

The Oakland Architecture of William H. Weeks

Not as well known in the architectural history of Oakland as was Julia Morgan, William H. Weeks was in his way the more important in the architectural history of California because of his many schools. Weeks was born in 1866 on Prince Edward Island, Canada, the eldest child of Richard and Margaret Weeks. His father was a carpenter-builder who moved frequently while plying his trade: to Denver, to Wichita, to Tacoma, and in 1891 to Oakland. In 1894 William left Oakland for Watsonville where he opened an office, and in 1898 his father joined him there, bringing along the rest of the family.

During those early years in Oakland, father and son engaged in a number of proj-

ects which are now purely of historical interest. They were honorably mentioned in the January 1896 California Architect and Building News article on the Sixth Ward School in Oakland, for which W.J. Cuthbertson was the architect:

"The Carpenter work was done substantially, conscientiously and carefully by R. Weeks and Son who have made a good reputation for themselves since they have settled in Oakland; they have been particularly successful in school house work, having only a short time ago completed the Redwood City High School. Besides their work in Oakland, Alameda and Berkeley....Mr. Weeks is a man thoroughly experienced in his business and thoroughly reliable. The firm has lately opened a shop in the Turn Verein Building on Webster street near Seventh, Oakland."

From 1894 to 1911 William Weeks lived and practiced in Watsonville, designing all kinds of buildings in all styles, not only for Watsonville but all over central Cali-

Towns all over California had schools and Carnegie libraries by Weeks. The Melrose Branch Library on Foothill, 1916, is an intact example. (Oakland History Room)



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fornia. His Mission Revival buildings are the most notable. Many of those buildings remain, the most important being the Casino and Natatorium at Santa Cruz, both extensively remodeled over the years. After four years in Palo Alto, Weeks returned to the East Bay in 1915. Here he resided until his death in 1936, until 1924 in Oakland and then in Piedmont where he built his own home at 800 Highland Avenue.

During his career, William Weeks maintained a number of offices. In 1905 he opened an office in San Francisco which gradually became his principal business address. The one at Watsonville was closed in 1913 when his brother joined him in the Bay Area. From 1924 to 1931 he had another office in Oakland and from 1926 to 1931 a third in San Jose. Operating three offices and employing as many as 53 draftsmen, during the twenties he had one of the largest architectural firms in the state. Specializing in schoolhouses, he became known even internationally for his work in that branch of architecture.

Almost every town and city in northern and central California had one or more of his buildings, typically a Carnegie library or a school constructed of reinforced concrete. Oakland was no exception. Because the stark, massive walls of reinforced concrete were conducive to the Spanish Colonial style in vogue during the 1920s, Weeks used it often, with Churriguresque ornamentation as in his First Christian

Church at 29th Street and Fairmount. As in Watsonville and the surrounding Pajaro Valley, the projects here are illustrative of the many kinds of buildings his firm designed.

The Weeks Securities Corporation, the financial arm of the company, sponsored a number of hotels in Oakland during the twenties. The Leamington on Franklin Street, converted recently to an office building, was for more than fifty years one of Oakland's major hotels. The Lake Merritt on Madison Street was planned originally to have a 14-story tower but that was never built. His Jackson Hotel is currently the Lakehurst Residence at 1569 Jackson Street. And the Piedmont Hotel at 3451 Piedmont Avenue has been since World War II part of the Kaiser School of Nursing.

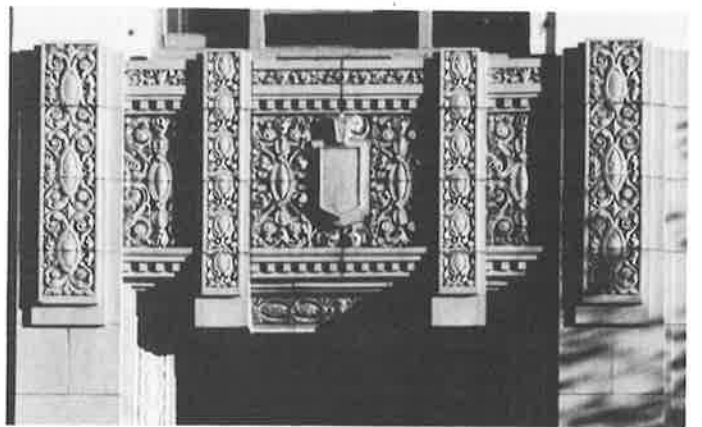
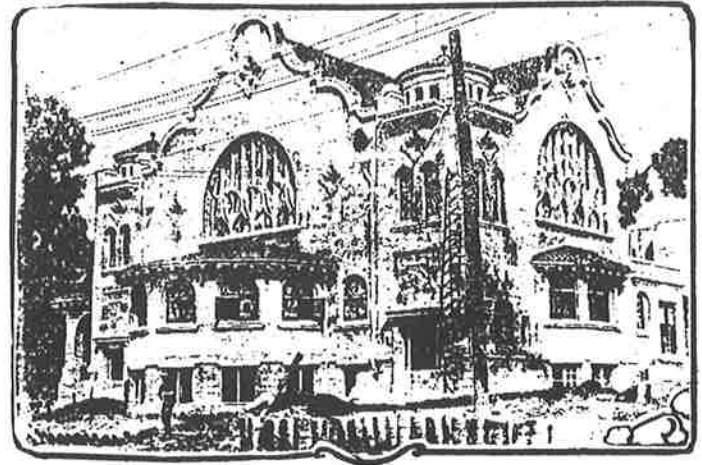
The California Building at 1736-42 Franklin was built as an office building but it also accommodated the ballroom and kitchen of the adjacent Leamington Hotel. The East Oakland Hospital at 2648 East 14th Street and 27th Avenue was planned to be in the Spanish Colonial style but was constructed in what might be termed Mickey Mouse Gothic. The Melrose Public Library at 4805 Foothill Boulevard has not been altered since its dedication in 1916, and is the oldest branch library in the Oakland system. The Sherman Clay building at 2135-47 Broadway has been extensively remodeled from its 1919 design, but the original brick facade is probably intact behind the ornamental



William Weeks (1866-1936) and two of his major Oakland buildings. Portrait is from a 1910s "mug book," *Men Who Made San Francisco*. First Christian Church (left), 1928, richly ornamented inside and out, at 29th and Fairmount. Right, Leamington Hotel at 19th and Franklin, 1925-26, built soon after Weeks opened his Oakland office in 1924. (Phil Bellman)

Weeks's 1910 and 1928 buildings for the First Christian Church, the older on Grand Avenue in the Mission Revival style, and its Spanish Colonial replacement on Fairmount (OHR)

Deco and Churrigueresque ornament on Weeks's Lake Merritt Hotel (1800 Madison St., 1927, above) and Leamington Hotel (1800 Franklin, 1925-26, below). Baroque-inspired work in cast concrete or terra cotta lent itself well to massive reinforced concrete buildings of the era. (Phil Bellman)



screen. His 1910 Christian Church was demolished in 1928, when the same congregation had Weeks build them a new church at 29th and Fairmount. The Mission Revival style building was described in the Oakland Tribune of July 3, 1910, as "One of the Most Pleasing Church Buildings Erected in Oakland in Recent Times."

Some other Weeks buildings in Oakland have not yet been fully documented. In 1891 there was a residence for Helen P. Flint that may be the house at 568 Fairmount, significant as Weeks' first design. In 1919 the Bank of San Leandro proposed to build a business block in Elmhurst, with a bank and stores downstairs and apartments upstairs, and Weeks was named as architect. In 1922 there were an addition to the Oakland High School as well as an auditorium for the Fruitvale Christian Church, since moved to 5410 Fleming Avenue. In 1925 he built some shops for himself, perhaps 4241-51 Piedmont Avenue. In 1927 he had three projects in East Oakland: a theater, possibly the Diamond or the Eastmont, both closed in the 1950s; stores on Havenscourt, perhaps at the southwest corner of Beck; and a three story school for the Lockwood District. Lastly, in 1932 he had the contract to build a market for Fred H. Morgan on Franklin Street; this building seems to have been demolished for the freeway.

With the present avid interest in those architects who practiced in California prior to World War II, William Henry Weeks has been rediscovered. But he will always remain a somewhat controversial and enigmatic figure. Controversial because many of his buildings, as those in Oakland, have little architectural merit; enigmatic because finding information about him is exceedingly consumptive of time--by way of illustration, of a supposed 50 churches by him, only 10 have been identified.

--Charles S. Marinovich

Charles Marinovich is originally from Watsonville. Curious why references to W.H. Weeks are so scarce, he has spent more than a decade collecting information on him.

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.

■ EARTHQUAKE UPDATE

At press time, a month after the event, we still have very incomplete information on the future of buildings damaged in the earthquake of October 17. Since City Hall is closed, it has been difficult to locate officials to find out which buildings have been deemed unsafe, and to find out what criteria and procedures will be used with respect to demolitions.

Certain important structures appear to have suffered little damage, among them the Civic Center Post Office, the Camron-Stanford House, the Fox Oakland, the Floral Depot, old University High, and most of the Storek and Storek Victorian Row project.

Of greatest concern among those buildings reported damaged are City Hall, the Broadway Building at San Pablo and Broadway, the Southern Pacific train station, the Charles Greene Library, and Emporium Capwell's. Swan's Market and the Oakland Hotel, both damaged, apparently are being repaired.

The fate of City Hall is still not clear. The city has called in the structural engineer who evaluated the building for a 1979 seismic and engineering report, and his findings will be presented to council by mid-December. Federal emergency relief money will be available to cover some of the repair or replacement costs, and FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) inspectors are reviewing the damage to determine the extent of federal coverage.

The Southern Pacific station at 16th and Wood Streets has been closed, and Amtrak is operating a station out of temporary quarters. Southern Pacific had already planned to sell the building when Amtrak moved its operations to Jack London Waterfront, and now that it is damaged, there is some question about whether S.P. will be willing to repair it. Efforts are being made to convince S.P. to hold off on any decision to demolish, so that a careful evaluation of the building can be made.

The greatest threat to historic buildings may not come from city-ordered demolitions, but from demolition by private owners. In order to assist in getting information to owners of damaged buildings, the Oakland Preservation Assistance Team, a coalition including representatives from the AIA, OHA, California Preservation Foundation, and the National Trust, has been meeting on a regular basis. Architects and engineers have volunteered to assist property owners in evaluating damage, and to recommend engineers and contractors. An information packet is available to concerned owners, and may be obtained from the East Bay Chapter of the AIA, 464-3600. The AIA and OHA co-sponsored an earthquake workshop for the public on Nov. 18, which offered practical advice on repairs and preventive measures for wood frame structures.

Efforts are also being made to convince the City Council to adopt a clear policy that wherever possible historic structures should be repaired rather than demolished, and to insure that the procedures adopted



16th Street Station: earthquake has added to the questions hanging over this landmark's future. (Phil Bellman)

Hollow terra cotta pieces popped when twisted or battered, as at the Broadway Building (top; 1907-08, Llewellyn B. Dutton) and YMCA/Hotel Hamilton (1909-15, William C. Hays). Face brick separated from inner layers of brick at the Clay Building, 1001 Clay (second from bottom; built 1903-04) and from wooden base of C.M. MacGregor's 1908 brick-veneered Madison Park Apts. (Betty Marvin, Gary Knecht, Phil Bellman)

by the city are geared in that direction.

OHA has information on federal relief assistance and local resources, and will try to keep up to date on how city government is functioning. Call the office at 763-9218, Annalee Allen at 654-6791, or Carolyn Douthat at 763-5370.

On a positive note, ferry service to San Francisco is operating from the foot of Broadway. Weekend service is hourly, and every half hour during weekday non-commute hours. The fare is \$5 round trip. Enjoy it while you can! --Carolyn Douthat

■ EARTHQUAKE RESPONSE

Approximately 90% of Oakland's landmark buildings came through the earthquake unscathed. That's the good news. The bad news is that the 10% that did sustain damage will have to be evaluated carefully in the coming weeks and months. Some of Oakland's best known buildings did suffer damage. City Hall, the imposing classical municipal symbol with its ornate clock tower, has been vacated, displacing city staff. The beloved Paramount Theater sustained multiple cracks to the interior plaster, which theater expert Steve Levin says shows that the building responded the way it should, but which will be costly and painstaking to repair. The 16th Street Amtrak Station which has been called "an outstanding example of 20th century classicism in railroad architecture" is closed pending evaluation. The Emporium Capwell store suffered heavy damage to the terra cotta on the facade, though published reports say the damage is not irreversible. The 118-year-old Mills Hall at Mills College also suffered considerable harm. And the elegant Beaux Arts Charles Greene Library which anchors the Preservation Park Historic District at 14th Street and Martin Luther King Way has been declared unsafe.

Three historic central Oakland churches, St. Francis de Sales Cathedral, the Romanesque style Sacred Heart Church at 40th Street and Martin Luther King Way, and



First Unitarian Church at 14th and Castro, all suffered visible masonry damage.

Housing advocates have been especially concerned over the evacuation of a number of older residence hotels and apartment buildings. Among those declared unsafe are the Madison Park Apartments at 9th and Oak Streets (listed on the National Register of Historic Places), the Oaks Hotel, and the Hotel Hamilton (the old YMCA). The Hotel Oakland, recently refurbished for senior housing, suffered extensive damage to the west wing. Repair work on the Hotel Oakland is already underway; plans for other buildings are still unannounced.

Owners of all these buildings will have to make decisions in the coming months which will have significant impact on Oakland's built environment. Important examples of the city's architectural heritage may be at risk unless sufficient economic incentives to repair them are identified and made available. Even though the majority of the city's designated landmarks and historic districts withstood the earthquake, many buildings which are potential landmarks have been affected. A building does not have to be a designated landmark to be "historic." According to Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey coordinator Gary

Knecht, 60 to 70% of Oakland's building stock is older than 1945. In some areas, such as West Oakland (which may well feel the most lasting effects of the quake), the percentage is closer to 80%. Any building of this vintage contributes to the historic fabric of our city. Every demolition is a loss to this fabric.

--Annalee Allen

■ PRESERVATION ASSISTANCE TEAM

Shortly after the earthquake, OHA's Preservation Action Committee met with other concerned individuals to develop strategies to assess the quake's impact on the community's older buildings. OPAT, the Oakland Preservation Assistance Team, is an ad hoc committee formed in response to the emergency. The group consists of individuals from OHA, Oakland Design Advocates, AIA, and city staff. In addition representatives from the National Trust and California Preservation Foundation have contributed much needed advice and support. The group has been meeting frequently at the East Bay AIA chapter office downtown.

OPAT has focused on several concerns. First was the need to establish contact with city officials to learn what proced-



Hotel Oakland, just after the earthquake (left) and as repair work begins (middle) illustrates the extensive and costly work that may be needed on many buildings. General Electric's Mazda Lamp Works (Austin Co., 1910-17), right, was an early factory in West Oakland on Campbell near the 16th and Wood train station. (Betty Marvin, Phil Bellman, Muffy Kibbey)



ures and policies are in effect. Since these officials have been displaced from City Hall, contact has sometimes been difficult. The team obtained lists of damaged buildings and identified property owners. A packet of information (collected from various sources including the National Trust and CPF) was assembled and sent out to these owners. A further effort to reach affected property owners was the November 18 workshop on earthquake damage in smaller woodframe buildings. The Oakland Museum offered the use of the James Moore Theater free of charge, as a public service. Over 300 people attended the session, where a panel of experts answered practical questions on construction and financing.

There has been a great deal of interest on the part of the media on the fate of the damaged buildings. Members of OPAT have been fielding inquiries from reporters. Among the questions most frequently asked: what is the meaning of the red inspection tags? Press accounts and popular rumor assumed these buildings were "condemned." Assistance team members issued clarification statements explaining that a red tag meant that preliminary inspections indicated there might be significant structural problems, requiring more extensive evalua-

tion and correction. Many or most of these red tagged buildings will be able to be stabilized, repaired, and used again. Demolition should be the last action considered.

Data from the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey has been invaluable to OPAT and city staff in determining which damaged buildings are landmarks or historically significant. Gary Knecht, coordinator of the Survey, organized tours of damaged areas so teams of experts from the National Park Service, State Office of Historic Preservation, and National Trust could evaluate the buildings first hand. When reports of their findings are made available in the coming months, they should provide valuable expert backup to claims that most of the affected structures are repairable.

Some members of the Assistance Team have volunteered to visit damaged buildings and advise owners. Others are exploring possible legal avenues should precipitous demolition requests occur. The OPAT committee plans to meet weekly for the foreseeable future to act as a clearinghouse for information. Any interested person is welcome to attend. Contact Larry Mortimer, chair, for meeting times (451-5954), or call the AIA office (464-3600).

--Annalee Allen



Skyscrapers, steeples (St. Francis de Sales, 1891-93), and chimneys suffered when tossed from side to side. Chimney damage (center; Cleveland Ave.) and cripple wall failure (right; I.M. Wentworth house, 1877, in West Oakland) were major residential hazards. OHA/AIA workshop on Nov. 18 explained weak links in older houses, and how to strengthen them. (Phil Bellman)



■ OLD OAKLAND ALIVE AND WELL

If it's been awhile since you visited Old Oakland at 9th and Broadway, an excursion to the historic district is in order. The Victorian era buildings came through the recent earthquake with very little damage. Those who appreciate the uniqueness of this 19th century commercial streetscape can take heart in the fact that, although the downtown Broadway area has suffered, Old Oakland is intact and functioning.

The Washington Inn at 495 10th Street was full the night of the earthquake, according to owner-manager Ken Ruppenthal. For those who elected to stay put rather than go home that night, the Inn was convenient lodging.

Despite the conspicuous rubble in front, Swan's Market came through the quake well, says Priscilla Coe, assistant marketing manager. The 70-year-old building has been under renovation for the past two years. When it reopens, as the Central FreeMarket, it will be a major food marketplace with a wide selection of fresh produce and foods from around the world. The terra cotta urns atop the entrance at 901 Washington will be repaired and replaced. Earthquake repair is not expected to greatly delay the targeted June 1990 opening.

The Cassandra Kersting Gallery was scheduled to open four days after the quake. Despite loss of four sculptures, the gallery opened on time. Upcoming shows include a group of sculptors from Long Beach, Bay Area glass artists, and four Polish emigre painters. The Gallery is located at 471 9th Street, between Broadway and Washington, open Monday through Friday 10 to 5.

Another new business in the area is Bay Bridge Books at 901 Broadway. Architecture lovers should investigate Oakland's newest bookstore on December 14, 8 pm, at a talk and booksigning by Mark Wilson. Mark, author of *A Living Legacy: Historic Architecture of the East Bay*, will show slides of earthquake damage to historical and landmark buildings, and discuss "Historic Preservation After the Quake." OHA members can plan to stop by Mark's lecture after the OHA holiday party that evening (5-7:30, Camron-Stanford House). For other events at Bay Bridge Books, call 835-5845.

Well-known Oakland landmark Ratto's Int-

ernational Grocers is open and busy catering to holiday needs, says manager Martin Durante. The owners were in the midst of extensive renovation when the quake hit. The building was closed for three weeks. Scaffolding will remain in place as work continues on repairing millwork and windows and restoring the cornice (see Landmarks Board report). Mr. Durante has applied for FEMA funds to repair structural cracks and can now do seismic strengthening as well.

Gulf Coast Restaurant and Oyster Bar, Pacific Coast Brewing Company, and Fana Ethiopian Restaurant are additional excellent reasons why a visit to Old Oakland is a must.

--Annalee Allen



After years of work, storefronts are unveiled and new businesses are moving into the Old Oakland-Victorian Row project. Bay Bridge Books, at 901 Broadway, hosts preservation lecture by Mark Wilson on Dec. 14. (Phil Bellman)



■ NEW PROPOSAL FOR THE FOX

Allen Michaan, president of the Oakland based Renaissance Rialto movie theaters, recently proposed a new development plan for the Fox Oakland and the city owned Paramount theaters. Michaan was responsible for the expansion and renovation of the Grand Lake Theatre and, most recently, the grand re-opening of the Orinda Theatre. A great admirer of the fantastic in movie houses, Michaan has long been interested in the future of the Fox.

According to Michaan, the Redevelopment Agency sees the Fox as a focal point for the proposed retail center. Michaan's proposal for the theater, which is being reviewed by OEDE staff for presentation to the Redevelopment Agency, would involve city acquisition and restoration of the Fox for use as a performing arts center, and leasing the Paramount to Renaissance Rialto for use as a full time movie theater complex. In addition to the main theater, Michaan proposes the addition of four new theaters on a vacant parcel next to the Paramount which would be connected to the lobby by two new doorways in the lobby wall.

As outlined in the proposal, moving performing arts from the Paramount to the Fox would greatly expand the potential for live theater events in Oakland. The Paramount has been unable to attract large theater productions, in part because of the size of its stage and off-stage facilities, and is booked for less than half the nights per year. The Fox, built for both movie and theater use, has one of the largest stage facilities in Northern California, larger than those of San Francisco's major theaters.

The combination of live events at the 3000 seat Fox and five movie theaters at the Paramount could make the Uptown a regional destination, which would in turn support restaurant and retail businesses. If restored as a performing arts center, Michaan believes, the Fox could be the key in bringing the downtown to life at night.

His views are supported by a 1985 study on the economic impact of the Playhouse Square Center Redevelopment Project in downtown Cleveland. The analysis of that project, which involved restoration of four theaters,

found that in addition to the money generated by ticket sales, the center created a focal point of economic activity in the downtown and increased the number of new businesses, attracted by both the theater audiences and the increased attractiveness of the area. The positive effects attributed to the project included increased tax revenues for the city, increased rental receipts and occupancy levels in the surrounding buildings, and an influx of dollars from outside the immediate area.

--Carolyn Douthat

■ OLD GROVE STREET CAMPUS

The Environmental Impact Report for the proposed shopping center development on the site of old University High has been put on hold pending the decision of the Redevelopment Agency on whether to reenter an Exclusive Right to Negotiate agreement with North Oakland Redevelopment Associates. Since last September, when the previous agreement expired, the Office of Economic Development and Employment has been negotiating with NORA on changes to the project. At a Redevelopment committee meeting late in September, Redevelopment Agency members considered a staff report which offered two alternatives for the project. The first would be a new agreement with NORA, at a projected cost of \$800,000, which would include requirements that the developer prepare mitigation alternatives to their proposal for the site, and consider site plan revisions. The second alternative proposed that the site be declared surplus property, and be sold through the city's real estate division auction procedures.

Public testimony at the hearing included several members of the North Oakland community who would like to see the existing buildings saved. OHA wrote to the committee, urging that they postpone a decision until other alternatives which would retain the building are fully explored. Going public for the first time, representatives of Children's Hospital presented a new plan for the site which would involve Children's as the developer and main tenant of the existing buildings. According to Jim Ishimaru, architect of the plan, Children's would retain the main building and renovate it for

offices, a senior center, and day care. The project would also include housing along Dover, to be developed separately.

There were no representatives from NORA at the meeting. OEDE staff, however, indicated that any proposal which did not involve NORA as developer would require issuance of a new Request for Qualifications.

NORA's original proposal projected Children's as the main office tenant. At the suggestion of Councilmember Marge Gibson-Haskell, in whose district the project is located, the committee voted to postpone a decision on the matter to give NORA and Children's an opportunity to meet and review the situation in light of the new proposal. Staff was also directed to identify sources of funding for the \$800,000 in additional costs associated with a new agreement with NORA.

--Carolyn Douthat

■ LIBERTY HALL DEDICATION

Radiant in its splendid restoration and surrounded by an outpouring of West Oakland neighbors, Liberty Hall, 1485 8th St., was dedicated and opened to the public October 29 as a community center for the West of Cypress area.

Undaunted by the debris of the fallen freeway just blocks away, the building stands as a tribute to the hard work of Jubilee West and the community in preserving this historic Victorian, a National Register and City Landmark built in 1877. Through the years it served as the headquarters of Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association and Father Divine's Peace Mission. Abandoned since the 1970s, the building was slated for demolition when Jubilee West purchased it in 1986.

Symbolic of the spirit of Liberty Hall is the flag flying from its rooftop, a Tree of Life flag made by neighborhood women to signify the hope and life they see in the rebuilding of this hall.

Under the guidance of its founders and directors, Sister Joanna Bramble and Sister Pat Sears, Jubilee West has restored 47 units of affordable housing in the West of Cypress area. It will continue its program of restoring houses in West Oakland from new offices in Liberty Hall.

--Helen Lore

■ PRESERVATION OF KING ESTATE PARK

On July 18 the City Council unanimously passed an ordinance to rezone the city-owned property known as King Estate Park, the open space west of Highway 580 near Keller Avenue (see OHA News Winter 1988-89, Spring 1989). In the Future Land Use map of the Oakland Comprehensive (General) Plan, the King Estate was designated as "park, recreation or natural area or watershed." However the zoning for the area was R-30, the one family residential zone.

The City Planning Commission recommended to the Council that the land be rezoned to bring it into consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. Since the zoning regulations do not have a specific category for parks, the King Estate Park was placed into the "unzoned" category which has been used for other parkland, such as Lakeside Park, Mosswood Park, and Joaquin Miller Park. The dedication of the King Estate Park as open space parkland was held on October 28, 1989. Neighborhood groups who worked on the rezoning and dedication are now concentrating their efforts on preserving 58 acres adjacent to the park which are owned by the Trust for Public Land.

--Barbara Sutherland



Mayor Wilson plants a tree at the dedication of the new King Estate Park, on October 28. (Phil Bellman)

OHA Update

■ PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The 1989 annual meeting was held October 26 at the Koncepts Gallery. Movie theater historian Steve Levin gave an informative, entertaining slide lecture. Three new OHA board members were elected--architect Alan Dreyfuss, house-inspector and city-watcher Jane Spangler, and neighborhood activist Barbara Sutherland. We welcome their input and talents in the coming year.

The three outgoing board members have contributed greatly to OHA. Mary Jane McConville chaired two successful house tours, Crocker Highlands in 1988 and Juila Morgan in 1989. Under Mary Jane's leadership the house tour has become the major fundraising event on the OHA calendar.

Julie Barron joined the board in 1985 and has served as vice president and secretary. She worked on the program committee, and her graphic talents set the style of OHA's announcements and flyers. Julie's sketches of the homes were a distinguishing feature of the house tour booklets.

A board member since 1983, Les Hausrath helped guide the organization through a period of extended growth. His chief goals while president were to establish an office and select a staff person. Realization of these goals has made OHA a more highly visible and responsive preservation organization. Les intends to continue advising the board, and hopes that creation of a second staff position will be possible in the near future.

Officers for the coming year are president, Annalee Allen; vice president, Sally Nielsen; treasurer, Bill McLetchie; and secretary, Fred Mitchell.

In what has become an annual tradition, the November meeting was held at the Cohen House. New board members got an opportunity to see this important Oakland landmark and OHA project first hand. Fortunately the Cohen House appears to have suffered no damage in the earthquake.

The earthquake and possible OHA responses were the main topic of discussion at the November meeting. Sally Nielsen and Annalee Allen reported on OPAT--Oakland Preservation Assistance Team--meetings which they have been attending since shortly after the

quake (see Briefing). The board decided on two main courses of action. First, the board adopted a resolution modeled on one passed in San Francisco, calling on City Councilors to urge the Public Works and Planning Departments to consult with preservation groups and qualified design professionals for technical advice on historically significant buildings damaged in the quake. The resolution also called on the city to do what is possible to reinforce and restore these damaged buildings.

Secondly, the board moved to join the East Bay Chapter of the AIA in holding a free public workshop on earthquake damage in older wood-frame buildings, buildings which are the backbone of Oakland's neighborhoods. This workshop drew a full house to the Oakland Museum theater on Nov. 18 to learn how earthquakes cause damage, what the weakest points in a building are, how to reinforce cripple walls and foundations, and much more. Many thanks to the panel--architect Larry Mortimer, Prof. Randolph Langenbach, engineer Gene St. Onge, contractor Dan Larsen, and banker Joel Luebkehan.

It is clear that Oakland will be experiencing the effects of the earthquake for months to come. Members of the OHA board will continue to monitor developments and will keep members informed on the progress of rebuilding. Responding effectively to the situation poses a significant challenge to this year's OHA board.

--Annalee Allen

■ OLD HOUSE JOURNAL OFFER

Old House Journal, a widely respected bi-monthly magazine with information about the history, repair, restoration, and decoration of old houses, is available to OHA members at a special price of \$16 a year (regularly \$21). It is also an excellent source book for authentic replicas and decorating materials from the past.

As an added bonus, OHA keeps half of the proceeds of the subscriptions it obtains with orders of 12 or more.

If you live in an old house or apartment, consider this offer and move quickly. DEADLINE for subscriptions is December 12. Send a check to the OHA office, P.O. Box 12425, Oakland, CA 94604 by that date. You can also renew under this plan. --Helen Lore



■ HOLIDAY PARTY CELEBRATES SURVEY

This year OHA members and friends are invited to rediscover the holiday charm of the Camron-Stanford House. OHA's holiday party is Thursday evening, December 14, 5 to 7:30. Stop by for a glass of eggnog in the elegant dining room, and view the old-fashioned Christmas tree in the parlor. We have been fortunate to have our office at this 1876 Italianate landmark for 3 years now. For those who haven't yet been to the office, this is a good opportunity to leaf through past issues of the News and see the resource materials we've collected, including the 27 volumes of the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey.

At this year's party OHA fetes the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey and its volunteers and staff who have labored these past 10 years to record the city's historic resources. The Survey proved invaluable in the first days after the quake as inspectors fanned out across the city to examine damage. Gary Knecht, Betty Marvin, Gail Lombardi, Donnalynn Polito, Sylvia Augustus, and Aicha Woods assembled survey data on the older buildings which appeared on the damaged structures lists, helping city officials and assistance teams to further evaluate vulnerable landmarks.

Over the years a large number of dedicated volunteers and interns have assisted Gary and past coordinators Laura Pan Niebling and Melinda Young Frye. We hope as many as possible will come to the party. The Survey has completed the Central District and Adams Point neighborhood, and is wrapping up work on the Prescott neighborhood of West Oakland. Eventually the entire city will be covered, and much is still to be learned about Oakland's heritage. Volunteers are always welcome to join in the task. This is a fine opportunity for amateur sleuths and lovers of old buildings to uncover exciting facts about Oakland's past.

Much of the material OHA uses for programs, walks, house tours, and News articles is gleaned from Survey sources. OHA is proud to be a co-sponsor of the Survey. Come to the party on December 14 and see why supporting the Survey increases awareness of Oakland's heritage.

--Annalee Allen

■ ITALIAN EXHIBIT AT HISTORY ROOM

Oakland's great multi-cultural history includes a rich Italian heritage, beginning with the pioneers who settled in West Oakland in the 1850s, through the growth of the city's "Little Italy" in the Temescal neighborhood at the turn of the century. The Oakland Public Library's Oakland History Room celebrates this heritage with an exhibit "Gli Italiani di Oakland: Oakland's Italian Community." Featuring historical photographs, newspaper articles, and other memorabilia, the display focuses on the full panorama of local Italian life, from churches, schools, and businesses, to social and family life, from the city's beginnings to the present.

The exhibit can be seen at the Oakland Main Library's Oakland History Room, 125 14th Street, from January 9 through March 30. Hours of the Oakland History Room are: Tuesday and Thursday, noon to 8:30 pm, Wednesday and Friday, 10 am to 5:30 pm, and Saturday, 1 to 5:30 pm. Call 273-3222 for further information. --William Sturm

City Landmarks Board Actions

The Oakland Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board meets on the second Monday of each month. Meetings are open to the public. Designation of landmarks is recommended by the Board to the 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 15 years since the Board was created. For future meeting times and locations, call City Planning, 451-6210 or 451-6321.

AUGUST

Board reviewed a proposal from Gestalt Development Corporation to construct an office building at 661-63 12th Street (SW corner of Martin Luther King Jr. Way) on the site of the burned and demolished Herick house in the Preservation Park S-7 zone. Board voted not to oppose new construction provided that it conforms to the principles of Victorian architecture in the surrounding neighborhood, and that the applicant clarifies the legality of building a new structure at that site.

Board reviewed possibilities for plaques to be placed on city landmarks, considering size, design concepts, materials (not

bronze, because of theft problems), and lettering. Annalee Allen, OHA president, outlined plans for a poster listing all city landmarks; a letter from the City Manager offered a \$2500 matching grant, and the Board of Realtors and OHA offered fundraising assistance. Parliamentary procedure for Board meetings was discussed.

SEPTEMBER

Gestalt Development had withdrawn the design review application for a new office building at the Herrick House site (661-63 12th Street in Preservation Park) because of changes involving a new financial partner, Bramalea Pacific.

Board recommended design review approval for Holy Names College to reconstruct the front yard area of the George McCrea House, a city landmark at the south corner of the campus, leaving landscaping details to be worked out with Planning staff.

Secretary Chris Buckley reported that a draft of the new Preservation Element for the city's General Plan would be prepared by late October. Its detailed and significant policy directions included controls covering three classes of landmarks, demolition and alteration controls, and limited controls confined to S-7 zones (historic districts) and "heritage properties" (comparable to properties on the Study List).

Chair Anthony Pegram reported on the West Oakland Redevelopment Plan and the need for the Board to appoint a representative to the committee being formed, in view of the important historic buildings in that area.

Boardmember Bobbi Armstrong reported on designs for landmark plaques (see August), and a special meeting on parliamentary procedure was scheduled for Sept. 22.

OCTOBER

Board rejected application of Admiral Telecommunications to legalize two existing public telephones at the Grand Lake Theatre (3200 Grand Avenue), a city landmark. The motion included a provision (or reminder) that anything placed on a landmark must come to the Board for review.

Board approved changes to previously approved design by Robert Berber & Sons for construction of an addition to 464 7th Street, Mi Rancho, formerly Central Pacific Railroad Depot, a city landmark. Windows in



Ratto's, at 9th and Washington: Board reviews plans for restoration of the cornice. Signs and storefronts in Old Oakland occupy much of the Board's attention, as the historic district comes to commercial life. (Phil Bellman)

the new design will match those on the existing building.

Board approved application for Storek & Storek to construct storefronts at 901 Broadway (Delger Block), an Oakland landmark; temporary approval was given for projecting signs, and the applicant was to return in November with plans for uniform signage (Spees and Pegram opposed).

Postponed action on application of Dale Meyer & Associates to construct a new four-story residential-commercial building on a vacant lot at 514 7th Street (NW corner of Washington) at the entrance to the Old Oakland District; applicant was to return in November with revised renderings.

Board approved plans by Martin Durante to construct a rear parking area and plaza, restore the previously removed main cornice, alter storefronts, and change paint colors at 821 Washington Street (SW corner of 9th), the Gooch Block/G.B.Ratto Co., a city landmark in the Old Oakland S-7 zone. Details involving security and design were to be worked out with staff, and unresolved issues brought to the Board.

Discussion of issues relating to the Historic Preservation Task Force was set for the November agenda. OHA and Board of Realtors reported inability to raise \$2500 matching funds to publish landmark posters before the first of the year (see August).

NOVEMBER

Following the earthquake, there was no November meeting. --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 Sun 17 Dec

"Christmas at Dunsmuir," 19th annual Christmas open house. Mansion tour, carriage rides, boutique, etc. Fri., Sat., Sun. 10-7. \$9 general, \$8 senior, \$5 jr, under 6 free. Dunsmuir House, 2960 Peralta Oaks Court, Oakland, 430-1426.

through Sun 7 Jan. 1990

"Fit for America: Health, Fitness, Sport and American Society, 1830-1940." Exhibit, History Special Gallery, Oakland Museum, 1000 Oak St. Free. 273-3401.

through Sun 28 Jan. 1990

"Birds of South San Francisco Bay Wetlands." Exhibit, Natural Sciences Special Gallery, Oakland Museum. Free

Sat 9 Dec.-Sun 25 Feb.

"Out of Work and On the Move: Photographs and Works on Paper by Dorothea Lange and Maynard Dixon from the 1930s." Exhibit, Oakes Gallery, Oakland Museum. Free.

Sun 3 Dec. 3:00 pm

"O California!: 19th and Early 20th Century California Landscapes and Observations." Lecture and book signing, Kevin Starr, Paul Mills, and Stephen Vincent. James Moore Theater, Oakland Museum. Free. 273-3401.

Tues 12 Dec. 9 am-4:30 pm

Peninsula holiday tour led by Alexander Gautraud. Oakland Museum Association History Guild. Transportation and lunch included. Reservations required, limited to 30 people. \$31.50 OMA member, \$34 general. Contact Helen Tryon, 232-2964.

Tues 12 Dec. time TBA

"The Cold War and Homosexuals in Australia." Gary Wotherspoon, professor of economics, University of Sydney. San Francisco Bay Area Gay & Lesbian Historical Society. UC Berkeley campus, location & cost TBA.

Thurs 14 Dec. Noon

Guided tour of Old Oakland. Oakland Museum Association History Guild. Meet in the Lecture Hall, Oakland Museum, 1000 Oak St. Free.

Thurs 14 Dec. 5:30-7:30 pm

Oakland Heritage Alliance Holiday Party, Camron-Stanford House, 1418 Lakeside Drive at 14th St., Oakland. Reservations required, \$3/person. OHA, Box 12425, Oakland 94604; 763-9218.

Thurs 14 Dec. 8:00 pm

"Preservation After the Earthquake." Slide lecture and book signing by Mark A. Wilson, author of "A Living Legacy." Bay Bridge Books, 901 Broadway, in the Old Oakland project. Free. 835-5845.

Fri 15 Dec. 6-9 pm

Holiday Party, Berkeley Architectural Heritage and Berkeley Historical Society. McCreary Greer House, 2318 Durant, Berkeley. Free/no-host bar. 841-2242.

Fri 15 Dec. 7-8 pm

"How to Paint Victorian Houses." Lecture and book signing, Michael Larson. Berkeley Architectural Heritage. Berkeley City Club, 3215 Durant, Berkeley. Reservations required, \$5/person. BAHA, 841-2242.

opens Tues 9 Jan, through Fri 30 March

"Gli Italiani di Oakland," exhibit, Oakland History Room, Oakland Public Library, 125 14th St., Tu & Th 12-8:30, W & F 10-5:30, Sat 1-5:30. Free. 273-3222.

January 1990 TBA (rescheduled from Nov.)



"Back On Track: Oakland's Early Transportation Systems." Ted Wurm, railroad historian. Oakland Heritage Alliance. Concepts Cultural Gallery, 480 3rd St., Oakland. \$5 OHA, \$7 general. OHA, Box 12425, Oakland 94604; 763-9218.

Sat 20 Jan. 10:00 am & noon

Pacific Heights House Tour, San Francisco Heritage. Prepaid reservations required, space limited. Cost TBA. SF Heritage, 2007 Franklin, SF 94109; 441-3000.

Sat 3 Feb. 10:00 am

New Year's Chinatown Walk, Lecture, and Lunch. San Francisco Heritage. Prepaid reservations required; space limited. Cost TBA. SF Heritage, 2007 Franklin St., SF 94109; 441-3000.

Sat-Sun 3-4 March

Annual Oakland Museum White Elephant Sale. Oakland Museum Association. 265 Hegenberger Road, Oakland (below Nimitz Freeway) Free.

Thurs 22 March 8:30 am-4:30 pm

"From Willis Polk to Frank Lloyd Wright: Filoli and the Hanna Honeycomb House Tour." History Guild, Oakland Museum Association. Includes transportation and lunch. Reservations required; limited to 36 people. \$36.50 OMA/\$39 general. Contact Helen Tryon, 232-2964.

Thurs-Sun 26-29 April

California State Historic Preservation Conference. California Preservation Foundation. San Francisco location and cost TBA. Contact CPF, 1615 Broadway, Suite 705, Oakland 94612; 763-0972.

Regularly Scheduled Tours

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.

Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board. 2nd Monday, 4pm;

City Planning Commission. Alternate Wednesdays, 3:30 pm;

Call temporary City Planning numbers, 451-6210 and 451-6321, for date, time, place, agenda.

City Council. Tuesday evenings, 7:30, Lakeside Garden Center.



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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Annalee Allen, Carolyn Douthat, Dean Yabuki

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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 (July 1 to September 30) are as follows:

Glenna Barrette, Mike Bradley, John Brennan, Alice Dediu, Louise DeRocco, Carol Doty, Riley Doty, Frances Duffy, Anna Edwards, Helen Fleck, Thomas Fleischauer, Nat & Marilyn Goldhaber, James Gormley, Robert & Carol Hansen, Jean Hofvendahl, Ruthelle Holmes, John & Bobby Immel, Ross Jackson/Gary Barg, Norma Jellison, William & Margaret Keeler, Anne Kerrigan, Dorothy King, Mary Lee Luzmoor, Sandra Mackey, Annette Maddox, Mathias Maseem, Michael McAuley, Dr. & Mrs. Charles D. Meier, Julie Merrill, W.J. Middlemiss, David Moore/Nedra Overall, Megan Nakahara, Margaret Phillips, Kate Piser, Donnalyne Polito, Karen Rahman, Anthony Ramos, Nancy Rieser, June Schellinger, Mertis Shekeloff, Virginia Socolofsky, Rachel Spalding, Barbara Srulovitz, Susan Trieste, Calla Unsworth, Graceann Walden, Fay White, Marcella Wong.

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

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

Name _____ New Renewal
 Address _____ Change of Address only
 City, Zip _____ \$10 Limited income (1 vote)
 Phone Numbers (H) _____ (W) _____ \$20 Individual (1 vote)
 I would like to serve on the following committee(s): Membership Programs \$30 Family (2 votes)
 OHA News Publicity Landmark Nominations Landmark Assistance \$50 Organization (1 vote)
 Preservation Action Summer Tours Development, Fund Raising other \$100 Sponsor (1 vote)
 \$250 Patron (1 vote)
 \$ _____ Additional contribution

Oakland History Notes:

Western Pacific

"A resounding blast from her whistle heralded the long-looked-for approach, and at 4:15 o'clock, the monster 'iron-horse' steamed into the big depot at Third and Washington streets to the shrill refrain of whistles... and the enthusiastic cheers of happy thousands who lined the track." Thus did the Oakland Tribune announce the momentous arrival of the overland Western Pacific train at its new depot on August 22, 1910. The Western Pacific became the third transcontinental railroad to terminate in Oakland. More importantly, the advent of the line signified the end of the Southern Pacific's monopolistic control of Oakland's waterfront. When, in 1906, the Western Pacific began construction of its ferry slip in the City's outer harbor, litigation began between the Western Pacific and the giant Southern Pacific over the issue of waterfront ownership. The S.P. lost, the City regained control of its waterfront, and the Western Pacific continued into Oakland.

The line which terminated at the new depot extended east from Oakland through Stockton, Sacramento and the Feather River Canyon to Denver and the Rio Grande terminus in Salt Lake City. In Oakland, the tracks ran along 3rd Street west to the Western Pacific Mole at the Outer Harbor, where ferries connected to San Francisco.

The arrival of the "iron horse" through a triumphal arch at its new station designed by W.H. Mohr, was accompanied by parades, speeches, and resounding predictions of Oakland's future growth and prosperity.



"This is an inspiring scene," intoned Mayor Frank K. Mott, "It is truly history making, for we cannot fail to appreciate the tremendous importance that the completion and operation of the Western Pacific Railroad will have upon the future of Oakland, of California, and upon the entire region which it traverses."

Through the years the depot was witness to many scenes of color and pageantry. During the 1915 fair, important visitors arrived via the Western Pacific. Thousands flocked to the station in 1919 to greet the soldiers returning from the First World War. And in 1949 the new California Zephyr, prince of the overlands, began service at the station. When the Zephyr ceased service in 1970, the venerable depot lapsed into limbo. Now a city landmark and home to Koncepts Cultural Gallery, it stands as a regal emblem of Oakland's railroad history. --William Sturm

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