

Julia Morgan: Oakland Architect

Julia Morgan was my godmother. The Julia Morgan I remember was a lovely, feminine little lady with long gray braids with blue bows. She always had time for a smile, a kind word, and a visit. We spent the first fourteen years of my life visiting Miss Morgan at her home on Divisadero in San Francisco and vacationing at her gorgeous home in the Monterey hills.

Julia Morgan (1872-1957), the prolific architect, was a hometown Oakland girl. She grew up on Fourteenth Street near City Hall. She graduated from Oakland High School. She went on to attain an engineering degree at U.C. Berkeley and then to France to attend the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in architecture.

My mother worked for Miss Morgan for thirty-three years as her private secretary and was responsible for her up to her death. She was in charge of all correspondence and plans for years afterward too. My father worked for William Randolph Hearst, through Miss Morgan's office, as a valuation engineer. He spent twenty years valuing all of Hearst's treasures in all the many locations where Hearst owned property. He stayed at the castle as a guest of Mr. Hearst and Marion Davies. He ate at the famous refectory table and swam in the indoor pool.

Miss Morgan designed approximately seven to eight hundred buildings. Part of her office records are at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo, some at U.C. Berkeley in the Bancroft Library and the College of Environmental Design, and others are in the hands of the homeowners. I still have eighty sets of plans. I donated four hundred to Cal



Chapel of the Chimes, 1927, a masterpiece from Morgan's San Simeon period; 1916 store building for Elsie Turner on Piedmont has her trademark Della Robbia wreaths. (Phil Bellman)

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Berkeley five years ago. All of her records still exist. Nothing was destroyed when she closed her office, as has been widely believed. Pre-1918 office files are at Cal Poly; post-1918 files I have.

The buildings are difficult to identify, because Miss Morgan used the clients' billing addresses rather than project addresses in her office files. As a result most of the lists that exist today are still tentative and inaccurate, including the one in Sara Boutelle's recent Julia Morgan, Architect. For the past year I have been working on a complete list.

Oakland has honored Miss Morgan in the "Grand Performance" mural under the Grand Avenue overpass. This year's Oakland Heritage Alliance house tour will honor her by showing seven of her Oakland homes. She always said, "Let my buildings speak for themselves." They will do this eloquently on the tour.

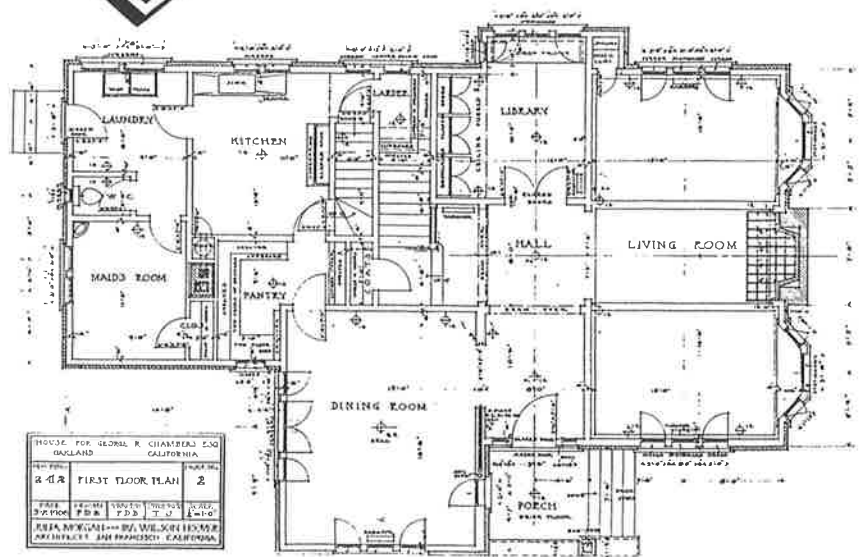
Julia Morgan was private and modest with the public. She would always give interviews about her mentor Bernard Maybeck, but would not talk about her own accomplishments. There were several reasons she didn't like the press. One was an article written about her early in her career that described her as a plain Jane. She felt they should discuss her buildings and not her. Another article stated that Miss Morgan's training in Paris was paid for by Phoebe Apperson Hearst, William Randolph's mother. This was not true. Julia's parents supported her entire education and travel expenses. In addition, Julia Morgan came from a close, Victorian family. One of her brothers, Avery, who accompanied her to Paris, had a mental breakdown. The family protected this information and became even closer and more private.

The architect is best known for Hearst's castle at San Simeon. Like Maybeck, Miss Morgan never turned down a job as too large or too small. San Simeon is only one series of buildings in a collection of accomplishments that few firms have equalled in a lifetime, much less one individual architect--and a woman besides. This woman was so popular and talented that her own male classmates hired her to build their homes. Her U.C. sorority sisters and their husbands did too.

Many of the buildings she designed are still standing. She built cottages, man-



Three Oakland houses illustrate Julia Morgan's use of complex forms, historical detail, and varied surfaces. Brown-shingled Von Adelung house, 1904/1909, now medical offices on 34th (Lynn Stone); half-timbered Susan Fisher house, 1909, on Kempton next to Edison School (Phil Bellman); Wells "honeymoon cottage" on Acacia (Eric Klatt)



HOUSE FOR GEORGE R. CHAMBERS ESQ OAKLAND CALIFORNIA
 R R R FIRST FLOOR PLAN 2
 DATE 1908
 ARCHT JULIA MORGAN
 ENGINEER J. H. HARRIS

Front elevation and first floor plan of George Chambers house on Santa Rosa Avenue, 1908, dating from Morgan's early partnership with Ira Hoover. Half timbering, brick veneer, and leaded glass are indicated on elevation; plan shows typical symmetry of front rooms and hall, side entry, and small kitchen, pantry, and maid's room. Three-story house has 7 bedrooms. (Lynn Stone collection)

sions, estates, churches, schools, hospitals, crematoriums, office buildings, stores, warehouses, apartments, hotels, boarding houses, lodges, music studios, college campus buildings, YWCAs in about fourteen locations, garages, and even a toilet building for the City of Oakland which cost \$4000 to build when houses cost half that. (Unfortunately it is no longer standing.) She designed buildings in California from the Oregon border to the Mexican border, New York, Washington, D.C., YWCAs in Japan, Arizona, and Hawaii, a house in New Zealand, an estate in France, altered St. Donat's Castle in Wales for Hearst, and designed an unbuilt complex for him in Mexico.

In Oakland she designed the Chapel of the Chimes, the old High Street Presbyterian Church, the Lakeside Baptist Church, the College Avenue Presbyterian Church, the interior of the First Baptist Church, the Post-Enquirer Building (demolished), the Palm Hotel on West Grand, the brick Turner stores at 40th and Piedmont, the old Lakeview School (demolished), seven buildings at Mills College (all but one still stand), the Kings' Daughters Home (five buildings), the YWCA, additions to the original Claremont Country Club (burned), thirty offices, school buildings, lodges, apartments, and hospital buildings including an addition to the old Fabiola Hospital. About half of her sixty Oakland homes still exist, some in



Left: Not Knowland Park but Hearst Castle--Julia Morgan with Marianne the elephant, at San Simeon in the 1920s(Lynn Stone collection). Right: Apotheosis of Julia Morgan--among Oakland artists in "Grand Performance" mural, Grand and Lakeshore(Lynn Stone)

new uses as lawyers' offices, a Jesuit residence, a doctors' office near Merritt Hospital (moved from 29th Street to 34th), and one house that was moved from Perkins Street to an office development at Embarcadero Cove (the one with the half-timbered Xs in the eaves). A "modern" cottage behind a 19th century house is one of the little-known Morgans on the tour. Some buildings survive only as traces--the brick walls of a car dealership on Broadway's auto row are all that remain of one of her commercial buildings. The McElroy house at 401 Lee Street in Adams Point appears to have been saved from demolition, and will be incorporated into an apartment complex. About six buildings on her job list I am still researching to locate.

To identify her buildings, I have had to go back to the old permit books at City Hall, the original block books, and the old city directories. (These were like phone books but more informative: they gave people's professions, and sometimes even where they were relocating if they moved.) Street names and house numbers have changed, and streets have been widened, obliterated, or moved. It is often necessary to draw the



Rich detailing in brick, terra cotta, wood, and metal, at King's Daughters Home on Broadway, 1912ff. (Phil Bellman)

old streets back in on a map with a ruler and measure distances in feet to find the original property. This method turned up a home on Chabot, where the original family still owns the property. To authenticate the house moved to Embarcadero Cove, I compared photos with the drawings I had donated to Cal five years ago.

To verify the research, I have knocked on many doors. The owners are sometimes pleasantly surprised to find that they have a Morgan home. Some of the identifying characteristics I look for in the houses are balconies, inward-opening windows, the layout of the entrance and stairway, types of gutter mounts, window frames, and ornamental woodwork, and even the brands of plumbing fixtures used. These are only a few of the tell-tale signs.

I am proud of my godmother's work. All her buildings were built from the inside out with the client's desires in mind. The original clients all loved their buildings and appreciated the architectural talents, engineering skills, and personal attention given by their architect, Oakland's own Miss Julia Morgan. --Lynn Forney Stone

House Tour May 21

Oakland Heritage Alliance concludes National Historic Preservation week with its spring house tour, **Julia Morgan in Oakland**. Join us for a rare chance to see seven of the homes this renowned architect designed in Oakland. Among them are what may be the largest Morgan house in Oakland, and the smallest. You will see her brilliant stylistic blend of Parisian training and Bay Area roots, her distinctive symmetrical and livable floor plans, her light-filled stairways, and her relentless attention to detail. You will learn about her clientele of women professionals and the Oakland elite, and about life in the days when a "servant's room" was standard.

The tour is Sunday, May 21, noon to 5 pm. It includes a garden reception. The houses are scattered, so you will need transportation. Maps and tour books will be provided.

Donation is \$12 for OHA members, \$14 general; for ticket orders, send SASE to OHA House Tour, Box 12425, Oakland 94604. Docents tour free: call 763-9218 to volunteer.

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.

■ WHITHER THE SIXTEENTH STREET STATION?

In late March, the State Transportation Commission approved a 3.2 million dollar grant to the Port of Oakland for construction of a new train station in the Jack London Square area. The Port's application was rated third in the list of 15 projects; transit planners see an Oakland terminal as central to a possible commuter train service running from San Jose to Auburn north-east of Sacramento. The grant, part of the state's Transit Capital Improvement Program, must still be approved as part of the 1989-90 state budget. If approved, funds could be available by August, and would be combined with an additional \$800,000 from other sources to build an intermodal facility serving both Amtrak and AC Transit. The site which the Port has earmarked for the new station is located between Embarcadero and Second, and Alice and Harrison.

Southern Pacific, which owns Amtrak's present station at 16th and Wood, has raised some objection to the proposed location, citing possible interference with its main line freight operation. Amtrak, however, would welcome the move. Southern Pacific has done little to maintain the present 1912 Beaux Arts station, and its location at the very edge of West Oakland makes access difficult for passengers.

The relocation raises questions about the fate of the old station. Designed by Chicago architect Jarvis Hunt, the impressive classical Beaux Arts structure was built not as the main Oakland terminal but as a transfer point for East Bay passengers. In addition to main line trains, this early day intermodal facility served SP's "Red Electric" suburban trains from a raised platform above the main track and, from the landscaped front of the building, provided streetcar connections to downtown Oakland and Alameda. Although the steel-framed building, clad in granite and terra cotta, has roof and plumbing problems, there have

been few alterations, and a wealth of classical detail and interior ornament remains.

The future of station has attracted interest ever since rumors of the relocation started. In January, architecture critic Allan Temko, writing in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, called on Oaklanders to save the station from "being ruthlessly knocked down like an elderly person mugged in the street." The article suggested that the building could be used to house a regional Black history museum and the Northern California Center for Afro-American History and Life, whose collection is now barely contained in the Golden Gate branch of the Oakland Public Library. It has also been suggested that the Port, Amtrak and Southern Pacific should consider moving the building to the new station site as an alternative to new construction.

Reports on SP's plans vary. Some say that the company, recently merged with the Denver & Rio Grande, has said it would like to keep the building. Others report that the company's record on historic preservation is bleak, and that the site is being eyed for new development.

The building is an Oakland City Landmark, and is undeniably one of the city's architectural treasures. Before too many decisions are made by the Port and Southern Pacific, the future of the building should be seriously studied and due consideration given to the best way to preserve it.

--Carolyn Douthat



Amtrak/Southern Pacific station at 16th and Wood Streets is an architectural and historical landmark but is little used today--a recurring formula for trouble. (Phil Bellman)

■ OLD GROVE STREET CAMPUS

News coverage of the city plans for the former University High School campus on Martin Luther King Jr. Way has stirred neighborhood opposition to demolishing the complex. As a result of articles in the Express, the Montclarion, and the Tribune, the Ad Hoc Committee to Save Merritt College has formed and efforts are being made to convince the city and the developer to reconsider the design for the project. The Committee, formed by North Oakland residents who live near the site, claims the support of some 800 people who signed petitions calling for saving the buildings, and has called a meeting in late April to review alternatives to the proposed development and consider strategies for saving at least a portion of the complex. According to these residents, and a 1987 city sponsored report on the project, the community has always supported retention of the buildings. Bill Lowe, chair of the North Oakland District Community Council and aide to Councilmember Marge Gibson-Haskell, and Larry Taylor, chair of the North Oakland Community Development District Board, maintain that the current plan has the support of many residents, and that delaying the process now runs the risk of having the developer back out.

As reported in the last issue of the OHA News, the city is still considering removing federal funds from the project by replacing them with Redevelopment Repayment funds. HUD has approved the arrangement, and staff is now working to find the additional \$500,000 needed to fund other pro-

grams affected by the switch. One of the programs affected is the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey, which is currently funded from the redevelopment account.

The project would require a major zoning change for the parcel and an amendment to the General Plan. Work on the EIR has begun. In addition to considering the effect of zoning and use changes, it will also assess the impact on historic resources and possible alternatives to the project. The contract with the EIR consultants provides for an optional assessment to comply with the federal Section 106 review process. This review is required when federal funds affect a historic resource. The city is seeking to avoid it by transferring CDBG funds out of the project, but it may come into play regardless. According to opinions from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the State Office of Historic Preservation, the use of federal funds in purchasing the site is sufficient to trigger the 106 review process, whether or not those funds are later replaced.

Much of the controversy surrounding the project focuses on assertions by the city and the developer that saving the building is economically unfeasible, and that any major supermarket tenant will require a new facility of specific size and layout. In response to the cost issues which have been raised, two independent reports have been prepared. The first, a seismic analysis of the old buildings by Peter Culley and Associates, Structural Engineers, concludes that the cost for seismic work would range between 1.8 and 2.4 million dollars in contrast to the 5 million figure which has been used by the city. The second study, conducted by Paul Wazink, is a comparison of construction costs for the proposed development and an alternative plan developed by Randolph Langenbach, professor of Architecture at UC Berkeley and former OHA boardmember. The Wazink study concluded that the cost of renovation of the old building, with additional new construction to the rear, would be comparable to completely new construction. These two reports have been submitted to the EIR consultants for use in analysis of alternatives.

On April 10 North Oakland Redevelopment Associates, the developer, and Robert Gianneli, architect on the project, presented the project plans to a community meeting



Grove Street Campus sits and waits.

(Phil Bellman)

chaired by Bill Lowe. With over 120 people looking on, Gianelli displayed models and elevations of the project which, from the front, mimics the outline of the existing complex. He critiqued Langenbach's alternative, noting that fewer parking spaces would be provided. NORA's presentation focused on their successful development of the Delaware Street project in Berkeley, which redeveloped small historic buildings for residential and commercial use.

The draft EIR will take several months to prepare. Pending city action on the project concerns the funding switch and the decision on whether to undergo Section 106 review. Once those decisions are made, the Council may go ahead with the Disposition and Development Agreement with NORA, originally scheduled for consideration last fall.

-- Carolyn Douthat

■ AND THE WALLS CAME TUMBLING DOWN

On March 22, the former Fourth Church of Christ Scientist on Lakeshore disappeared from the lakeside scene. Wrecking crews, working from the Second Avenue side, demolished the building and hauled the broken pieces away in a weeklong operation.

The fate of the building was decided last May, when the City Council denied OHA's appeal from Planning Commission approval of a new church for the owners, the Lake Merritt United Methodist Church. As part of the conditions of approval, however, the owners were required to document the 1920s classical church and to develop a salvage plan for the building. On February 5 an "open house" was held for those interested in acquiring parts of the building, and the remaining salvagable portions were removed by Berkeley Architectural Salvage, including interior trim and two large sets of stained glass windows. Documentation of the building, prepared in accordance with the standards of the Historic American Buildings Survey, a federal project, has been provided to the city, the Oakland Museum, and HABS. According to the conditions of approval, the demolition permit could not be issued until the documentation and salvage plan were completed.

Excavation for the new church has begun, and the plans for the new building have been submitted to the city for permit approval.

--Carolyn Douthat



Fourth Church of Christ, Scientist: Two-year controversy enlisted National Trust support, prompted preservation task force, put OHA on the map at City Hall. (Phil Bellman)

■ TASK FORCE REPORT

The Historic Preservation Element Task Force, which has been meeting since last fall, is scheduled to complete its review of preservation issues and policies in Oakland at the end of June. In the meetings remaining, members will be considering such issues as historic district controls, the role and powers of the Landmarks Board, and the allocation of city resources, fiscal and human, to preservation in Oakland.

During May and June, the group will review their draft recommendations for a Preservation Element in the city's General Plan. The element itself will not change existing city ordinances. As a policy document, it will contain an overall statement of preservation issues in Oakland, and set out those policies to be used in addressing preservation of architectural and historic resources in the city.

Once the task force recommendations have been finalized, the report will go to the Planning Commission and Landmarks Board for review.

--Carolyn Douthat

■ KING ESTATES UPDATE

The King Estates Neighborhood Association, Oak Knoll Neighborhood Improvement Association, and Crest Avenue Neighborhood Association have united in opposition to a planned unit development on open space known as King Estates, west of Highway 580 near Keller Avenue (see OHA News, Winter 1989). Much of the development was to be on 18.3 acres owned by the City of Oakland. That property was acquired in 1956 for development as a park, but was never formally dedicated. An adjacent 58 acres, owned by the Trust for Public Land, was also part of the proposed planned unit development site. Much of this larger acreage has steep slopes and landslide activity which inhibit development. Both parcels together form a splendid natural open space of grassy knolls which residents hope to preserve.

Last November the development option which the Urban Housing Institute held on the city-owned land expired. At that time the neighborhood associations moved for formal dedication of the parkland, gaining support from the Elmhurst Community Development District Board. In March the Oakland Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission, with the support of staff, recommended to the Oakland City Council that the city-owned open space be dedicated and preserved by the City as natural parkland. Councilors Bazile and Gilmore, representing southeast Oakland, have endorsed that recommendation and on April 4 the Council committee that reviews community services recommended the dedication to the City Council, including a rezoning and General Plan amendment.

The King Estates Park issue now goes to



View across freeway to King Estates shows its strategic location as urban open space. (Phil Bellman)

the City Planning Department and Planning Commission as well as to the City Council. Support for preservation of the parkland as natural open space can be directed to the Oakland City Planning Commission, Mayor Lionel Wilson, and members of the Council.

--Robert Seymoure & Barbara Sutherland

■ ALICE ARTS CENTER

In April city officials took a big step toward creating a cultural arts center for Oakland when they allocated nearly \$6 million for work on the Alice Arts Center. Formerly the Alice Club Hotel, the six-story Mediterranean style building erected in 1927-28 is located at Alice and 14th Street in a neighborhood of other distinctive lakeside apartment buildings. Redevelopment agency members (city councilors in their alternate role) voted 5-0 to add \$6 million to the \$2.9 million allocated in 1986 which enabled the city to buy the building and perform initial renovation. The Cultural Arts Division, headed by Mary Anne Hedderson, and mandated to oversee and coordinate arts activity in Oakland, has offices in the building. Other major arts tenants include Oakland Ensemble Theatre and CitiCentre Dance Theatre. Mary Anne Hedderson's presentation to the Redevelopment Agency made the point that rehabilitating the Alice Hotel at \$83 per square foot is far cheaper than building a new arts center, estimated at \$200 per square foot.

The Alice Hotel was originally the Oakland Women's City Club and was designed by Miller and Warnecke, an influential architectural firm in the East Bay for over 40 years. The design for the Women's City Club was said to have been inspired by the 14th century Florentine palace of the Davanzzati family. Its rusticated ground floor, overhanging eaves, round-headed arches, and top floor loggia certainly evoke images of a Renaissance palazzo.

The Women's City Club was a major element in the development of the surrounding Lakeside neighborhood, the triangular area between 14th Street, Harrison, and Lake Merritt, into one of Oakland's leading social and entertainment centers. The tone was set by the 1910-12 Hotel Oakland, located diagonally across 14th Street from the Club and once one of the grandest hostel-

How New Women's City Club Will Look

Here is a reproduction of the architect's sketch of the new Oakland Women's City club, which local women propose to build in Alice street, north of Fourteenth street, and in which women's activities of the city will be concentrated. The type of architecture proposed is largely Italian and this style will prevail throughout the building, a six-story structure.



Drawing by Miller and Warnecke for Women's City Club, published in Tribune, Feb. 21, 1927. Auditorium, roof garden, shops, and committee rooms now adapt well to arts use.

ries on the west coast. Other centers of activity were the two Scottish Rite temples in the 1400 blocks of Madison Street and Lakeside Drive. The area's prestigious atmosphere was enhanced in the 1920s and 30s by the construction of several large luxury apartment buildings and apartment hotels such as the Hill-Castle, located directly behind the City Club. Much of this neighborhood is contained in the Lakeside Apartment Historic District identified by the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey. The Women's City Club is an important southern anchor of the district.

The Survey's Historic Resources Inventory cites the City Club's significance "as one of Oakland's most important centers of women's social, political, educational and business activities during the 1920s and 1930s. It is also a major symbol of the increasingly prominent role of women in community and financial affairs during this

period which followed women's 1920 achievement of the right and power to vote. The building served as the central facility for women's groups throughout Oakland and the East Bay."

Now that further funds have been allocated, plans can go forward for structural rehabilitation, electrical work, plumbing, heating and ventilation, and constructing soundproof rehearsal and performance spaces. When completed in 1990, the center will provide office, rehearsal, and performing space for dance, theater, and music organizations. Hedderson's report to the Redevelopment Agency states: "Support for the arts in Oakland, particularly in the central district, is a community need and a very important bond to the community and development of the center district."

This trend of locating arts centers in historic buildings downtown is taking place nationwide. A recent issue of the National Trust publication Preservation Forum points out how "revitalization ties it all together, first by renovating and preserving architecturally significant buildings, then by recruiting local artists and organizing events that will attract residents and tourists downtown."

"It's working, folks," Benny Sato Ambush, director of the Oakland Ensemble Theatre, told the Tribune. "The Alice Arts Center is working. You go down there on a weekend and people are streaming in and out." Funding the Alice Arts Center has placed Oakland in the mainstream of this revitalization trend.

--Annalee Allen

■ WESTERN AEROSPACE MUSEUM

The Western Aerospace Museum has moved into a larger former hangar, Building 621 at Oakland Airport's historic North Field. This was built in 1940 by Boeing School of Aeronautics, then a division of United Air Lines, as an Army Air Corps aviation mechanics school. It will allow the museum to house and display 10 to 12 airplanes-- something that has not been possible before (they have turned down several over the past two years). Museum membership is \$25 a year, and the museum needs volunteers every weekend to clean, paint, create exhibits, and serve as docents. The Museum's mailing address is Box 11332, Oakland 94611, or contact president Ronald Reuther, 644-8031.

OHA Update

■ PROGRAMS: YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

Sally Nielsen has done an outstanding job coordinating the OHA winter lecture series. The programs have been varied in subject, and all interesting. Dean Yabuki and Helen Lore have also contributed their time and made sure things ran smoothly. If anyone has comments about the lectures, or has ideas for future programs, call or drop us a line. This will help us plan the kind of programs the membership is interested in.

Support OHA! Plan to attend the spring house tour on May 21. This year's tour features Julia Morgan houses in Oakland. The tour is OHA's major fundraising event of the year. Proceeds go toward maintaining the office and staff, supporting the News, and other ongoing projects. 82% of OHA's operating budget comes from dues and events. Member support of our events has always been outstanding, and we hope this year's house tour will be the biggest ever.

This year's committee, headed by Mary Jane McConville, has selected an outstanding group of unusual homes, some never before seen on any tour. Lynn Stone provided invaluable background and advice. Docents are still needed to staff the houses and help with refreshments. If you would like a free tour and a chance to join in the production of this major OHA event, call Helen at 763-9218 and she'll put you to work.

If spring is here, the summer walking tours cannot be far behind, once again twelve tours on July and August weekends. Half are new and half are old favorites. As an OHA member you can not only go on the tours, you can learn to lead them. Tour organizers Lynn Fonfa and Dean Yabuki note that some of the tours are so popular that additional leaders should be trained, especially the Mountain View and Borax Smith tours. If you "apprentice" this summer you could be leading tours in summer of 1990. This is a fun way to learn about Oakland and share your knowledge with members and friends. Give it a try--call Helen at the office, 763-9218. --Annalee Allen

House tour May 21 showcases magnificent Julia Morgans like this Rockridge mansion. Attend or volunteer! (Eric Klatt) ▶

■ WELCOME TO THE BOARD

We are pleased to have Marlene Wilson return to the OHA board. Marlene was an early OHA organizer, serving on the first board of directors in 1980. She served as recording secretary, vice president, and on the Preservation Action committee. She has a particular interest in urban creeks and has worked to preserve Temescal, Peralta, and Arroyo Viejo creeks. Marlene is an attorney by profession, and was responsible for drafting the easement agreement for the Cohen house. She has worked to obtain down-zoning for Richmond Boulevard and her own Rose Garden neighborhood. The board will look to Marlene's experience as it anticipates renewed negotiations over the Floral Depot and other downtown projects.

Serving on the OHA board is a great way to stay current with the preservation concerns of Oakland. If you are interested, or know of other potential candidates with a strong concern for urban issues, contact nominating committee chair Lynn Fonfa, 763-3410. We're always interested in broadening our base of support. --Annalee Allen



■ NEW BOOKS ANNOUNCED

The State Office of Historic Preservation has just issued Five Views: An Ethnic Sites Survey for California, a 270-page book based on the state-wide ethnic survey conducted a decade ago. It identifies sites significant in the history of Blacks, Latinos, Chinese, Japanese, and Native Americans. The book is being sold at the OHA lecture series, and is available from OHA for \$10.25, a 20% discount.

Visions Toward Tomorrow: A History of the East Bay Afro-American Community, 1852-1977 is the work of the team directed by Dr. Lawrence Crouchett that produced the show "Visions Toward Tomorrow." (The exhibit recently left the Oakland Museum for a showing in Los Angeles.) The book, a concise, vivid, and abundantly illustrated history of Blacks in Oakland, Berkeley, and Richmond, is available from the Center for Afro-American History and Life, at the Golden Gate Branch Library, 5606 San Pablo.

Windsor Publications, Northridge, announces California Crossroads: Alameda County, An Illustrated History, by Ruth Hendricks Willard. This 128-page hardcover book is a popular history with 125 illustrations, both color and black and white, an index and a complete bibliography. It is available at local bookstores for \$27.95.

■ DETROIT OF THE WEST AT THE O.H.R.

Once the leading center of auto-making on the Pacific Coast, Oakland was known in the 1920s as the "Detroit of the West," home to the Chevrolet, Durant, Star, and Willys-Overland motorcars, the famous Fageol buses and trucks, and the unique Doble steam car.

The Oakland History Room celebrates these colorful years with an exhibit, "Detroit of the West: Oakland's Auto Industry, 1916-1940," featuring historical photographs and newspaper articles showing the factories, the cars, the workers who built them, and the neighborhoods which grew up to house the auto makers, from the construction of the Chevrolet plant in East Oakland in 1916 to the eve of World War II.

The exhibit can be seen April 21 through June 16 at the Oakland Main Library's Oakland History Room, 125 14th Street, Tuesday through Saturday. --William Sturm



West Oakland survey is uncovering the history of a vast area of intact 19th century working people's housing, like this block of Peralta Street. You can help. (Phil Bellman)

■ WEST OAKLAND SURVEY STILL NEEDS YOU

The Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey's work on the Prescott neighborhood is now moving into high gear at the Oakland History Room, in anticipation of a summer deadline for its report on the city's largest historic area, containing over 800 buildings. Research to be done at this stage is mostly biographical, using city directories and the History Room's indexes (see feature article in Fall 1988 OHA News). We want to find out who lived in the neighborhood in the 19th and early 20th centuries, and how they fit into Oakland history. Fascinating information is emerging from this project, on tract development, railroad-related occupations, the succession of fashionable and declining neighborhoods, family size and structure, immigration and ethnic history, and much more.

The Survey is co-sponsored by the City Planning Department, the State Office of Historic Preservation, and Oakland Heritage Alliance. OHA has consistently provided invaluable support in the form of volunteer researchers. You can continue this tradition, learn about your city, and learn some arcane but enjoyable skills by helping out with the Survey. Survey staff (Gary Knecht, Betty Marvin, and students Nadja Karpilow and Aicha Woods) are at the Oakland History Room Thursday and Friday afternoons and Thursday evenings. Come see us, or call the Survey at City Planning, 273-3941, Monday and Wednesday afternoons. The History Room is open Saturday afternoons and Tuesday and Thursday evenings, and orientation can be arranged at your convenience.

City Landmarks Board Actions

The Oakland Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board meets on the second Monday of each month at 4 pm in Room 211 City Hall. Meetings are open to the public. Designation of landmarks is recommended by the Board to Planning Commission and City Council. Landmarks are subject to a 240-day delay in issuance of demolition permits. Exterior alterations require approval by City Planning staff, at the recommendation of the Board. 108 landmarks have been designated in the 14 years since the Board was created.

Two new members have been appointed to the Landmarks Board in recent months.

Bobbi Armstrong is a real estate developer who was born in Canada and grew up in Southern California. Her first career was in nursing, with degrees from San Francisco State and the University of Washington. She worked at Presbyterian Medical Center and the local Kaiser School of Nursing. She minored in business, and became increasingly interested in real estate. Her husband is a contractor, and for a brief period she sold commercial leases in San Francisco. Seeing opportunities in development, she renovated a number of older houses in Piedmont; this led to similar work in other local areas, and to her interest in preservation.

Laverne Wells-Bowie was born in Newport, Rhode Island, and attended schools in that area before moving to Oakland where she attended the College of Arts and Crafts. She became a textile designer and had her own business for several years before studying architecture at UC Berkeley. On completing graduate work there, she received a professorship at the University of Tennessee. She is presently on leave from that assignment, working for a local architecture firm and preparing for the state licensing examination. She represented the Board at the preservation conference in Los Angeles.

JANUARY

A special meeting was held to set Board priorities for 1989. Representing OHA concerns were preservation action chair Carolyn Douthat, president Annalee Allen, and Bill McLetchie. Topics selected for further study were design guidelines (including how and whether to use the Secretary of the Interior's Standards), timing of design review submittals, procedure for Mills Act contracts (tax relief), designa-

tion of interiors of present publicly-owned landmarks, review of 1-A (top priority) properties on the preservation study list, neighborhood issues (demolition by neglect, facade improvement or "Main Street" projects), and possible public forums.

FEBRUARY

Board approved Bill Wong's application to demolish and reconstruct the storefront of 521-25 8th Street in the S-7 preservation zone. Asbestos shingles were to be removed from the second and third floor facade, and the building to be restored or reconstructed to its original style. Details and color selection were to be worked out with staff (Board secretary Chris Buckley), for Board approval at a future meeting.

Board postponed action on Richard Chan's application to legalize an existing chain link fence and paved lot and to install a wall sign for a proposed auto repair business at the northeast corner of East 12th Street and 11th Avenue, in the Downtown Brooklyn S-7 preservation zone. (The corner is the site of the Central Block, a city landmark damaged by fire and demolished.)

Board discussed a request from David Casebolt of the Pardee Home Foundation expressing concern about security at Preservation Park and suggesting a meeting with representatives of the Planning Department, City Manager, Police and Fire Departments, and Office of Economic Development and Employment. Board suggested adding representatives of the nearby Victorian Legal Center and Bramalea Pacific, and boardmember Anthony Pegram agreed to participate.



Quality of buildings in East 12th Street S-7 zone explains Board review over new construction in district. (P. Bellman)

Chair Frederick Hertz reported on the Historic Preservation Task Force which is considering creation of five categories of historic properties, including the three now existing (landmarks, S-7 districts, and study list properties) plus "super landmarks" which could not be demolished except in case of hardship or other special circumstances, and a "limited design review" designation requiring review only for major alterations. Designation of privately owned but publicly accessible interiors is also to be considered (at present only publicly owned interiors may be designated).

Board discussed the need for timely mailing of agenda packets, and decided to move up the deadlines for filing design review and other applications accordingly.

Hertz announced that he would attend the Certified Local Government workshop sponsored by the State Office of Historic Preservation in Sacramento on March 2.

Board noted that the fire-damaged Simpson House (524 23rd St) had been demolished and that Steven Farneth of Architectural Resources Group considered the Herrick House irreparable (it was later demolished).

MARCH

Board reviewed and approved plans by Holy Names College to reconstruct the front yard area of the George McCrea house, an Oakland landmark at the south corner of the campus at 3500 Mountain Boulevard. The approved plan called for a more formal design, a relocated stairway, a retaining wall of "used bricks" like those on the house, and consideration of an anodized finish on the gate to the college, instead of the copper proposed. The applicant was directed to work with staff on stair and wall treatment and selection of materials.

Board approved the design for a wheelchair ramp at the rear (northwest corner) of the landmark Dunsmuir House.

Endorsement in concept was given to Bramalea Pacific's plans for exterior alterations to eleven buildings in Preservation Park. Issues including use of old window glass, screening the restaurant deck of the James White house from Castro Street, and details of roof patterns and door treatment were to be worked out with staff.

Board voted to revise its draft evaluation standards (landmark criteria) to make local Black history a pattern of primary



1700 block of 7th Street, 1716-18 7th in foreground. Built in 1889 as a plumbing shop, it became important in this century for Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. (P.Bellman)

rather than secondary importance. This was in response to a landmark application for 1716-18 7th Street, for many years headquarters of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters under C.L. Dellums. The first Black union in the United States, the Brotherhood played an important role in the early 20th century civil rights movement and in Oakland history. Under the revised criteria, the building is eligible for landmark status despite alterations and deterioration.

APRIL

Board approved Richard Chan's revised design for a picket fence (instead of chain link) and sign and trees around the perimeter of the proposed auto repair site at East 12th Street and 11th Avenue (see February). They approved plans by William Nelson and Arthur Clark of Storek & Storek for storefronts at the Wilcox Block and its Annex at the southwest corner of 9th and Broadway, in the Old Oakland S-7 zone.

Board discussed status of design review for exterior alterations to Macky Hall at the California College of Arts and Crafts (5212 Broadway), where a stop work order was issued after construction began without required staff inspection: secretary Buckley was to investigate and report at the May meeting.

Rules and Procedures committee reported further thoughts on agenda mailing dates, designation of interior spaces, and possibility of the Board becoming a commission rather than an advisory board. Fundraising was discussed, for publishing landmarks posters or brochures. --Kathy Olson

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 June 16

Detroit of the West: Oakland's Auto Industry, 1911-1940. Exhibit, Oakland History Room, Main Library, 125 14th St., 2nd fl. Tue/Th 12-8:30, W/F 10-5:30, Sat 1-5:30. 273-3222.

Sun 7 May 1-6 pm

Ethnicity in California Agriculture: a Symposium. Western Jewish History Center, Judah Magnes Museum. Held at Krutch Theater, Clark Kerr Campus, UC Berkeley, 2601 Warring St. Reservations required. Free. Contact Magnes Museum, 849-2710.

Sat 13 May 10 am-noon

Public Workshop on Lake Merritt's Future. Parks & Rec./Am. Soc. of Landscape Architects. Manzanita Recreation Center, 2701 22nd Avenue. Samee Roberts 273-3090/Brooks Kolb 543-4664.

Sun 14 May - 20 May

Preservation Week, National Trust for Historic Preservation. Theme "Look Homeward, America."

Wed 17 May 7:30 pm

Jazz & Swing Music of the 1930s & Early 1940s, Jeffrey Tucker, Art Deco Society. SFJCC, California at Presidio, SF. \$3/\$5. 552-DECO.

Sun 21 May 12-5 pm

Julia Morgan House Tour. Oakland Heritage Alliance spring tour & reception. Reservations encouraged. \$12 OHA/\$14 general. OHA, 763-9218; Free tour for volunteers: call OHA.

Sun 21 May 7-9 pm

Public Workshop on Lake Merritt's Future. Parks & Rec./Am. Soc. of Landscape Architects. Lakeside Park Garden Center, 666 Bellevue Avenue. Samee Roberts 273-3090/Brooks Kolb 543-4664.

Wed 24 May 7:30 pm

Doing Local History: the Challenge and the Danger. Dr. Richard Orsi, Professor of History, Cal State U., Hayward. Oakland Heritage Alliance. Lake Park United Methodist Church, 281 Santa Clara at Elwood & Jean Streets. Refreshments. \$3/OHA, \$5/general. Contact OHA, 763-9218.

Fri 2 June-Sun 4 June 9-6, Sun 11-4

Berkeley Public Library Book Sale. Friends of BPL. Berkeley Main Library garden.

Fri 2 June-Sun 4 June 10-3

San Francisco Public Library Book Sale. Friends of SFPL. Fort Mason, Pier 3, SF. Free.

Fri 9 June evening

Cirque de Soiree, San Francisco Heritage's fundraising gala, details TBA

Fri 9 June - Sun 11 June

Festival at the Lake, Lakeside Park, entry on Bellevue. Community organizations, arts exhibits and performances, food. OHA will have a booth.

Fri 9 June - Sun 11 June

Art Deco Weekend By the Bay. Art Deco Society of Calif., 109 Minna #399, SF 94105, 552-DECO.

- Fri 8 pm-midnight, Preservation Awards Reception, City Club, Stock Exchange Tower, 155 Sansome, \$20
- Sat 10-12, Marina District Art Deco Walking Tour, meet cor. Chestnut & Fillmore, \$3/\$5.
- Sat 1-3, Pacific Heights Art Deco Walking Tour, meet cor. Gough & Sacramento, \$3/\$5.

- Sat 8:30-10:30 pm, Neon Bus Tour of SF at Night, led by Michael Crowe, meet at The Concourse, 8th & Brannan, reservations required, \$10/\$12.
- Sun 1-3, Downtown SF Art Deco Walking Tour, meet at 450 Sutter bet. Powell & Stockton, \$5/\$7.
- Sat 10 am-9 pm, Sun 11-5, West Coast's largest Art Deco Sale, lectures, films, displays. The Concourse, Showplace Square, 8th/Brannan, \$3/\$4.

Sat 10 June 1:30-3:30 pm

Treasure Island Museum Tour. Douglas Brookes, Curator. Oakland Heritage Alliance. Meet at the entrance to the Treasure Island Museum. Reservations required. \$3/OHA, \$5/General.

Fri 16 June 1-9 pm, Sat 17 June 9-5

4th Annual Genealogical Fair, St. Mary's Cathedral Conference Center, Gough & Geary, S.F. Classes & exhibits; admission fee plus \$3/class. Calif. Genealogical Society, 777-9936/283-0867.

Sat 24 June afternoon

Cohen House tour, lecture, and Victorian tea. \$20, reservations required. GraceAnn Walden, The Grand Tour Company, 654-8824.

& Sun afternoons, mid-July through August
OHA Neighborhood Walking Tours. Series of 12, details TBA, watch for announcement. 763-9218.

Sun 23 July 1-3 pm

Downtown Oakland Art Deco Walking Tour. 13th and Broadway. OHA/ADSC, \$3/\$5, 763-9218.

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; \$2/\$1, free first Sun.; 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.

McConaghy House. 102 year old farmhouse at 18701 Hesperian Blvd., Hayward. Tours Thurs.-Sun., 1-4, \$2/adult. Closed January. Info. 581-0223.

San Francisco Heritage weekly tours; \$3, info.441-3004.
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 Annalee Allen, 654-6791.
Preservation Action Committee: contact Carolyn Douthat, 763-5370, for time, place, and agenda.
Publications Committee, working on guidebook/history The Broadway Book: Fred Mitchell, 655-4920.

Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board. 2nd Monday, 4 pm, Room 211, City Hall. 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. City Clerk, 273-3611.



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.

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Oakland Heritage Alliance News

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OHA NEWS welcomes contributions--research projects large or small, historic photos, reports on preservation issues or events, etc. Contact Betty Marvin, 849-1959, Dean Yabuki, 832-5355, or OHA, 763-9218.

Back issues are available for \$2 from OHA.

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 1 to April 1) are as follows:

Barbara Bream, Wm. & Susan Vinella Brusher, Michael Caredis, Jane Dark, Arthur Dunlop, Nick Fales, Dan Fontes, M.C. Haug-Boone/A.R. Boone, John & Lisbeth Henning, Dian Hymer, Frank & Dona Irvin, Darcy Johnson, Jennifer & Randy Katz, Anne Lawrence/Paul Roose, Lois Lindsay, Nancy MacLeod, Pamela Magnuson-Peddle, Mary G. McDonald, Jon Norman, Bernice Quinn, Nelly Ren, Katherine Russell, Linda Skare, Nancy Ann Smith, Craig & Jill Vagt, and Lee Y. Woo.

Special thanks to members renewing at the sponsor level:

Ted Gallagher/Gallagher & Burk
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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.

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Preservation Action , Summer Tours , Development, Fund Raising , other

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- \$50 Organization (1 vote)
- \$100 Sponsor (1 vote)
- \$250 Patron (1 vote)
- \$ _____ Additional contribution

(Oakland History Room)

Oakland History Notes: Oakland's First Wood-Frame House

In the now distant winter of 1920, some members of Oakland's Rotary Club gathered about an aged home on the north side of East 8th Street to commemorate the city's first wood-framed house. A plaque was erected in the front yard which read "The first frame house in Oakland. Rear rooms built in 1849 by Moses Chase...front added in 1856."

Some among the gathered throng may have remembered Mr. Chase as a taciturn old man who tended apple orchards in the back of the house. None would have remembered him as a young man who, in 1849, left his native Massachusetts and his bride-to-be to seek his fortune in California's Gold Rush. Failing as a miner, he made his way to San Francisco in the winter of 1849 where he rigged up an old whale boat and set sail for the Oakland shore. Landing near the foot of present Broadway, he eventually pitched his tent at the foot of 7th Avenue. Pine and oak trees sprinkled the landscape, grass stood two feet high, and Moses was quite alone in his modest abode.

In early 1850, he was discovered by the Patten brothers who, like him, had come to California in quest of gold and finally sought fortune elsewhere. Mr. Chase joined forces with the Pattens to lease land from the Peralta family, who held the Oakland area under a Spanish grant. The Pattens and Chase became profitable farmers and some-



time in 1850 (the plaque exaggerated) Chase built his house of driftwood and ship timbers from the hulk of an abandoned vessel.

His fortune now secured, Moses returned to Massachusetts in 1857 to wed his waiting bride, Ellen Clinton, and bring her to his new home. Ellen died before he arrived, and, heartbroken, he returned to Oakland with his young son by a previous marriage. The area around the Chase home was now more richly settled, and soon a town was founded by the Pattens and Chase, called Clinton, in honor of Moses' late love.

Heavy in years and sorrow, Moses Chase died in 1891. His descendants lived in his house until, like its builder, it succumbed to old age, its plaque and timbers swept away for the expansion of a machine company in 1946. Today, the site of Mr. Chase's sad little house is part of the Laney College sports field. --William Sturm

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