



# CONTINUITY

PRESERVATION ACTION COUNCIL OF SAN JOSE NEWSLETTER VOL. 11, No. 1, WINTER 2000

HTTP://WWW.PRESERVATION.ORG

## MONTGOMERY HOTEL MOVES TO NEW LOCATION

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by Ellen Garboske

There was a lot of excitement and trepidation in the air on Saturday, January 29, 2000 as the venerable Montgomery Hotel began the laborious journey to its new foundation some 190 feet south of its original location. Viewers watched in wonder as this unusual event unfolded...unusual because with an estimated weight of 9.5 million pounds it is the heaviest building ever relocated intact and on hydraulic jacks equipped with rubber wheels. After moving 25 feet, there was a delay due to a computer glitch (in Silicon Valley?) but the move went smoothly after that. A cheer sounded when "Monty" arrived at its destination within the allotted three hours.

After years of efforts to preserve the Montgomery Hotel, and a decision by city government to demolish it in favor of an addition to the Fairmont Hotel, PACSJ has accepted this new life for one of San Jose's most important historic structures. When Mayor Gonzales reversed the decision to demolish the Montgomery, and the decision was made to move the structure to make way for the Fairmont annex, PACSJ

was both saddened and relieved. Saddened because moving a historic structure is not the best method of historic preservation, but relieved that at least the Montgomery Hotel would remain a visual and living part of San Jose's history.

By the time our readers receive this newsletter, work should be well underway to attach the Montgomery Hotel to its new foundation, a complicated procedure in itself. Once the hotel is stabilized at its new site, plans are in place to begin a serious search for a new owner/operator to establish a fine boutique hotel operation to honor the name Montgomery Hotel. PACSJ Board of Directors and members look forward to celebrating the reopening of the Montgomery Hotel. We suggest our readers refer to the Sunday, January 23, 2000 issue of the San Jose Mercury News for a detailed description of the procedures involved in moving and stabilizing this historic structure.



Montgomery Hotel c. 1930



9:30am

9:45am

Montgomery Hotel (at left)  
On the move — January 29, 2000

See additional photos by Tom Simon at [www.preservation.org](http://www.preservation.org).

CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL! If It does not say '00 your membership has expired and this may be your last issue of *Continuity*. Only current members can participate in special events such as the St. James Park tour and luncheon lecture. Complete the enclosed renewal form to assure your part in preserving our local history. WE NEED YOU!



# From the President

by John Olson

The year 2000 looks to be an exciting one, with some rewards from past activities, and enough engaging new challenges to keep us hopping. Thanks to your many renewed and new memberships, we're equipped to go into the new year reassured that we're speaking for many. Some members, in fact, have cast amazingly generous votes of confidence. It's a good feeling.

I look forward to working with PACSJ's new officers, Vice President Kitty Monahan, Secretary Patt Curia, and Treasurer Beth Wyman. All have been contributing their expertise and energy to PACSJ for years, and are well known in the preservation community.

It feels almost as if we are taking a breather after some of the battles of the past, but we can't sit back. A major, proactive issue for PACSJ and the city this year is improving the process and criteria for evaluating projects involving potentially important buildings. We have seen in recent years that it has sometimes been difficult for planners or developers to understand clearly, and in the early stages of a project, what should be treated as a historic resource. One problem is that the current historic inventory is a work in progress. Another is that interpretations of the ordinances defining thresholds of importance may vary, as can historical research findings.

Asked the definition of "an historic building," architect Alan Hess quipped at an AIA meeting in San Jose last week that he thought it was anything that opened its doors before last week. We aren't going to promote that standard, but we want to help develop and improve the standards in light of the reasons and benefits behind doing preservation at all.

The city is planning to resume the sorely needed historic survey of downtown this year. This will help everyone to know better just what we have there and will do much to improve the review processes. Also, the Redevelopment Agency's new Executive Director, Susan Schick, has indicated her interest in evaluating the historic building stock. This will be extremely important work, and we will offer to help to any extent. With new leadership in both City Hall and the Redevelopment Agency, this is the time to step up our efforts and make a proactive difference for the future.

Meanwhile, signs of positive trends continue to appear. In the proposed Civic Plaza and Balbach Street areas, the

Redevelopment Agency is now working to sell old homes for relocation, instead of simply planning to tear them down. This is an ambitious program that we'd really like to see succeed.

Nearly all the planning steps are complete for the Jose Theatre to begin getting weathertight and seismically secure again. We've accomplished our goal, and soon we will need to be starting on the next step: to encourage and help in renovating it as soon as possible. Our thanks to all the performing arts groups and individuals who helped the Friends of the Jose Theatre deliver the message that it is needed. Your participation made the difference, and we hope that it will be a benefit to the performing arts community in the not-too-distant future.

The Montgomery Hotel will have been moved by the time this newsletter is printed and mailed. The move will certainly be a once-in-a-lifetime memory for many of us. The houses in the River Street district are getting some necessary repairs, and plans to convert the massive brick Del Monte Cannery on Santa Clara Street into residential lofts are sailing along. The Letitia Building's renovation is looking beautiful.



*Montgomery Hotel on Wheels*

Last, but not least, we're also going to try to have more fun. Last year's Presidio tour was our first adventure in some time, and it was hugely enjoyable. I'm very much looking forward to our upcoming Spring trip. We hope to do these regularly, and I hope to see you there.☺

CONTINUITY is published quarterly by the  
Preservation Action Council of San Jose.

Opinions expressed in CONTINUITY are not  
necessarily those of the  
Preservation Action Council of San Jose.

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Please submit your comments and suggestions to  
Preservation Action Council of San Jose, CA 95109

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 Printed on Recycled Paper



# Watchdog Report

This burg is changing, and changing its mind so often I'm in a spin! Reminds me of a pup chasin' its tail! Can't say it ruffles my hair, though, seems as if most of the changes are on the side of keepin' my charmin' city intact. That was some rumble when they moved ol' Monty the other day. Still can't get it through my bonehead why they'd do that, but word is us canines will still find our friendly old *Montgomery Hotel* a bit south of where it was. Go figure...

Sniffin' around *Naglee Park* the other day (great place for handouts) with my ear to the sidewalk, I got word about my old friend **April Halberstadt**, a Naglee Park resident, historian and preservationist without equal. Seems like ol' April got interviewed by that **Weimers** guy over at the Merc, and he got the word out about all the good things April and her cohorts have done for my home town. We need lots more like her. A determined, intelligent, reasonable preservationist. Good story, old buddy. Which reminds me, my pappy used to tell me a joke, "What are newspapers good for?" um-m-m-m, I forgot the punch line. You figure it out.

Best part of Naglee Park was *Lou's Donuts*, gone but not forgotten by my olfactory senses. Speaking of olfactory, I'm still waitin' for that celebration parade to escort *Mark's Hot Dogs* from its current location to a spot around the corner. I palpitate over anything with the word 'dogs' in it. I hear the Landmark Commissioners gave the go ahead to the project, just waitin' now for planning and the city council to give it a pat on the head.

Been lots of activity around the theater circuit lately. On one of my middle of the Saturday night rounds I was startled to see two-legged figures surreptitiously carrying stuff out of the *UA Theater*. Figured it was a mighty big caper, but turns out UA just didn't want to play there anymore. The bark is, no amount of doggy biscuits could tempt them to stick around. There goes the last vestige of Frankie-baby's great *Pavilion*.

Got my hackles up briefly when it looked like the marquee on my favorite old Studio was being demolished. Turned out they were just replacing all those gadgets that make the lights work. Should be back together and ready to beam by now.

My last stop of the night was to check up on the majestic *Fox California Theatre*. You know, where **Opera San José**

is supposedly planning new digs. The rumor mill's been mighty quiet lately, so figured I'd better do a little nosin' around. Met up with my most dogged undercover agent and he gave me the straight scoop, that is if everything doesn't change again. Word is the existing stage is to be expanded to the north to add depth. The Market Street garage will disappear, and additional



*The Fox Theatre*

theatre facilities such as restrooms, dressing rooms, etc., will go there. An additional entry is planned at the old *Mission Hotel* site. A sizable contribution from the **David Woolsey Packard Humanities Institute** makes this all possible, on top of what **RDA** budgeted. This has all been pretty hush-hush, but my animal instinct tells me this is probably another project in limbo until the new RDA honcho and the new mayor decide what projects get funding. Ah, yes, I always wanted to appear on stage...A noble farce, wherein kings, republics, and emperors have for so many ages played their parts, and to which the whole vast universe serves for a theatre...

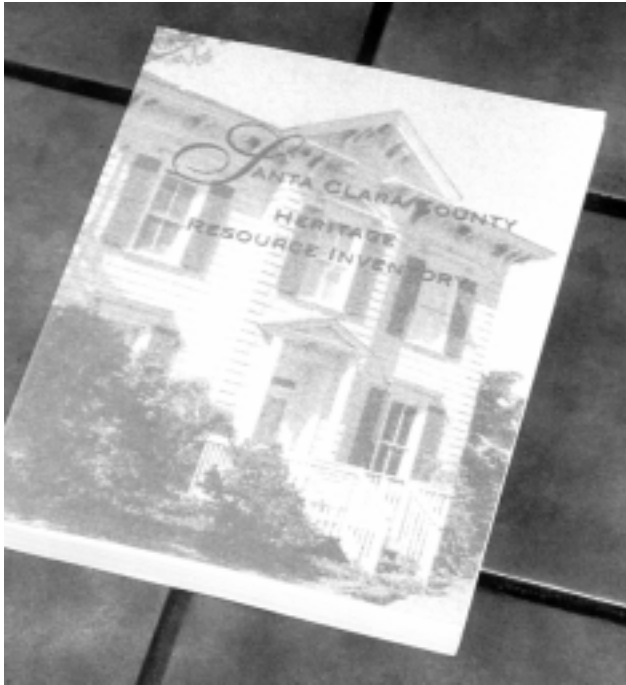
## The Dog

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## 25TH ANNUAL CALIFORNIA PRESERVATION FOUNDATION CONFERENCE MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA APRIL 13-16, 2000

This year's CPF conference in Monterey will give attendees an opportunity to see historic preservation in an extraordinary setting. The conference will feature mobile workshops and tours of Monterey's adobes, Pacific Grove's Victorians, Carmel's cottages and Monterey County's Pebble Beach and agricultural towns. Educational tracks are titled Preservation Tool Kit, Interpretation of Historic Resources, Preservation Issues - Moving Into the Next Century, and Preservation 101. Preservationists, historians, architects and planners are encouraged to attend this conference to learn methods, laws, results and importance of historic preservation from nationally recognized experts.

Registration brochures are available by calling CPF at (510) 763-0972, or by downloading the brochure at [www.californiapreservation.org](http://www.californiapreservation.org). CPF Members receive a discount on the registration fees.☞



## **NEW INVENTORY OF COUNTY HERITAGE RESOURCES PUBLISHED**

*by Beth Wyman,*

Advisor to Santa Clara County Historical Heritage Commission

The Santa Clara County Historical Heritage Commission (HHC) is pleased to announce the release of the *1999 Heritage Resource Inventory*, a 229 page revised and updated publication which covers historic properties and sites within the unincorporated areas of Santa Clara County. Current commissioners are: Chairman Paul Bernal, Elisa Boyden, Ellen Garboske, Lorie Garcia, Mary Lou Lyon, Kristiane Maas, Franklin Maggi, Nancy Mason, Leslie Masunaga, Rick Sprain and Rose-Marie Twu.

Book chapters include 19 areas of the county, a Heritage Tree Inventory and a Matrix of Historical Designations which cross-references all local, state and national landmark categories. Each listing includes the historical and current name of the property, the address, designation status, site description, historic information and Assessor's Parcel Number.

This HHC project was started in 1993. County Planning Department Intern Gayle Feichter was hired by the commission to review the previous listings and verify the new listings. Photographs of each site were compiled by volunteers, including: Ms Feichter, Paul Bernal, Overfelt High School Art Department Chair Steve Taddei, and HHC Advisors Jack Douglas and Beth Wyman. The County Planning Department provided continuous direction and technical assistance.

Information on the various areas was provided by the following volunteers: Judy Allgire, Ruth Fox and Lorie Garcia, Coyote; Pat Snar Escamilla, Gilroy; Rosemary Meyerott and Nancy Mason, Los Altos/Los Altos Hills; Sandy Bailey and Anne Bloomfield, Los Gatos; Steve Burkey, Eiichi Sakaue and Ed Cavellini, Milpitas; Beth Wyman, Morgan Hill; Loretta Jackson, Mountain View; Kitty Monahan and Nancy Mason, New Almaden; Gail Wooley and Steve Staiger, Palo Alto; Ron Eddow, San Jose; Heather Bradley, James Walgren and George White, Saratoga; Marlene Bumbera, Dr. Ronald Hilton, Laura Jones, Art Ogilvie and Steve Staiger, Stanford University; Mardi Gualtieri Bennett and Natalie Wells, Burbank; Elizabeth Krase and Brian Terhorst, CalTrans; Frank Fenton, Jeanine Moring and Debbie Turpin, County Parks Department; Dan James, Dan Petroff and Sidney Sun, NASA; Jerry Smith and William Wulf, Valley Medical Center; Marilyn Dilles, Bruce Franklin and Marlene Wylie, Santa Cruz Mountains; Art De Mattei and Julie Klingman, Valley Transportation Authority. Also contributing to this project were Don Anderson, Michael Atherton, Judy Bogardus, Tom and Karen Kruse, Glory Ann Laffey and Walter Lester. Printing was done by the County General Services Agency Printing Department (GSA).

Copies of this publication have been distributed to county and city libraries, historical museums and historical organizations. Copies are available to the public for \$16 each at the History Museums of San Jose Bookstores at Kelley Park and the Fallon House in San Jose. For more information contact Editor Beth Wyman at 408/867-1195.

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## **NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATIONS, LET US HEAR FROM YOU!**

For many years most redevelopment projects have been focused on the downtown areas of San Jose. Mayor Gonzales and the Redevelopment Agency (RDA) have indicated that they intend to spread out to the many neighborhoods of San Jose which could benefit from available RDA funds. Many of San Jose's older neighborhoods contain historic homes, barns, commercial buildings, bridges, fences, etc. PACSJ would like to write about these historic structures, and to help you preserve them for future generations. Look around your neighborhood, make a list of interesting or historic structures, and we'll help you research their history. Preservation of historic or architecturally important buildings can rejuvenate the surrounding area, and preservation has been proven to be good for business. Tell us about the "gem" in your neighborhood. Phone (408) 947-8025, leave your name and number and someone will return your call.

# MILLS ACT: A PRESERVATION INCENTIVE FOR HOMEOWNERS

by Tom Simon

Many financial incentives for historic preservation apply only to commercial properties or to those listed on the National Register. However in 1972 the California State Legislature passed a bill known as the Mills Act which can benefit individual owners of buildings, including residences, with city, county, state or national historic designations. The Mills Act provides for property tax relief for eligible properties in return for a contractual commitment from the owner to preserve the building and to use a portion of their savings for rehabilitation and maintenance of the building.

The Mills Act enables cities and counties to enact ordinances that permit them to enter into Historical Property Contracts with owners of historic buildings. The contracts typically run for ten years and allow reassessment at a much lower rate than normal. Often savings of over 50% are possible. Unlike traditional Proposition 13 assessments the lower Mills Act assessment even is carried over when the property changes hands. At the end of their term the contracts can be renewed.

When the Mills Act was first passed there were rigid requirements for public access to the buildings it covered. Often annual tours or open houses were required. Also a high percentage of the owner's tax savings needed to be expended on the building. These requirements have been relaxed, making compliance much easier. Usually the individual contracts specify exactly what is required in return for the tax savings.

Each city has wide latitude in how to implement its own Mills Act Ordinance. San Jose chose to only allow historical property contracts for listed City Landmarks. So today in San Jose there are only 108 eligible properties, 5 of which are actually taking advantage of the Mills Act. Considering how many historic properties need improvement in San Jose, it is unfortunate that the city has decided to provide this incentive to such a small portion of them. Often cities are reluctant to apply the Mills Act to a larger number of their historic properties because of fears of losing tax revenue. Likewise cities are sometimes fearful of the administrative costs.

In successful campaigns to expand the benefits of the Mills Act, advocates often point out that only a fraction of the "lost" property tax revenues would have gone to the city, because only a portion of property taxes are passed on to

cities. Furthermore, even if every listed building were eligible the maximum impact still represents a small fraction of all property taxes. Also the program has benefits to cities that can easily justify the minimal loss in revenues. Often historic buildings are in older neighborhoods that need revitalization. An incentive like the Mills Act can often tip the financial scale for families looking to own and rehabilitate an historic home. These families are often willing to make huge investments in their houses and the surrounding community. The alternative for many houses is a continued slide into disrepair and neglect. The final outcome is often destruction or abandonment.

Given what blighted and declining neighborhoods cost San Jose in the form of code enforcement, policing, maintenance and a decreasing tax base, it is clear that maximizing incentives for improving historic properties makes business sense.

The San Jose City Council should expand the Mills Act eligibility to all buildings with a historic designation in its historic resources inventory. Also the city should provide funds for updating the inventory so that all the significant buildings in the city are documented, and thus eligible. In return the city can impose reasonable requirements on owners of buildings with Historical Property Contracts. With a new preservation-minded mayor we are hopeful that these and many other things that have been needed to save historic and significant buildings in San Jose can now be accomplished.

For more information on the Mills Act contact the California Preservation Foundation [www.slip.net/~cpf](http://www.slip.net/~cpf) for their excellent guide. Also the City Planning Department can provide more information on the Historic Resources Inventory. The Mills Act itself can be found at [www.leginfo.ca.gov](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov) as Government Code Section 50280. To voice your opinion contact your city council member at [www.ci.san-jose.ca.us](http://www.ci.san-jose.ca.us) or Mayor Gonzales at [www.sjmayor.org](http://www.sjmayor.org). A somewhat dated copy of the city's Historic Inventory is on our web site, [www.preservation.org](http://www.preservation.org).





Photo Courtesy of Nancy Newlin

In California George W. Page became an active member of the Masonic Order and, according to Newlin, won numerous contracts from his connection with that group. One important commission would take him to Honolulu where he designed his first Masonic Temple (1879). Discouraged at not getting the commission for King Kalakaua's new palace, he returned to Boston. Four years later he would return to San Francisco, marry Miss Hutchinson and set up a practice in San Jose.

He was briefly in partnership with Edward Goodrich, the son of San Jose's first professional architect Levi Goodrich. It is believed that Page's first project in San Jose was the Romanesque Knox-Goodrich Building on South First Street. Soon a number of major designs would flow from his drawing board, including the Congregational Church at Third and San Antonio Streets (1888, razed in the 1960s), the addition to the St. James Hotel (1890), the first Hayes Mansion in Edenvale (1890), the Hayes Mansion chapel and residences in and around the Hayes estate, and the San Jose Unitarian Church.



Detail of Knox-Goodrich building

## GEORGE W. PAGE ALMOST FORGOTTEN ARCHITECT

by Jack Douglas

George W. Page (1851-1924) was, until recently, associated only with his designs for the Hayes Mansion and San Jose's Unitarian Church on St. James Square. A closer look, particularly by Nancy Newlin in her book, *The Gem of Edenvale*, has revealed that Page was responsible for numerous important buildings in this county and elsewhere.

Page was born in Boston and attended schools there. Like all young would-be architects of that era he spent his apprenticeship doing drafting for various prestigious firms in New England, and he was fortunate to be able to attend classes at the newly established School of Architecture at MIT, the first such program in the United States.

With his apprenticeship behind him Page began a career which would keep him on the move for many years. After experiencing the California Pavilion at the Philadelphia World's Fair in 1876 he decided to come west. While working in San Francisco he met his future wife, Mary Hutchinson, the daughter of Robert Hutchinson, an important Alviso businessman.

Perhaps inspired by his colossal Queen Anne style mansion for the Hayes family, numerous other clients commissioned Page and his partner M. M. Bruce to build large homes in that style. A typical example is the ornate residence of Santa Clara County District Attorney James Campbell (shown below).

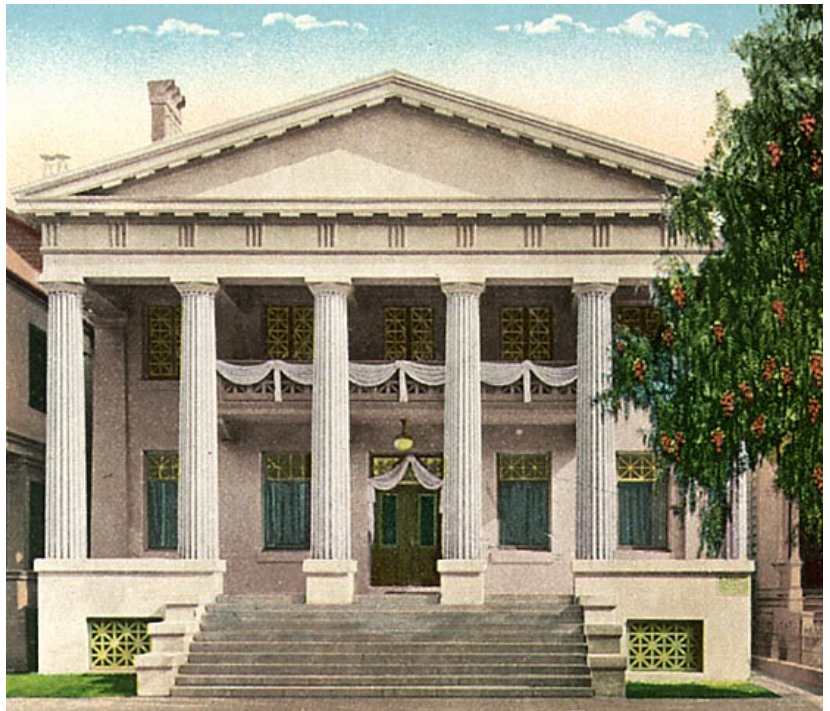




### Queen Anne Gives Way to Spanish Style

The decline of the Queen Anne monster house was symbolized in Santa Clara County by the fire that leveled Page's gabled and turreted Hayes family mansion in 1899. Mary Hayes Chynoweth turned once again to her favorite architect to design a new mansion with separate quarters for herself and her two sons and their families. Page chose to design the second mansion in the soon to be popular Spanish Colonial style. This style was introduced by A. Page Brown in his California Building at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. George Page's second Hayes mansion was a stellar example of this genre. The beautiful tile-roofed structure was the gathering place of the great and near great who visited the influential Hayes family.

Now authentically restored, the Hayes Mansion is open to the public as a conference center. This unique building is, without doubt, George Page's finest achievement; and it is fortunate that it and the recently remodeled landmark Unitarian Church can be enjoyed into the new century.



*Scottish Rite Temple  
Postcard Courtesy of Jack Douglas*



*Hayes Mansion c. 1908  
Postcard Courtesy of Jack Douglas*

Page's last project, the first Masonic Temple on St. James Square, was not so fortunate. This classic Greek Revival structure, later known as Eagles' Hall, was razed, leaving only the facade fronting a ten story office building.

Perhaps bored with bland and faceless modern architecture, the public has rediscovered the charm and character of our older structures, and once forgotten architects such as George W. Page are finding new admirers.

For more information about George W. Page and the Hayes Mansion I recommend *The Gem of Edenvale: The Historic Hayes Mansion of San Jose, California*, by Nancy Newlin, 1994, available at the History Museums of San Jose bookstores. ↗



*First Congregational Church  
Postcard Courtesy of Jack Douglas*

# FRUITS OF THE VALLEY

by Marti Wachtel

Long ago in this valley, the peaches grew,  
Pears, plums, prunes, 'cots—and cherries too.  
The orchardists' work never was done,  
But blessed by good soil and loving sun.  
They reaped and they sowed and they sold them by stand,  
'Til some brilliant soul said, "this fruit should be  
canned!"

So they built large brick plants and shiny machines,  
The orchardists picked, the canners cleaned.  
They sorted and pitted and sometimes they chopped,  
Or they sliced and they diced those wonderful crops.  
They printed labels, they filled the cans,  
Fruit for America was—in the plans.  
Cans were packed, sent off by trains,  
Less frequently ships, but later, planes.  
Communities flourished, the future was bright,  
But something came creeping in the still of the night.  
Where once there were orchards, microchips grew,  
Hardware and software, the Internet too.  
New houses, more houses, the orchards gave way,  
To suburban tracts still used today.  
Housing needs kept growing, all the land now quite dear,  
Some nasty developers said, "the acres, we'll clear."

And what of #51, the cannery gone,  
It stood empty and silent, sad and forlorn.  
"Mow it down" said a group of real estate guys,  
We said, "whoever called developers wise?"  
"Hell, no" said the people. "We're all connected,  
To canneries, to fruit, we never expected...  
This history, our legacy to possibly lose,  
Clearly and surely, not the outcome we choose."  
Then along came SHPNA, Landmarks and PAC,  
Who rolled up their sleeves right off the bat.  
Meetings, more meetings for over a year,  
But the developers said, "What? We can't hear!"  
Then Planning jumped in and wrote a letter,  
"Save the building" they said. "We mean it, you better!"  
Then came the day. It was Tuesday last week,  
And they returned, and said, "here's a peek."  
"We're saving the building. Your history, we're  
marking.

There's condos and lofts and three levels of parking,  
We've done what we could. Your history's back!"  
But the credit is due—SHPNA, Landmarks and PAC.

*Note to our readers:* This poem was written by PACSJ Board of Director Member Marti Wachtel and presented as a three-minute success story at Santa Clara County Heritage Council's Annual Meeting. It is an interesting and amusing view of the battle waged by PACSJ, SJLandmarks

Commission and the Shasta Hanchett Park Neighborhood Association (SHPNA) to save the Del Monte Plant #51 Building, which developers had planned to demolish. We hope you will enjoy it as did we!☺

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*PACSJ Year 2000 Officers  
Standing: Patt Curia and Beth Wyman  
Seated: Kitty Monahan and John Olson*

## PACSJ MEMBERS ELECT OFFICERS

With the sad passing of PACSJ Board of Director's President Rick Sherman last August, John Olson stepped up as Acting President and Andre Luthard temporarily took over John's duties as Vice President. Members marked and returned ballots in January and overwhelmingly elected John Olson as President, Kitty Monahan as Vice President, Beth Wyman as Treasurer and reelected Patt Curia as Secretary. Our organization is fortunate to have these very talented officers to guide us through the next rounds of preservation battles. We hope each of our members will support these dedicated officers by stepping forward to assist with the many activities necessary to preserve our area historic fabric. Thank you to Andre Lutard for his service as acting Vice President and Jim Arcuckle for his many years as Treasurer.



# FINIALS AND FRETWORK

by April Halberstadt

Musings from a dedicated preservationist.

## Once a landmark...

San Jose's only official historian, the late **Clyde Arbuckle**, was once declared a landmark himself. Now his official landmark plaque is firmly attached to his granite headstone in Oak Hill Cemetery. The bronze plaque and a picture of Clyde are on one side of the impressive stone; a long list of his accomplishments are listed on the other. However, the dedication left a few of his old friends chuckling when one observed, "Clyde said he 'never wanted to be taken for granite.'"



*Arbuckle Monument Unveiled*

*L-R: Susan Arbuckle, Leonard McKay, James Arbuckle*

## Forgotten landmark...

General Naglee's great-granddaughter has been visiting in the area and is surprised that San Jose citizens have neglected the 'landmark' Naglee mansion. **Mrs. Lou Lord** has been meeting with local historians and expressed her hope that the mansion could be restored by someone with an interest in California history. This would be a great project to commemorate the California Sesquicentennial.

## Talking and Listening...

The new Redevelopment Agency Director, **Susan Schick**,

is on the meeting circuit, spending a great deal of time talking to various local groups. We heard her speak several times last week and really like the style and content of her message. First, we are really impressed that she is talking with us. Emphasis on the word "with." Second, she has been letting us all know that she plans to revise the RDA's Downtown Plan. The current plan was adopted in 1992 and as Susan points out, the new civic center was planned for the block where the Tech Museum was built. And third, she has been telling us that she plans to invite the prestigious Urban Land Institute to study San Jose and give us some of their insight on development.

## The RDA giveth and the RDA taketh away...

For all of the talk about a livable downtown, the agency is proceeding with plans to demolish a few more houses for another parking lot. More structures in the Balbach neighborhood are the newest target, nibbling away at what is left of the neighborhood. Our last count has about 100 houses slated for demolition by the agency in the downtown area.

RDA staff member **Nancy Lytle** was recently bemoaning the fact that relocating old houses seems to be impossible these days. Nancy has been trying to move the houses in the civic center site and finding few takers. There are a couple of important factors that the RDA seems to overlook. First, many people are extremely wary of dealing with the agency at all and second, most old house enthusiasts refuse to be a party to the destruction.

## And...

Speaking of landmarks, is there any hope of reviving the San Jose light tower? Maybe if we all gather at First and Santa Clara with flashlights...☺

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# EDUCATION! HISTORY! PRESERVATION! ENJOYMENT!

These are just a few of the words to describe PACSJ's upcoming event. Take a walking tour of St. James Square describing the architecture, preservation efforts and historical events occurring in this historic district. Get a rare peek inside some of the surrounding structures, enjoy lunch while a noted speaker tells you all the inside details of the people and events behind the evolution of this historically important district of San Jose. Refer to the enclosed flyer for date, time, and further details. And remember, **ONLY CURRENT MEMBERS OF PACSJ ARE ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND**, so if you haven't sent in your membership renewal for the new year there is a form enclosed in this newsletter for your convenience.☺



*Letitia Time Capsule Trunk  
with Barry Swenson's signature white hat  
and Jack Douglas's book*

cards. Contributors received certificates inviting them to attend the capsule opening ceremony 100 years from now. We advise recipients to treat those certificates as family treasures, pass them down to descendants, or plan on living to a very healthy old age.☺



*PACSJ Board Members Tom Simon, April Halberstadt and Jack Douglas submit Historic Documents*

## LETITIA BUILDING TO REVEAL HISTORY IN THE YEAR 2100

by Ellen Garboske

The elegant Letitia Building, currently under restoration by Barry Swenson Builders, was the site of a recent celebration when PACSJ members along with other members of the community were invited to submit mementos of San Jose's history for inclusion in the building's time capsule. The 'time capsule' actually consists of three sturdy trunks which will be sealed beneath the granite floor of the restored Letitia Building lobby. There will be a plaque to mark the burial spot, with instructions to retrieve the time capsule in 100 years, on January 1, 2100.

PACSJ's contribution to the capsule consisted of a letter to future citizens detailing our efforts to preserve the historic structures in San Jose for their enjoyment. We also included copies of *Continuity*, and booklets that PACSJ published on the St. James Park and Downtown Commercial Historic Districts, San Pedro Square and Japantown. April Halberstadt, Jack Douglas and Beth Wyman donated copies of books they've written or edited, along with copies of the Historic Inventory, PACSJ's membership list and other memorabilia.

There were many other interesting and unique artifacts portraying life in San Jose and the Santa Clara Valley in the 20th century, including lite rail tickets, Barry Swenson's signature white cowboy hat, an artificial knee, photographs, maps and business



*PACSJ Members Celebrate Letitia Time Capsule  
Front row (L-R): Joann Williams, Marti Wachtel, April Halberstadt, Councilmember Cindy Chavez, Ellen Garboske Back row: Tom Simon, Jack Douglas, John Olson, Kris Maas, Beth Wyman, Bill Thomas and Leslie Masunaga — Photo by Beth Wyman*



# DEL MONTE PLANT SAVED FROM DEMOLITION

by Marti Wachtel

The Del Monte Plant #51 building will be adaptively reused as live-work space, condominiums and parking, the Castle Group of San Mateo, developers for the site announced recently. The former cannery, located at The Alameda and Bush Street, was to be razed so that new residential units could be constructed on the site.

The decision to reuse the existing structure was the end result of many months of continual meetings between the developers and subcommittees of the Shasta Hanchett Park Neighborhood Association (SHPNA), the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) and intervention by PACSJ and the City of San Jose Planning Department.

Members of SHPNA, HLC and PACSJ see saving Plant #51 as a major victory for historic preservation in San Jose. The building is potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, the California Register and as a Candidate City Landmark because of its intimate association with a significant pattern of industrial development in the economy of San Jose. The site serves as an emotional and cultural icon to large numbers of area residents who possess a personal and/or a familial involvement in the canning industry.

Present plans call for the Plant #51 building to include 100-110 lofts or live-work space in the northern end of the building, up to 140 units at the southern end with a three-story parking structure in the mid-section. While the exterior walls must be seismically retrofitted, interior trusses and beams appear strong enough to be reused in their current state.

Elsewhere on the project's 10.6 acres, there will be an additional 200 residential units, in an architectural style which will coordinate with that of Plant #51. The developer will also donate 2.1 acres to be developed as part of a 5.0 acre turnkey public park. The project was presented to the City of San Jose Planning Commission on January 25th for the zoning permit. It will be presented to HLC and Planning for the Planned Development permit at a later date.



Del Monte Plant #51

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# CALENDAR



The Preservation Action Council of San Jose is a nonprofit membership organization providing information to property owners and education to the public, and promoting programs and policies for historic preservation and compatible new architectural design.

FEBRUARY	
21 (MON)	PAC SJ OPEN BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING 7PM MOTHER OLSON'S INN, 72 N. FIFTH STREET
MARCH	
25 (SAT)	ST. JAMES PARK HISTORIC DISTRICT TOUR, LUNCH AND LECTURE (SEE ENCLOSED FLYER)
20 (MON)	PAC SJ OPEN BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING 7PM MOTHER OLSON'S INN, 72 N. FIFTH STREET
APRIL	
13-16	ANNUAL CALIFORNIA PRESERVATION CONFERENCE MONTEREY, CA (SEE ARTICLE PAGE 3)
17 (MON)	PAC SJ OPEN BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING 7PM MOTHER OLSON'S INN, 72 N. FIFTH STREET

**USE THE FORM ON PAGE 11  
TO RENEW TODAY!**

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