

Take an armchair tour through Butters Canyon

By Dennis Evanosky

Butters Drive in the Oakland hills holds many surprises. Addresses on the street include not only homes, but also a German nature club. The road winds its way along a west-facing slope of the hills where Peralta Creek has its headwaters. The creek has carved steep valleys clothed in trees and plants; one of these valleys is the pride of the Butters Canyon Conservancy. The most interesting surprises come with the geology here.

The best way to reach Butters is to drive up Lincoln Avenue (named for early property owner Frederick Rhoda's son, Lincoln). The road straddles a ridge that stretches into the Oakland hills from today's Dimond District, past the old Easton & Wilson Quarry, site of today's Head-Royce School. At Route 13, the road takes on the name of Joaquin Miller, the "Poet of the Sierras." The ridge continues its rise to the west above "The Abbey," a small wooden structure where Miller once lived. Nearby the only equestrian statue in Oakland depicts the poet astride a horse.

In the decade that followed Miller's 1913 death, developers built roads into the landscape across from his home. They joined these new byways with Mountain Boulevard. In keeping with a habit of the times, the developers named two of these roads for local men who gave their lives in World War I: Roy Brunell and Harry Butters.

Let's take a walk.

We'll take a right on Butters Drive from Joaquin Miller Road, going past the station house for Oakland Fire Department's Engine No. 25, which opened here in 1953. The road leads around some steep canyons. Peralta Creek (named for Oakland's first European settlers) begins its journey into the flatlands in these canyons.

Our hike brings the canyons' foliage into focus. Native trees like the coast live oak, redwood, bay laurel and buckeye intermingle with "invaders" like eucalyptus, acacia and a myriad of fruit trees that homeowners have introduced. Native plants like the poppy,



Dennis Evanosky

HARRY BUTTERS astride his horse, right. Above is a serpentine field near the canyon that bears his name. The 1920s California bungalow at the top of the hill and the modern homes below attest to the neighborhood's staying power. The chemistry found in the California state rock, serpentine, prevents almost anything from growing on this field. The stubble growing on the left side of the hill is cactus that might trace its origins to the Peraltas using the plant to define their property boundaries.

larkspur and, yes, poison oak, co-exist with "exotics" that include French broom, cactus and my favorite, rattlesnake grass.

Germans came to the area in the 1920s and founded the *Naturfreunde* (the Friends of Nature) clubhouse on Butters Drive. It is still here, just past the first canyon we come upon. Right next door to the clubhouse is a grassy field. From here, we enjoy a sweeping view out to the west and appreciate the area's history, geology and geography. A discerning eye can pick out the Fruitvale Bridge over the Oakland



John Lane Company

Estuary, which empties into the San Leandro Bay. From our vantage point, we can trace the meanderings of four creeks that shaped

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Butters

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not only the landscape, but the history of East Oakland as well. Below us from left to right are Sausal, Peralta, Lion and Courtland creeks.

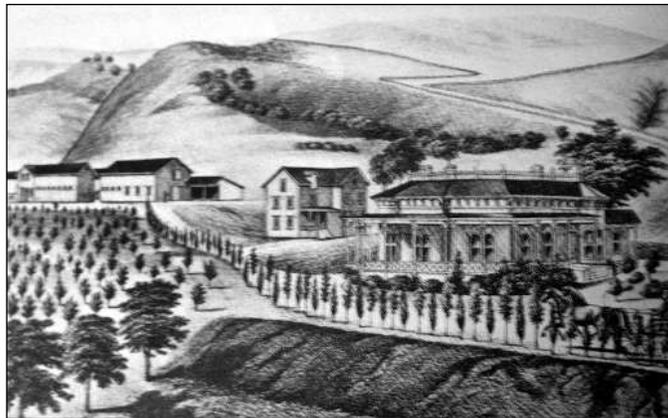
Formed from Shepherd, Cobbledick, and Palo Seco creeks, Sausal Creek drains today's Fruitvale neighborhood. Henderson Luelling and Frederick Rhoda chose this creek and the rich soil its watershed provided as the place to start a thriving fruit industry. The creek is most evident in Dimond Park, but disappears into storm drains and empties into the Oakland Estuary just south of the Fruitvale Bridge. Sausal Creek once formed an impressive delta eradicated with the coming of early industry including a rope walk and a race track. The creation of the "Island City" of Alameda spelled the end of this delta.

Peralta Creek flows from Butters Canyon south of Joaquin Miller Park, southwest to Hamilton Junior High School and then south into East Creek Slough, where it meets San Leandro Bay. Like Sausal Creek, much of Peralta Creek now flows through man-made culverts and underground storm drains. Along the way, the Harrington Avenue, Laguna, Curran and Berlin branches lend their energy to Peralta Creek.

Lion Creek flows from the canyon between the former Golden Gate Academy and Holy Names University. The creek drains the area south of Joaquin Miller Park, flowing through Mills College, and then in underground storm drains southwest to emerge at Coliseum Gardens. Only a few small stretches of

So who was Harry Butters?

Butters Drive remembers Harry Butters, who lived in Piedmont. Through his old school connections in England, Harry received a commission in the Royal Artillery, 24th Division, 107th Brigade in April 1915. Harry was killed in action on Aug. 31, 1916. He and his unit were at the Somme, firing on Trones Woods outside Guillemont, when his gun received a direct German hit during a massive barrage; he and all the members of his battery lost their lives.



THE ALDEN FARM, at top, was purchased by Peter Finigan from Charles Low. Finigan commissioned mapmakers Thompson and West to sketch his home. The barns in the background stood on the site of Holy Name University's Tobin Hall; the home just to the east of Cushing Library below McLean Chapel.

Oakland History Room

the creek above Mills College still exist at the surface.

Courtland Creek played an important role in shaping East Oakland's landscape. The course of this creek, which begins its journey in today's Laurel District, defines not only the route of High Street, but the placement of the California Railway as well.

Sausal Creek enters the Oakland Estuary near the Fruitvale Bridge. Peralta and Courtland creeks both meet San Leandro Bay in a channel called the East Creek Slough. Lion Creek enters the bay using Damon Slough, named for Nathaniel Damon, who owned a wharf near the site in the 19th century.

These sloughs—tidal creeks—joined Arroyo Viejo and San Leandro creeks to shape a marshland that once covered the place where the Golden State Warriors, the Raiders and the A's now play ball.

A grove of Coast Live Oaks has found a home near the top of the hill just behind us. I found a pair of stones here that Native Americans could have used as tools to mash the trees' acorns.

Alden Farm once stood just below us on the site of today's Holy Names University. The buildings we can see on the university's perimeter are Tobin Hall and the university's gymnasium; these stand on the site of a barn that Charles Low built in 1874. Not too far away, but out of our sight, is Brennan Hall which stands where the Lows made their

home in 1874. Peter Finigan purchased the property from Low in 1877 and built a second house near today's Cushing Library. In 1884, Thomas Magee took over the property—trading it in part for the aforementioned race-track that once stood in the flatlands below us near today's High Street and Coliseum Way. Magee added a second story to the Finigan house. This house stood on the hill like a beacon until it burned in 1957.

Leona Heights lies further south with the long-disappeared California Railway's end station on today's Route 13 just below the old Chabot Observatory. The railway took passengers to another vanished landmark, the Leona Hotel. Trains along this line also hauled sulfur from the mines and rock from the rock quarry owned, believe it or not, by the Stone brothers. The rail bed later served as the right of way for the streetcar that carried passengers to Mills College. Early streetcars in Oakland carried round discs with various symbols instead of numbers. Because the Mills College line's white disc had a big yellow dot in the middle, people called it the "fried egg" line.

The Hayward Fault runs just below us across Redwood Road and along Jordan Road into a rift valley that begins at the Mormon Temple. The valley stretches north from here to Lake Temescal. Palo Seco, Cinderella, Cobbledick and Shepherd creeks join together

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at one of the valley's deepest points near today's Montclair Golf Course to form Sausal Creek.

The area's first redwood mill once stood somewhere along Palo Seco Creek. Loggers stripped the old-growth redwood of their lower branches and strewed these pieces (called "slice") along with the "duff"—debris that the trees shed over the years—over the creek bed. Drivers coaxed their oxen as they dragged logs (*palos*) using this dry (*seco*) creek bed as a road to the mill. Sawyers cut the logs to more manageable sizes and transported them down today's Park Boulevard and 13th Avenue to the Oakland Estuary.

Beneath our feet lies a most interesting geological *mélange*—a collection of rocks, all faulted and mixed in a seemingly chaotic manner. A pair of what the geologists call "assemblages" are the culprits here. The first is called the Franciscan Assemblage, the second, the Great Valley Assemblage. Geologist Doris Sloan calls attempts to understand this *mélange* "exasperating."

One of these rocks—California's state rock, the much-maligned serpentinite—once lay at the bottom of the sea. It's likely that



HOMES IN THE BUTTERS CANYON neighborhood run like a necklace below the fog that crowns the Oakland Hills. The McLean Chapel on the Holy Names University campus stands above the site of Charles Low's Alden Farm. Native American tools were found in the field to the left of the chapel.

the mineral content of this rock played a role in shaping the field we are standing on. The chemistry and physical makeup of serpentinite soils has thwarted invading species or reduced their impacts so that native grassland species, some of which are now found only on serpentinite soils, flourish.

Other serpentinite prairies are located not far from here on Burdeck Drive, where the serpentinite has risen to the surface; above the Mormon Temple just off Woodminster Road; and above the Lincoln Square Shopping Center. An especially interesting protected prairie lies at the end of a trail that leads from the Richard C. Trudeau Training Center at 11500 Skyline Blvd., between Redwood and Joaquin Miller roads.

Serpentine is just one of the many pieces of the *mélange* that confuses even the best scientists; others include greywacke, chert and Leona Rhyolite. There's even a geological formation named for Joaquin Miller. What happened to create such frustration among the experts?

Prior to the Jurassic Period—199 million years ago—all of this area lay submerged under a great sea. Today's Utah would have been on the shoreline. Then, about 150 mil-

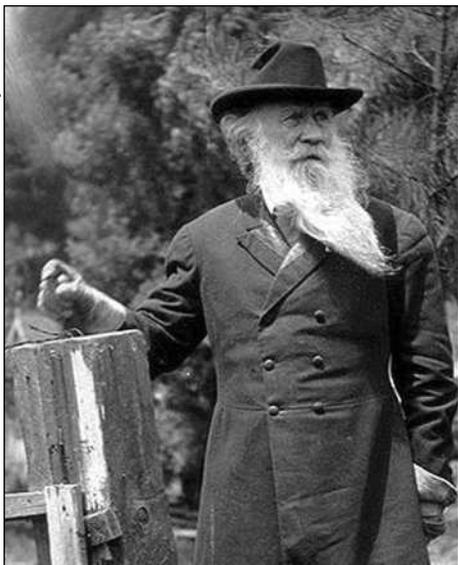
lion years ago, the North American Plate buckled against the Pacific Plate. This collision created a proto-Sierra mountain range. Slowly worn down by erosion, the mountain range's sediment filled Central Valley, then at the bottom of the sea.

Some 30 million years ago, an ocean ridge on the Pacific Plate got jammed onto the North American Plate. This formed the forerunners of the Coastal Range we are standing on today. Then something dramatic happened: the Pacific Plate changed direction and instead of moving east into the North American Plate, it began moving north perpendicular to it. This gave birth to the San Andreas Fault.

Two of this fault's companion branches—the Hayward and the Calaveras faults—play a role in shaping the landscape, acting like pincers that squeeze the hills around us. Scientists say that this action causes the hills to rise up between 12 and 20 inches every century. The San Andreas and Hayward faults teamed up to form what scientists call a "drop block." San Francisco Bay finds its home in this valley between the faults today.

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Oakland History Room



JOAQUIN MILLER, the poet of the Sierras, took up residence below the crest of the hill across from what later became Butters Drive.

Dennis Evanosky



Bird islands to lose heavy guano load

By Naomi Schiff

Here are some of the issues OHA's Preservation Committee has been working on and watching recently.

NINTH AVENUE TERMINAL: In a Jan. 20 vote, the Bay Conservation and Development Commission greenlighted the **Oak to Ninth project**, now being called "**Brooklyn Basin**" (although its central water feature is really Clinton Basin). BCDC recommendations included reusing the curved trestle at the southeast end of the terminal building as part of the Bay Trail, if feasible (see photo), and accelerating the construction of the trail into the earlier stages of the project. OHA advocated that BCDC recommend retention of a larger portion of Ninth Avenue Terminal, to no avail. The project will now be reviewed by the Army Corps of Engineers, and OHA has requested to be included in those discussions. OHA continues to pursue its appeal of project approvals in appellate court.

ZONING UPDATE: At numerous Planning Commission meetings and at a City Council Community and Economic Development Committee meeting on Feb. 8, the **zoning update** moved forward. OHA continues to

ask for alterations to a Community Commercial zone so that car sales and rentals would not automatically be permitted in two neighborhoods (Telegraph Avenue and 13th Avenue); requests lower height limits on San Pablo between West Grand and 26th Street, areas along International Blvd. and E. 12th between 9th and 14th avenues, and a few blocks in the Fruitvale area; and requests front setbacks be maintained between 1st and 5th avenues along International Boulevard. Heights along Telegraph between Alcatraz and the Berkeley border are still the subject of controversy and discussion among neighborhood groups, staff, and council members.

LANDMARKS BOARD: Vacancies on the board will occur, as Kirk Peterson and Rosemary Muller have reached the limits of their terms. Mayor Jean Quan is expected to announce new nominations for the two positions in the next few weeks.

BROADWAY VALDEZ and LAKE MERRITT BART (CHINATOWN) PLANNING PROJECTS: The planning efforts in both the **Broadway Valdez** and **Lake Merritt BART** areas have been delayed throughout the fall, but seem to be



THE CURVED TRESTLE, seen in the water at lower right, supported train track serving the Ninth Avenue Terminal. It could become part of a new Bay Trail segment, carrying bicyclists and pedestrians.

getting underway again. For information, consult the planning department website, or contact OHA if you are interested in participating. Each area includes numerous buildings of historic importance. The Areas of Primary Importance in Chinatown, along with other concentrations of historic buildings, fall within the Lake Merritt BART study area.

CAR PAINT SHOP DEMOLISHED: Union Pacific precipitously demolished the historic Car Paint Shop in its yards to the

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Port of Oakland

Butters

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We'll leave this fascinating field behind to visit a preserve we owe to the Butters Canyon Conservancy.

As we walk further along Butters Drive we ascend to find a pristine canyon, the last stop on our hike. It's no accident that this canyon remains almost untouched. The Butters Land Trust, as the conservancy was originally called, held its initial meeting on Nov. 14, 2006. The group hired Berkeley's Restoration Design Group to survey, map and present a proposal to restore the canyon.

In February 2010, the conservancy purchased the last of the 13 parcels in the canyon. They did it entirely on their own, raising nearly \$800,000 through yard sales, grants, loans and donations.

We continue our walk along Butters Drive and along Robinson Drive to have a look at



JOAQUIN MILLER stands on the porch of his signature home, The Abbey (you may need a magnifying glass!). Miller clothed the bare hills with thousands of trees.

the other side of Butters Canyon. Robinson Drive will take us back to Joaquin Miller Road. A downhill jaunt will take us back to our starting point at Butters Drive.

Butters Canyon is one small part of the fascinating mosaic that makes up the Oakland hills. This includes the redwood forest

with the site of the "Blossom Rock" tree just over the ridge north of here and the remains of quarries to the south—one a sacred place not only to the Native Americans, but to the Peralta family as well. There are more stories to tell, more hikes to take and so much more to discover. ■

Oakland History Room



The Bay Trail: another chance to take an informative excursion

By Kitty Hughes

No need to take an expensive vacation to Europe this year for your dose of culture and recreation, or pine for the days when a weekend excursion to Hawaii didn't seem like such a big deal. Oakland offers a variety of unrivaled opportunities to combine recreation, exercise and cultural exposure. No airline ticket, pet sitter, or mail hold required. Without straining your wallet, you can get away from it all on your own hometown turf.

The Bay Trail is the place to start. Hop on your bicycle or lace up your walking shoes, and get ready for an unforgettable day's excursion. Actually, there's so much to see and do that it could take you several weekends to do it justice. Extended along flat terrain, the trail also offers nearby restaurants and cafes that will let you sample cuisines from around the globe.

Historic markers strung out along the way tell the story of Oakland. Installed on posts made of recycled rail, the 12 markers are placed in the public right of way, in sidewalks and public parks. The markers, along with sculptures and other artwork, form a virtual outdoor museum.

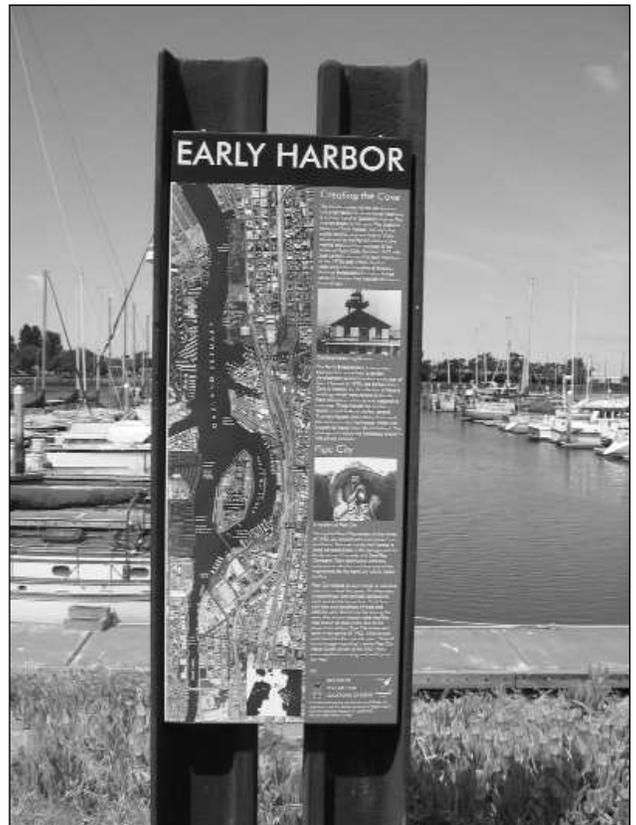
Not all of the trail runs directly along the bay. Because of commercial and industrial uses along sections of our waterfront, portions of the trail lie on nearby inland streets, mainly bike lanes with sidewalks. Connecting spurs connect you from this on-street alignment (sometimes called the "commuter spine") to sections of trail along the bay. The historic markers provide guideposts to help

you find your way. The following guide to orient you to the markers should also help.

Begin your trip on the bike lanes at the north end of Mandela Parkway. On your right, just beyond the Emeryville city limits, you will see the first marker, titled "Progress and Transit." This marker shows a map of West Oakland and the shoreline, which used to be located near Mandela and consisted of marshlands and tidelands. Beginning with the Gold Rush, the area was gradually filled in to make way for development.

The marker also features the Key System, an integrated transit service of streetcars, trains and ferries that provided commuter service throughout the Bay Area starting in 1903. It operated streetcars until 1948 (when buses took over), and transbay service on the Bay Bridge until 1958. AC Transit took over all the routes in 1960. Photos and graphics, along with a map showing that "you are here," will help orient you so you can locate the next marker (indicated by a red route line and red and blue stars on the map).

Travel down Mandela to Seventh Street and learn about wharves and warehouses, the



Waterfront Action

ONE OF THE HISTORICAL MARKERS you'll encounter.

Southern Pacific Railroad Terminal at 16th and Wood (shown on a map for a quick side excursion), the Long Wharf and Oakland Mole, and Port of Oakland history.

See **BAY TRAIL** on page 6

What is the Bay Trail?

Oakland's Bay Trail forms a section of the Regional San Francisco Bay Trail, a walking and bicycling route that will eventually ring the entire nine-county bay waterfront. To date, approximately 60 percent of the regional Bay Trail is completed. The City of Oakland has been building sections of the Bay Trail over the last decade, and large parts are now in place and ready to walk or ride. The project includes a variety of features, including bicycling and walking facilities, parks, sculpture and other art, trees and landscaping, benches and other amenities, and the historic markers.

The City's Public Works and Community and Economic Development Agency Transportation Services, Design and Construction and Project Delivery staff have taken the lead in developing the Bay Trail. They created and installed the markers, with assistance from a team of reviewers, including the Oakland Cultural Heritage Survey, the Oakland Main Library's History Room, city and Port of Oakland Staff, as well as PGA Associates, a local landscape architecture firm.

The Bay Trail has been funded by several sources, including the San Francisco Bay Trail project, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's Transportation Fund for

Clean Air, State Transportation Development Act Article 3 Funds, State Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Funds, and most recently, voter-approved Measure DD funds.

When completed, the Bay Trail will provide two parallel facilities along the estuary, the on-street bike lanes and routes for commuters, and the waterfront trail for leisurely excursions. Over time, a continuous waterfront path will extend along the estuary from Jack London Square to Martin Luther King, Jr. Shoreline Park. In the meantime, Bay Trail explorers can use the continuous on-street route that extends from Mandela Parkway to Embarcadero to dip into the parks and trail sections along the waterfront. ■



Bay Trail

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On the way, it is worth stopping at the Cypress Memorial park, located on the left side of Mandela between 13th and 14th streets. The park commemorates the 1989 collapse of the Cypress Freeway. The redwoods on the site stand in the arc of the former freeway ramp. In lieu of a marker, the community wanted a major memorial of this event. A graph on the back wall of the park illustrates the earthquake tremors and a prominent sculpture of a ladder reminds us of the firemen and others who risked their lives by climbing up onto the crumpled ramp to rescue victims.

At Seventh Street, located in the BART Parking lot, a marker features the ethnically diverse West Oakland immigrant community that sprang up around the transcontinental railroad terminus. Learn here also about the gospel, blues and jazz scene that emerged on Seventh Street in the 1920s.

If you have time (this alone could be one day's outing), cycle out the Eighth Street spur to see the marker at Bertha Port Park. Who was Bertha Port? (She had no relation to the Port of Oakland and the answer might sur-

prise you. You will find it on the marker installed on the east side of the park.) The park marker also features changing neighborhood names, like Prescott and Lower Bottoms, and how these names evolved.

At Pine Street, segue over to Seventh Street (best traveled on a weekend to avoid truck traffic) and prepare for a treat: Middle Harbor Shoreline Park. This large public facility built by the Port features more West Oakland history, including the shipping industry and Bay Bridge development. The picnic tables offer spectacular views.

To continue back along the main Bay Trail alignment, head back up to Mandela and turn right to continue on Third Street to Second. A marker in front of an old cannery building helps you envision what the area was like originally, bustling with industries and support services for the railroad commerce.

At Second and Broadway, check out Jack London's Klondike cabin and statue for a quick lesson on an important literary figure.

There's more of the Bay Trail to check out on the east side of Broadway. Enjoy the journey of discovery! ■

My favorite stops along the Estuary

By Sandy Threlfall

Give yourself permission to follow Seventh Street to its terminus and you will find a treasure—Port View Park. In the park is the Oakland Pier Train Tower, and upstairs is “A Room with a View,” which is its official title! It is a room full of fascinating historic photographs of the “old” Port and related railroad operations. Do stand on the footprints and line up Yerba Buena Island with the photograph on the window, and you will see the Port operations of 1905. By 1910 there were 160 trains a day passing through this area. Sit yourself down and listen to the sounds of industry while enjoying the view of San Francisco and the beautiful bay. A Room with a View is open Monday through Friday from 10 to 3.

Just east of here is Middle Harbor Shoreline Park, and a stop is definitely worthwhile. A healthy walk out to Chappell Hayes Tower will give you a bird's eye view of container shipping. And if you time it right, there will be a ship either being loaded or unloaded right in front of you. There is a great informational marker that describes container terminal operations and, of course, crane facts—not birds, but lifting machines!

Midway between east and west is the Ninth Avenue Terminal. It is an historic building (front half) from the late 1920s with an Art Deco flair. To find it, turn from the Embarcadero onto 10th

Avenue and walk (drive) in the gates. Near the front of the terminal is a railroad trestle, historic of course, which allowed the trains to bring wheat and cotton from the Central Valley into the terminal itself. If you happen to be there at low tide, look into the water between the railroad trestle and Coast Guard Island and you will see the skeletons of the Alaska Packers sailing ships that wintered on the Alameda side of the Estuary, when the hunt for salmon during the summer months had ended.

Now the east end. In Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline Park, you will find Arrowhead Marsh, which is everything a bird would want—wetlands, islands, shallow waters good for feeding, and open views so predators can't hide. In the winter, the birds are too numerous to count. For us, it's a great example of what a wetland can provide not only to the birds, but the fishes, ducks, walkers and bikers. Here, a dike was torn down in 1998 to allow the San Leandro Bay waters to return to their wetlands, and only 13 years later the wetlands are prospering.

I love the Bay Trail—walking along it, listening to the silence, and then seeing a huge aircraft pass overhead. The contrasts are there, and you can be too!

Sandy Threlfall is the Executive Director of Waterfront Action. For access maps and more information about the Estuary, go to www.waterfrontaction.org.

Welcome to our new members!

OHA is pleased to welcome these newest members to our roster:

Lesley Allen, Steve Brockhage & Elizabeth Holiday, Daniel Brzoric, Jack Campbell, Stephanie Casenza, Abby Cohen, Kathy & Kenneth Ditlefsen, Cherie & Sherwood Donahue, Sandy Eakins, James A. Goring, Barbara Grey, Thomas Griswold, Jeff Hill, Jean R. Langmuir, Dorothy Lazard, Sherman Lew, Mary Marsh, Charlene Milgrim, Nate Miley & Linda Pratt, Hugh Morrison, Emily Odza, Susan Papps, Barbara Pottgen, Jerard Reilly, Paul Sholar, Paul & Gerda Siple, Ginevra Tehin, Elizabeth Tucker, Jane & Terry Wiedwald, Joan Marie Wood, Jim Wyman & Charis Moore



The rich and varied life of Adrian John Ebell: Part One

Art Gallery of South Australia



ADRIAN EBELL'S INTEREST in phantasmagorical magic lantern shows like the one seen above left brought him west, where he met Edward Lawton. In August 1862, the partners decided to travel to Minnesota to photograph the Dakota tribe for use in their show. They got much more than they bargained for. Above right, Adrian Ebell strikes a pose in a studio photograph.



Ebell Club of Anaheim

By Dennis Evanosky

Adrian John Ebell was born at Jaffnapattam on the northern tip of Ceylon (today's Sri Lanka) on Sept. 20, 1840. He was the son of Henry Theodore and Mary (Palm) Ebell. Mary was the daughter of W. D. Palm, an elder pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church at Wolvendaal, the oldest Protestant church in use in Sri Lanka. Mary's mother, Johanna, hailed from Rotterdam.

Adrian's great-grandfather Carl Frederick came to Ceylon in the 1760s; he served the Dutch government as chief of the island of Mannar. (The Dutch controlled Ceylon 1685–1798.)

The family named Adrian for his grandfather. Little is known about Adrian's father, Henry.

When Adrian was about 10 years old, he came to the United States with his sister Anna Henrietta and her husband, the missionary William Cherry.

Adrian first studied at Williston Seminary in Easthampton, Mass. He entered the Academic Department of the Sheffield Scientific School, a Yale college, with the class of 1862; he studied for two terms.

The next year he entered college with the class of 1863, but left again at the end of one term. He began working in photography. He started operating a "phantasmagorical" magic lantern show in Hyde Park, and then in Chicago with Edward Lawton.

"Although Dr. Adrian John Ebell lived only to the age of 37, his life was rich and varied, and his influence on the lives of women is present even today in the number of women's clubs that have taken his name."

—Alberta Beckelheimer,
Ebell Club of Anaheim

In August 1862, both Ebell and Lawton decided to travel to Minnesota to photograph the Dakota tribe for use in their magic lantern show. This decision changed both their lives.

Ebell and Lawton left Chicago on Aug. 1. They traveled by train and flatboat to the Mississippi River. They then caught a steamboat to St. Paul, arriving on Aug. 6.

Minnesota Historical Society's Alan Woolworth gives a fascinating, detailed description of Ebell and Lawton's experiences among the Dakotas. Woolworth tells us that the pair was already short of funds and obtained photographic supplies "probably including chemicals and glass plates" by trading Ebell's five-octave melodeon with Joel E. Whitney who was operating a photographic gallery in St. Paul.

"The two young men eagerly started up the Minnesota River," Woolworth writes.

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Ebell

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They arrived at “The Redwood,” or Lower Sioux Agency, around Aug. 13. They continued on to “The Yellowstone,” or Upper Sioux Agency, where Woolworth writes they hoped to photograph the payment of annuities to the Dakotas.

They arrived just in time to witness the outbreak of the 1862 Dakota War.

The U.S. government signed treaties with Indian tribes, spelling out how the tribes would receive annuities from the government in return for lands taken from them.

According to legend, at a meeting of the Dakota Indians, the U.S. government and local traders, the Dakotas asked Andrew Jackson Myrick, who represented the government, to sell them food on credit. His response was said to be, “[S]o far as I am concerned, let them eat grass.”

On Aug. 16, 1862, the treaty payments to the Dakota arrived in St. Paul. They were brought to Fort Ridgely the next day, arriving too late to prevent violence.

On Aug. 18, four young Dakota men were on a hunting trip in Acton Township,

Minn. They stole food and killed five white settlers.

Soon after, a Dakota war council was convened and their leader, Little Crow, agreed to continue attacks on the European-American settlements to try to drive out the whites. Little Crow led a group that attacked the Redwood Agency.

Andrew Myrick was among the first the Dakota killed; they caught him as he was trying to escape through a second-floor window of a building at the agency.

His body was later found with grass stuffed into his mouth.

When news of the Dakota uprising reached the outpost where Ebell and Lawton were staying, everyone there fled to Stephen R. Riggs’s neighboring Hazelwood mission.



Harper's Weekly

SETTLERS AT REST: The mission families and their guests, fleeing the Dakota uprising, stopped to rest Aug. 21, 1862. At that moment, Ebell took this, his most famous photograph. The woman in white, at the upper right, is kneading bread dough.

The mission families and their guests, including Ebell and Lawton, escaped with a few belongings to a tree-covered island in the Minnesota River. Ebell managed to bring along a camera and his exposed plates.

Leaving the island for a safer refuge that afternoon, the party of several dozen people stopped to rest on Thursday, Aug. 21.

They killed a young cow, roasted meat, baked bread, and dried their rain-soaked clothing. Ebell and Lawton set up their camera and photographed the settlers. The resulting image became Ebell’s most famous photograph.

“Two days later, the party reached safety at Henderson, (Minnesota),” Woodward writes. “Ebell and Lawton continued on to St. Paul.” Ebell took his exposed glass plates to Joel Whitney, the man he’d traded his melodeon to. Whitney put Ebell’s prints on sale.

In accordance with business customs of the day, Ebell’s photographs bore Whitney’s Gallery stamp; Ebell’s association with the photographs was lost and forgotten.

The story of Ebell’s life will continue in the next issue. ■

This account of Adrian Ebell’s life originally appeared in the Alameda County Historical Society’s January 2011 Quarterly. For more on Ebell and the Society he helped create, please see our back page.



IN THE NORTHWEST: Posing for a photograph that would surprise many, Adrian John Ebell takes a moment in Minnesota Territory in August 1862. That’s Edward Lawton poking his head into the portable darkroom on the right.



Mayor Quan takes a history walk on inauguration day

By Annalee Allen

On Jan. 3, the day Mayor Jean Quan took the oath of office at the historic Oakland Fox Theatre, she conducted a celebratory march through downtown to commemorate the occasion.

“Remembering & Making History in Oakland” was a walk that highlighted key locations and moments in both her personal family history, as well as the community at large. This past November, Oakland voters elected Ms. Quan the 49th mayor of the city; she is Oakland’s first woman and first Chinese-American mayor, and one of the first

Asian-American woman mayors of a major U.S. city. Her history walk not only celebrated her deep city roots, it underlined her stated intentions to promote Oakland’s historic assets wherever possible and to encourage citizens to discover for themselves what Oakland has to offer.

Participants on the Jan. 3 march received a keepsake map and brochure of the tour route from Chinatown to the Oakland Fox. The keepsake included a brief history of Oakland and information on Quan’s family. That history dates back to the days following the

1906 Earthquake when her great-grandfather and his three sons fled San Francisco and came across the bay.

Production of the keepsake brochure was a team effort on the part of the staff of the Cultural Arts & Marketing Department, with indispensable assistance from the Oakland Library’s History Room, and the Cultural Heritage Survey files.

Marchers stopped at sites such as Chinatown’s Pacific Renaissance Plaza, home to the Oakland Asian Cultural Center; the Asian Resource Center Gallery, housed in a restored landmark building belonging to the East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation; and the Malonga Casquelourd Center

OHA is grateful for the generous response to our Annual Fund drive!

As of the end of January, 95 people donated a total of \$4,350. Thank you!

See **QUAN** on page 10

OHA wishes to thank all of the homeowners, volunteers, donors and advertisers who made the Rockridge House Tour such an incredible success. Thank you for all the hard work and time you spent!

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Lecture series takes its show on the road and into the bay!

By Kevin Dwyer

Our popular Lecture Series continues into the new year, with exciting speakers discussing topics of local, cultural, natural and historic interest to Oaklanders and OHA members. Livening things up, we'll be holding several lectures "on the road," allowing glimpses into some of Oakland's more fascinating spaces.

On **Feb. 10**, our lecture takes place at the historic **Peralta Hacienda**, now a six-acre historic park located in the Fruitvale District. Executive Director **Holly Alonso** relates the history of the Peralta rancho, from the 1750s to the 1950s. She tells us stories of the Fruitvale community today, giving voice to the many cultures that have created—and are still transforming—California. She describes the process of developing a neighborhood project into a full-scale historic park, including the hacienda's restoration and its current exhibits. She discusses how illuminating history can transform and benefit the communities in which such historic homes are located. Peralta Hacienda is located at 2465 34th Ave. For directions to Peralta Hacienda, or for further information, contact OHA at 763-9218.

On **March 10**, photojournalist **James Martin**, author of *The Islands of San Francisco Bay*, returns to take us on an island-hopping adventure, as he shares gorgeous images and fascinating tales of the bay's most prominent geographical features. Learn about local explorers and pioneers, lighthouses and bridges, ghost towns and marshes, as well as herons, eagles, seals, and more. Find out about great getaways for hiking, walking, bird-watching, camping, sailing and paddling, right in your backyard. Books will be available for sale and signing after the lecture. Sorry folks, this lecture will not be held on a bay island. Martin will speak at our old faithful spot, **Chapel of the Chimes**, 4499 Piedmont Ave. This was one of our most popular lectures in 2009, so come early to get a seat!

On **April 21** (third Thursday!), author **Rick Malaspina** will discuss his newly-published photo book, *Italian Oakland*. The city of Oakland was a magnet for Italian immigrants in the early decades of the 20th century. Some relocated from San Francisco after the devastating 1906 earthquake and fire; many more came to Oakland from Italy's northern regions of Pied-

mont, Liguria, and Lombardy in search of opportunity and prosperity. These pioneers worked hard, typically at backbreaking labor, to build new lives. As they established new roots and adopted new ways, congregating largely in north Oakland's vibrant and bustling Temescal neighborhood, these Italian-Americans also nurtured their Old Country customs and traditions—many of which, along with rare glimpses of bygone days, are portrayed in Malaspina's book, a charming trip through time. Malaspina is a former news reporter and columnist for the *Oakland Tribune* and the *San Francisco Examiner*. He was born in North Beach and now lives in Oakland. Fittingly, this lecture will be held at the **Colombo Club**, across from the DMV in Temescal, one of the largest Italian-American social clubs in the United States. The club is located at 5321 Claremont Ave.

For more information on our lectures, visit our website at www.oaklandheritage.org. Keep your eyes peeled for our email blasts with further information. (To be added to our email list, call OHA at 763-9218.)

Each lecture is \$10 for OHA members and \$15 non-members. ■

PC

Continued from page 4

west of the Seventh Street Post Office after a brief flurry of desperate activity in September. A farewell tour attended by many rail buffs and historic preservation people was well-covered in the newspapers.

Relations with Union Pacific became strained, and rail preservation people expressed dismay that one of the very oldest rail resources in California was lost with little opportunity to work out mitigation measures or salvage opportunities.

If you are aware of endangered Oakland rail resources within Union Pacific control, please contact us so we can try to work with Union Pacific at an earlier stage next time.

BIRD ISLANDS RECONSTRUCTION: The Lake Merritt bird islands, historic com-

ponents of the nation's first wildlife refuge, are being repaired. Work will pause during nesting season, and any work remaining will be completed after the summer.

According to Measure DD Committee minutes, "The plan is to clear some of the non-native species and significantly reduce the amount of guano on the Islands. The excessive guano may have been responsible for killing the trees. Native trees and plants will be planted and a new fresh water supply will be added. Rip rap on the south side of the Island will be installed to deal with existing erosion and lake elevation changes that will occur when the Lake Merritt Channel is opened."

MILLS ACT: The **Cathedral Building** is Oakland's first commercial Mills Act project, approved by City Council Dec. 7 along with four other properties. ■

Quan

Continued from page 9

for the Arts, formerly the Women's City Club building, a 1920s landmark designed by the architectural firm of Miller and Warnecke.

Quan also stopped at the 1926 Leamington Hotel on Franklin Street (designed by William Weeks), where her father once worked as a union cook. Various union representatives joined her to pay tribute to Oakland's long history as a place where working class immigrants could get their start.

Copies of this map/brochure are available at the History Room, or by contacting Annalee Allen, Oakland Tours Coordinator, via email at aallen@oaklandnet.com. ■



Oakland to host preservation conference

By Dea Bacchetti

We have some exciting news to share. California Preservation Foundation has selected Oakland as the host city for its 2012 conference! This is a fantastic opportunity to highlight Oakland's beautiful architectural, cultural, and natural heritage. Preservation professionals from all over the state will attend the conference, and OHA will be involved in the planning. We will keep you posted as information becomes available.

We would also like to announce that Rachel Force has taken over as our temporary Administrative Director. She is replacing Chela Zitani, who has left the organization to pursue other interests. Ms. Force will serve in this role until April at which point we will be hiring a permanent replacement.

As we gear up for an exciting new year, I would like to take a moment to recognize everyone who helped make 2010 successful. My first thank you goes out to the Board of Directors. This is one of the hardest working, most dedicated boards any president could ask for. We are a volunteer board, with diverse interests and skills, but united in our love of Oakland and its unique heritage. The members of the board have taken it upon

themselves to keep on top of current preservation issues in Oakland, advocate for the retention of our cultural and architectural heritage, and weigh in on preservation-related issues through our various activities. In addition, the board plans and executes our evening lecture series, our summer walking tours and the annual house tour. It takes a lot of hard work to run these programs, so give a round of applause for the board! We are always looking to expand our board, so if any of you are interested, please contact our administrative director.

Speaking of programs, thank you to everyone who volunteered, especially those who assisted with the house tour and the walking tours. We wouldn't have been able to do it without your help.

I would also like to send a heartfelt thanks to everyone who assists with our ongoing efforts to advocate for better historic preservation in Oakland. You are the ones who show up to City Council, Landmarks Boards and Planning Commission meetings to support our efforts. Some of you are serving on committees on behalf of the organization, and some of you lend a hand writing letters to support our causes. It is because of all of

you that we are able to be better advocates for a better Oakland.

Lastly, thank you to all of our members who have been supporting us for 30 years, through good times and bad times. In our current economy, we are eternally grateful for your continued support, not only through your renewed memberships, but also through your contributions to our year-end campaign.

Looking forward, this year is shaping up to another exciting one for the organization. We are filling in the last lecturer spots for our spring lectures and planning for new lectures this fall. We have begun planning for our summer walking tours. Please contact our office at 763-9218 if interested in volunteering with these programs. ■

PIP Awards upcoming

On May 12, we'll once again hold our Partners in Preservation awards ceremony. Join us as we celebrate some of the true heroes of local preservation. It's a wonderful opportunity to see some of the exciting endeavors going on in our city, and to meet people who make things happen. The deadline to apply for the awards is Feb. 28. Visit www.oaklandheritage.org for info.

CONTRIBUTORS: Annalee Allen, Dea Bacchetti, Kevin F. Dwyer, Kathleen DiGiovanni, Dennis Evanosky, Rachel Force, Kitty Hughes, Naomi Schiff, Sandy Threlfall

PRODUCTION: Erika Mailman

OHA News welcomes contributions: research projects large or small, historic photos and reports on preservation issues or events. Send to news@oaklandheritage.org.

MISSION STATEMENT: OHA is a nonprofit membership organization which advocates the protection, preservation and revitalization of Oakland's architectural, historic, cultural and natural resources through publications, education, and direct action.

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OHA membership keeps you informed, helps make our city more livable, and puts you in touch with our many events. It makes a wonderful gift, too!

- \$45 Cornerstone** (individual): newsletter, advance notice and discounted pricing on programs, events and tours.
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- \$500-\$999 Ionic**: same as above plus four tickets to a walking tour.
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Some limited income memberships are available. Call for information

- I'd like to contribute _____ to the OHA Leadership Fund, and help assure the future of historic preservation in Oakland.

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The Ebell Society met many places over the years, but none finer than this

By Kathleen Leles DiGiovanni

Between 1907 and 1959, the handsome Harrison Street building pictured at right was the home of Oakland's Ebell Society. The Society began in Oakland in December 1876 when a group of women met at the First Congregational Church with Dr. Adrian Ebell, the young, charismatic leader of the International Academy for the Advancement of Women. An Oakland chapter was promptly organized and renamed in his honor a year later, following his untimely death.

For the first 21 years of the club's life, it met in the homes of its members. In 1897, the Ebell Society moved into the neo-classic Reed Hall, a lovely building that stood at Harrison and 13th streets. It was designed by Walter J. Mathews and was rented to the society by its owner, Mr. Reed.

The club wanted its own home, though, and in 1906, purchased the site on Harrison Street between 14th and 15th. The prolific and versatile A.W. Smith drew up its plans. The three-story building was in what was called the "English Style" with clinker brick and half-timbering. In addition to a library and committee rooms, the clubhouse included a banquet hall and an auditorium seating 700 that was available to rent by the public. An article appearing in the *Oakland Enquirer* in February 1907 describes it as being conveniently located a block from the "bankers' \$2,000,000 hotel," the proposed-but-not-yet-built Hotel Oakland. The article notes that although the clubhouse was by then complete, the clubwomen elected to delay its

opening until the end of the Lenten season, scheduling a gala event after Easter.

The clubhouse was open daily, and the club employed a housekeeper who served tea to members who stopped by.

Organized for philanthropic and educational pursuits, the Society had an ambitious program of study groups in subjects including art, art history, foreign languages, music and politics. It was influential in Oakland's civic life as well. The clubhouse played hostess to the campaign for women's suffrage in California. Armed with the vote, clubwomen took a leading role in organizing to defeat a 1911 ballot proposal to consolidate the cities of the East Bay. In 1916, the Society was the first women's club to form a Red Cross Section. For decades, the most prominent lecturers in the country appeared in the Ebell Society's auditorium.

Beginning in the 1920s, club members had discussed leaving the Harrison Street clubhouse and building something newer, possibly in the Oakland hills. Nothing was ever done about that, but on Nov. 9, 1959, a devastating fire swept through the upper floor,



THE EBELL SOCIETY CLUBHOUSE, once on Harrison Street.

damaging the building so badly that it had to be demolished. The fire department managed to save most of the club's furnishings and art, but the Ebells needed a new home. They sold the lot for a parking lot (which it has remained to this day) and, armed with a \$100,000 insurance settlement, negotiated with the city for a home in the newly-opened Lakeside Garden Center building. They funded a wing for the new building to be called the Ebell Room, a 250-seat auditorium with a stage and dressing room. The club entered into a 25-year "lease and gift" which entitled it to use the room on Tuesdays. The room was dedicated in 1963 and served the club until its formal disbanding earlier this year. ■