Walking Tour led by Dean Yabuki. Mary Bowles Bldg., 1718 Telegraph \$3/\$5, rain cancels, 763-9218.

Aug. 30, Sun., 1:30-3:30, "Fruitvale," OHA Walking Tour led by Fran Matarrese & Betty Marvin. Meet at St. Elizabeth's Church, 1464 34th Av. near E. 15th St. \$3/\$5, rain cancels, 763-9218.

Sep. 8, Tues., 7:45 pm, and Sep. 12, Sat., 10 am or 1 pm, San Francisco Heritage slide lecture & tour by Gray Brechin on the Richmond District. \$12; 441-3000.

Sep. 13, Sun., 10-5, Alameda Victorian Preservation Society, "A Day In The Park," tours, crafts, food, entertainment, restoration exhibits, Victorian costume. Franklin Park, Morton & San Antonio. Free. Info. about exhibiting, 531-6632 or 523-AVPS.

Sep. 18, Fri., 7:30 pm, Berkeley Historical Society, 3rd super-encore showing of "Berkeley History on Film: Changing Times, '06 to the '60s." 155 Dwinelle Hall, U.C. Campus, c.\$5 TBA, info. & res. 524-9880.

Sep. 20, Sun., West Berkeley tour, Berkeley Architectural Heritage, details TBA, 841-2242.

Sep. 19-27, Oakland Preservation Week, featuring Historic Downtown Oakland: activities TBA. Coordinated by Camron-Stanford House Assn., 836-1976.

Sep. 23, Wed. eve., Preservation Week slide lecture at CCAC by Hank Dunlop, "Bay Area Victorian Interiors," co-sponsored by OHA & CCAC. Details TBA, 763-9218.

Sep. 27, Sun., 12-5, 10th Annual Preservation Fair, Camron-Stanford House (14th & Lakeside) & Victorian Row (9th & Washington). Free; 836-1976.

Sep. 27, Sun., 11-5, Berkeley Rose Garden 50th Anniversary.

Oct. 15, Thurs., OHA Annual Dinner, Fratellanza Club, 1140 66th St., details TBA, save this date!

## 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-Lillienthal House, 2007 Franklin; Haas-Lillienthal house tours, Sun. 11-4:30, Wed. 12-4

Regularly Scheduled Meetings - see p. 17





# 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

- President.....Les Hausrath
- Vice President.....Annalee Allen
- Financial Officer.....William McLetchie
- Secretary.....Edward Phillips

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Annalee Allen.....654-6791
- Julie Barron.....763-1865
- Leslie Flint.....658-4915
- Lynn Fonfa.....763-6410
- Les Hausrath.....834-5652
- Randolph Langenbach.....428-2252
- Betty Marvin.....849-1959
- William McLetchie.....444-0876
- Frederick Mitchell.....655-4920
- Edward Phillips.....465-9829
- Naomi Schiff.....835-1819
- Deborah Shefler.....465-2660

## 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 (April through June) are as follows:

Gary Balsam, Chuck Carpenter, Fernando Cuervo, Michael Falk, Sally Freedman, Ellinor Juarez, Amy Lyons, Joan McKay, The Pardee Home Foundation, Moira T. Richards, Aileen/Sinan Sabuncuoglu, Glen Taber, Robin Treat, Bob Wisley.

# Oakland Heritage Alliance News

## CONTRIBUTORS

Annalee Allen, Jane Anders, Phil Bellman, Carolyn Douthat, Daphne Favila, Leslie Flint, Grace Hanush, Gaye Lenahan, Helen Lore, 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.

## Donors

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

\$5.00-49.00

- Patrick Anders
- Martha Baber
- Beulah Belling
- Frances Bowman
- Loma Brant Boyd
- Doris Brady
- Hilda Brant
- Timothy/Patricia Canty
- Edmund Clausen
- Emelita Cohen
- Karen Cushman
- William J. Davies
- Howard Eggerman
- Toni Ellis
- Leslie Flint
- George/Helen Gilmour
- Roberta Green
- John/Tamra Hege
- Eric/Kaye Herbranson
- L./William Hinkamp
- Susan Rench Hyde
- Beatrice Kempf
- Helen Lore
- Dario Meniketti
- Tony Moniz
- William Penn/Ruth Barnes Mott
- Laura/Brad Niebling

- Ed/Mary Phillips
- Victor Rosen
- Ira/Carol Serkes
- Peter/Barbara Skowronski
- Zeldo Staples
- Carol van Steenberg
- Peggy Stinnett
- Kathleen Sullivan
- George Teebay
- Dennis Wanken
- Jeffrey Wetmore
- Steve/Marlene Wilson
- Suzanne Wilson
- Douglas Yasumura

\$50.00-99.00

- John/Dee Coppola
- Lynn Fonfa
- Earl/Barbara Hamlin
- Kenneth/Virginia McLetchie
- Craig Miller
- Richard Nagler
- Fred Wolfe

\$100.00-500.00

- Les/Linda Hausrath
- Deborah/Stephen Shefler

© 1987, Oakland Heritage Alliance

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 Room)

## Oakland History Notes

### The Athens Athletic Club

"A new club breathing a new spirit of good fellowship destined to become a powerful factor in Oakland's future was launched upon its career in a new building last night when the palatial \$2,000,000 home of the Athens Athletic Club was formally and officially dedicated."

So the Oakland Tribune announced the grand opening of the regal Athens Athletic Club on Sept. 29, 1925, the culmination of a fund-raising effort dating from the formation of the club in 1921. Designed by William Knowles, the 12-story building stood on the west side of Clay between 12th and 13th Streets. It fed, housed, nurtured, and pampered 3000 members, a roster of whom read as a veritable Who's Who of the East Bay civic and business elite. As a social center for Oakland's leaders, the club was host to such luminaries as Presidents Hoover and Truman and aviator Amelia Earhart.

The structure offered glittering dining facilities for 300, a cocktail lounge suitably subdued for the harried businessman, and a ballroom where, on Fridays and Saturdays, you could dance to the strains of Del Courtney's orchestra. The third floor had billiard and card rooms, and for the more energetic, floors four to six featured the athletic aspect, with a squash court, swimming pool, weight room, handball courts, and steam, massage, and shower facilities. Sleeping quarters occupied floors seven to eleven, and as frosting on the cake, a sol-



arium was to be enjoyed on the 12th level.

Decline in membership after World War II, caused in part by the growth of suburbs and the decline of downtown businesses which had supported the club, eventually closed the facility. In 1968 Synanon began using the building as a center for drug rehabilitation. In 1977 it was blown to bits with dynamite to make way for the City Center redevelopment that currently occupies the site.

--William Sturm

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

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

Address Correction Requested

DATED MATERIAL — PLEASE  
DO NOT DELAY DELIVERY