

# CONTINUITY

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Dedicated to Preserving San José's Architectural Heritage

Fall 2008

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## Why A Mid-Century Survey?

Throughout our community we have dozens, perhaps hundreds, of potentially historic buildings. The problem is we don't know how many. Surveys and context statements are the vehicle that allows us to determine the location of these buildings and also their historic significance.

PAC\*SJ has long advocated the need for increased surveys to allow for a more complete Historic Resources Inventory. The planned Mid-Century survey is important because many of these buildings are reaching a critical 50-year-old threshold. Fifty years is one of the significant criteria used for establishing the historic status of a building. Without a completed survey and the accompanying context statement, potentially historic structures will not be added to the City's inventory and that puts them at increased risk for demolition, or remodeling that does not maintain the character of the building.

The City's Historic Preservation Ordinance clearly states the need for surveys and the inventory:

*In order to help carry out the goals and policies of the city's general plan, ...an inventory of po-*



*One of San Jose's potentially threatened mid-century buildings, the former San Jose City Hall (1958) on N. First St.*

*tentially historical and/or architecturally significant structures shall be maintained. The Ordinance goes on to state: The historic resources inventory shall serve as a resource document which can be used as a foundation for future designation of historic landmarks and/or districts, reviewing and evaluating proposed alterations or removal of structures and proposed development on sites identified therein.*

*(Continued on page 3)*

# Interim Executive Director Message

*"There is a theory which states that if ever anybody discovers exactly what the Universe is for and why it is here, it will instantly disappear and be replaced by something even more bizarre and inexplicable. There is another theory which states that this has already happened." ~ Douglas Adams ~*

It appears, at least here in San Jose, it has happened. Consider the examples below that probably would not have occurred if all things were properly aligned in the Universe.

More than three years ago, PAC\*SJ entered into an agreement to receive grant monies from the National Trust for Historic Preservation in conjunction with the Knight Foundation. Part of the agreement required that we have a local partner match a portion of the grant. After much discussion, the Redevelopment Agency (RDA) agreed to be the local partner and provide a \$35,000 matching grant.

We were very pleased to collaborate with the RDA and felt hopeful this was the start of a new partnership that would lead to positive long-term results. The money was targeted for a much-needed context statement and survey of Mid-Century architecture throughout San Jose. It was the beginning of what should have been a beautiful relationship.

Survey's are an integral part of the City's Historic Preservation Ordinance. The findings become a part of the historic resources inventory. The Ordinance states they "...help carry out the goals and policies of the city's general plan..." It goes on to state the "...inventory shall serve as a resource document which can be used as a foundation for future designa-

tion of historic landmarks and/or districts, reviewing and evaluating proposed alterations or removal of structures and proposed development on sites identified...". A survey benefits everyone – the City, RDA, and the community-at-large.

Well, time has a funny way of changing dynamics, and that's what has happened here. After three years of talking, waiting, and talking some more, the RDA still had not made good on its agreement to fund the matching portion of the grant. We did everything possible to work with the RDA and see this project through to a successful conclusion.

Finally, by late 2007 it was too late. The National Trust said they could wait no longer, and that if the matching money did not surface shortly they would have to pull the grant. And that is just what happened.

Earlier this year, in an attempt to salvage something from this debacle, we had a meeting with the Trust and RDA. Although no one from RDA could explain why there was still no signed agreement after three years, it was decided to move on and see what we could do now.

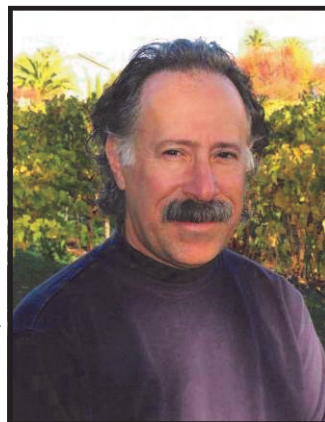
We were pleased that RDA agreed to still fund their portion that they had originally agreed to, so at least a partial survey could be completed. Things began moving again, PAC\*SJ contracted with a project consultant, and it appeared we were finally on our way. But, things work a little differently in the RDA's world.

We supplied all documents requested. RDA General Counsel signed off, so did Risk Management. Finally it looked as if we were about to have a signed agreement and could start the survey. Wrong again.

As we go to press the agreement is stalled on the 14<sup>th</sup> floor of City Hall and the project continues to languish. It defies common sense and there is no rational explanation for the Agency's actions.

We will continue to be optimistic. I hope to report soon that RDA has lived up to their agreement and the survey is underway. Either way, I will keep you informed.

*(Continued on page 3)*



**Brian Grayson**



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## Interim Executive Director Message (Cont'd)

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On another issue that also defies common sense, we have the City Council extremely anxious to demolish the old Martin Luther King Library on San Carlos Street. You can read more about this historic building elsewhere in this newsletter, but you should be aware of the action the Council is poised to take.

Rather than proceed with landmarking the library, which the independent historic analysis scored well above the City's own criteria for landmark status, the Council and the RDA want the building down as soon as possible.

Instead of exploring how the building can be reused and adapted to work with any potential expansion of the convention center, the Council has started with the most drastic solution first. Not only does it ignore the historic quality of the building, it also violates the City's own Green Vision for environmentally superior solutions. Demolishing a concrete building that could be reused is the least "green" action the City could take. Regardless of how much of the rubble is recycled, it does not account for the tremendous energy that went into building the structure or the energy that will be

expended recycling the building.

PAC\*SJ maintains the building should be saved. If the City chooses not to grant landmark status in spite of its high score, then at the very least the building should be reused and incorporated into any future development. Anything less undermines the Ordinance and the City's Green Vision.

In spite of these disappointing developments in the City, it is important to keep things in perspective. In the end, life is too short to constantly fight one battle after another. Nothing brought that to the forefront more than the recent death of a good friend of preservation, Tona Duncanson. Tona lost her fight with cancer but left a legacy of friendship, intelligence, and a knowledge of city government that few ever aspire to. On behalf of PAC\*SJ, I extend our sympathies to her husband Tom and their family. Thank you for sharing Tona with all of us. She will be missed.

**Brian Grayson**

**PAC\*SJ Interim Executive Director, 2008**

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## Why A Mid-Century Survey? (Cont'd)

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Having a context statement, along with the survey, provides a complete package to allow for making planning decisions regarding the City's historic resources. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation Planning indicate how important context statements are:

*Decisions about the identification, evaluation, registration and treatment of historic properties are most reliably made when the relationship of individual properties to other similar properties is understood. Information about historic properties representing aspects of history, architecture, archeology, engineering and culture must be collected and organized to define these relationships. This organizational framework is called a "historic context." The historic context organizes information based on a cultural theme and its geographical and chronological limits. Contexts describe the significant broad patterns of development in an area that may be represented by historic properties. The development of historic contexts is the foundation for decisions about identification, evaluation, registration and treatment of historic properties.*

Over three years ago, the Redevelopment Agency (RDA) agreed to provide matching funding with the National Trust for Historic Preservation for a context statement and survey of the City's Mid-Century buildings. Unfortunately, the Trust's funding was lost due to the RDA's delay in providing the matching funds. We continue to wait for the RDA to honor their agreement, but everyday of delay is one day closer to losing more of our historic buildings. ♪



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# Navy Meets with Public on Hangar One

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On August 26<sup>th</sup>, the Navy held a Public Meeting in Santa Clara on the recent Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA) for Hangar One at Moffett Field. This is a second EE/CA since the RAB (Restoration Advisory Board) Committee voted against the first one. After evaluating 13 cleanup alternatives, the Navy's bottom line advocates removing the skin from the Hangar, coating the metal frame and walking away. Their historic mitigation options include documenting engineering and design records, taking oral histories, cataloguing the inventory, and producing an interactive CD.

The reaction from the public attendees (probably about 150) was quickly apparent from each of the 47 speakers. Representatives testified from the City of Sunnyvale, City of Mountain View, and the National Trust. Others included an architectural critic, previous P3 pilots and Navy personnel, Ames personnel, former Historic Preservation Officer of Palo Alto, and other Moffett Field historians. Emotions ran high and there was applause for each of the speakers who were allowed three minutes. It was obvious that every one felt the Navy's attempt at cleanup was ridiculous and leaving the structure with just a metal frame would only destroy the Hangar in short time and render it useless. The public wants the Hangar in tact, whether such alternatives are used as an acrylic coating, a new fabric skin, or the process that has recently been completed at the sister Hangar in Akron, Ohio. One of the speakers reported that Lockheed has coated their Hangar in Akron (similar to Hangar One) with a substance that will bind the contaminants and prevent further environmental contamination. The cost of this application appears to be less than the Navy's estimates for their removal action alternatives. If Akron can do it, why can't Silicon Valley? Here are some of the comments from the public:

- Adequate cleanup is not enough and leaving just the skeleton is not enough. The building must be returned to the community as a useful working building in durable condition. The Hangar is part of our lives and part of the community. Leaving the Hangar as a skeleton will lead to its demise by "demolition through neglect".
- The "toxics" present a minimal risk and is greatly exaggerated. Other speakers stated they worked in the Hangar and did not suffer health effects.
- Linda Ellis challenged the Navy to prepare an addendum to the EE/CA and include the option of using the Teflon coating which requires no maintenance, has a Class A fire rating and a 60 year longevity.
- Brian Turner from the National Trust said that leaving the Hangar with the metal frame will cause slow deterioration and render it useless. To rehabilitate the Hangar after such deterioration would be extremely costly. Adaptive re-use should be the goal. The Hangar deserves more creative thinking. He also requests that the EE/CA report be resized to a manageable format so more citizens could download it from their computers.
- A comparison was made between the "Emperor's New Clothes" tale and the Hangar. The Navy would like us to believe that an invisible cover (skeleton only) is the same as an enclosure.
- Without the outer skin the Hangar would become a lifeless relic and an aviary for birds. It needs adaptive re-use.
- Why did the Navy reduce the contamination and completely restore the Baylands in previous years, but will not consider restoring the Hangar to a useable state? The Navy needs to finish the job and do it right.
- Several individuals commented on the awesome impression the Hangar made on children and visitors when they first enter the inside space.
- The EE/CA report was deficient in the cost analysis and the adverse effects of the contaminants.
- Air pollution contaminants (chlorides and sulfates) will degrade the coating on the metal frame.
- Three million dollars will be used just for historical documentation. Why not put that toward restoration.
- Why not make the Hangar a great air and space museum, a Smithsonian West.
- The sister hangar in Akron Ohio has just had a combination sealant applied for 10 million dollars. It took 7 months to apply. The Navy was asked to look into this remediation process.
- The Hangar without its skin will look like a picked over Thanksgiving turkey carcass. It will go from an icon to an eyesore.

*(Continued on page 5)*

# Navy Meets with Public on Hangar One (cont'd)

- In the EE/CA 14.9 million dollars is listed for other preservation issues. What is this for? A CD and oral interviews do not constitute historic mitigation.
- The structure, enclosure and space is amazing. The Hangar is a national treasure and is on the National Trust's List of the 11 Most Endangered Historic Sites in America.
- The fabric option cost is not discussed in the EE/CA. The difference between alternative #10 (removing skin) and #6 (acrylic coating) is only 8.4 million. The numbers need to be further explored.
- This Hangar is a piece of our social consciousness.
- If the Hangar sits exposed without its skin, how will the maintenance be performed? Water and bird debris will accumulate on the high voltage electrical boxes, the non water-proof electrical conduit, the elevator and pit, the catwalk, all wood surfaces, cranes, and the Hangar deck.
- The Hangar is seen from space and airplanes. It is an icon.
- The Hangar without a skin will act as a giant bird cage and will become a safety hazard. Planes landing in the area will be exposed to numerous flocks of birds and cause flight accidents. The cost of one of those accidents would be greater than the difference in cost to restore the Hangar properly.
- The Navy is legally obligated to restore this Hangar. The Hangar honors our forbearers.
- Mountain View will hold a Council meeting at City Hall (500 Castro St.) on September 9<sup>th</sup>. The City is asking the Navy to restore the Hangar with full Federal funding. In 1932 the citizens of Mountain View and Sunnyvale donated the land to the Navy for Moffett Field and the Hangar.
- The Hangar is eligible for National Historic Landmark status and is a contributing structure to the Historic District. It is the highest level of historic properties.
- The Navy will lose the opportunity to communicate its history. It would be a great public relations resource if it was restored. It could also generate income to help pay for maintenance.
- The cost of restoration of the Hangar is calculated at \$125 per sq foot. That is a bargain.
- The EE/CA has 453 pages, 265 of those pages are comments after the first meeting. Why waste time and space with this unnecessary inclusion but leave out detailed cost estimates and plans for each alternative. And nowhere did the report state that the RAB (Restoration Advisory Board) Committee voted down the first EE/CA.
- Not counting the emotional value of the Hangar, the Navy needs to do the "politically correct" thing.
- **A skeletal structure of the Hangar will be a lasting memorial to bureaucratic incompetence.**

The Navy's Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA) for Hangar One is available on line at [www.bracpmo.navy.mil](http://www.bracpmo.navy.mil), the Mountain View City Library, or requested from [Darren.Newton@navy.mil](mailto:Darren.Newton@navy.mil). The public comment period for the revised EE/CA ends on September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008. To provide comments on the EE/CA document, or for more information about the Moffett Field Environmental Cleanup Program, please contact Darren Newton at the address or email below. Comments on the revised EE/CA will be addressed in a Responsiveness Summary as part of the Action Memorandum, issued in the Fall of 2008. The Action of Memorandum is the decision document which follows the revised EE/CA. Send comments to:

Darren Newton, BRAC Environmental Coordinator  
Navy BRAC Program Management Office West  
1455 Frazee Rd., Suite 900  
San Diego, CA 92108-4310  
(619) 532-0963 or [Darren.Newton@navy.mil](mailto:Darren.Newton@navy.mil).

# ON THE RADAR



## Former Martin Luther King, Jr. Library:

In August, this 1970 building was denied City Landmark status by the Historic Landmarks Commission, in spite of the historic report assigning the building high points for landmark qualification. It appears that City agencies

might have influenced their decision since it is in the way of plans for a Convention Center expansion. See article on the former MLK Library on page 7.

**San Jose Medical Center:** Building 800, on the southwest corner of E. St. John and N. 16th St is composed of two sections, one built around 1919 with a wooden frame, the other in 1928. The EIR discusses the demolition of all structures except the 1919 portion of Building 800, but demolition of the newer portion could endanger the older portion. PAC\*SJ advocates that all means should be taken to protect Building 800 even if it means saving the 1928 portion as well. The buildings were originally the Temple Laundry. From 1943 to 1960 it was the IBM's card punching plant. In 1961 it became part of the San Jose Medical Complex. The EIR is atypical since no project, other than a parking lot, has been proposed. In August, the Historic Landmarks Commission supported the City staff recommendation to recommend listing the property on the Historic Resources Inventory as a Structure of Merit. There was also discussion about protecting the three other potentially historic buildings. The Planning Commission will tentatively hold the Certification Hearing on September 24th.

The Oncology Building at this Medical Center complex is still in use (Santa Clara and 16<sup>th</sup>) and doesn't need to be earthquake

retrofitted; therefore, it shouldn't be torn down. The greenest buildings are the ones we save from destruction.

**"Graves House", 4146 Mitzi Dr:** This is an 1868 farm house off of Saratoga Ave, near Doyle. It is one of the few structures that could qualify as a landmark in District 1. Sylvester Graves was an orchardist and this house is one of the oldest in the City. It is pictured in Thompson and West, page 85. PAC\*SJ has been monitoring this building since 2004 when we wrote a letter of concern to the City's Historic Preservation Officer. We confirmed that it is in the San Jose City limits and is not on the historic inventory. The house is currently occupied. PAC\*SJ would like the Historic Landmark Commission to consider reviewing the house for possible landmark status.

**Affirmed Housing: St. John and North 4<sup>th</sup> St. (Donner-Houghton site):** The owners of the four-plex adjacent to the site of the former Donner-Houghton House are requesting demolition. It was damaged in the fire last year and an apartment building is now being planned. The Horace Mann Neighborhood Assn. is disturbed by the design of the proposed project.

**Hangar One:** The Navy will save the skeleton of the Hangar One at Moffett Field but remove the toxic "skins". This will leave the structure a virtual and real ruin and unusable for any purpose. See article for more details on page 4.



*The former IBM building circa 1940's (now Building 800) . This plant was the start of IBM's growth in the Valley. (Photo from Draft EIR).*

**Presidio Building – San Francisco:** Gap Founder, Don Fisher wishes to donate his world class contemporary art collection to the city of San Francisco and build a new museum on the parade grounds of the Presidio. That plan would destroy the sense of place since the parade grounds are the assembly point of the fort and tell the story of its military design. The Presidio Trust is open to the concept but other citizen Presidio support organizations are not and they are asking for support. The Santa Clara Valley Pioneers are asking for support to save the Parade Grounds. How about bringing the art collection to San Jose? 🐾



# San Jose's Former MLK Library

The former Martin Luther King Jr. Library, also known as the Main Library in earlier years, is tenuously sitting at 180 West San Carlos Street waiting for the final verdict on its existence. This library is the oldest remaining public library built, specifically as a library, by the City of San Jose. The historic consultant firm, Archives & Architecture, has evaluated the former Main Library and assigned it 104 points, which significantly exceeds the City's requirement of 67 points for City Landmark qualification. Therefore the building definitely qualifies as a landmark under the City's criteria. However the Planning Department and the RDA are anxious to demolish the structure in order to increase the size of the Convention Center, which is directly behind the former Library.



*The Former Martin Luther King Jr. Library on San Carlos St.*

The former Main Library was the fourth publicly owned building to hold the City's downtown library. After San Jose voters approved a library bond measure in 1961, the Main Library was completed and open for business in 1970. Originally the Library was to be the focus of a large civic plaza but plans fell by the wayside. Consequently, the Library is surrounded by high-rise hotels, a parking garage and the Convention Center. The Martin Luther King Jr. Library on San Carlos Street was closed in 2003 when it merged with the San Jose State University Library in the new impressive building at 150 East San Fernando Street.

The former Library was designed by Norton S. Curtis & Associates, a local architectural firm in San Jose. Norton (Bud) Curtis began his architectural career in 1947 working with his father, Ernest Curtis, and William Binder at the eminent San Jose architectural firm of Binder & Curtis. After his father died in 1956, Norton assumed the coordination of his father's Civic Center project on North First Street and later designed the "City Hall Annex". Norton Curtis opened his own firm in the early 1960's and designed government buildings, educational buildings (for University of Santa Clara, San Jose and Santa Clara Unified School Districts), commercial buildings, banks, and churches. Norton Curtis's Main Library project was influenced by his father's design of the Civic Auditorium across the street, thirty-four years earlier. He blended the Spanish Colonial style of his father's Auditorium with modern techniques, materials and style for the Library. Norton Curtis passed away this year on July 3<sup>rd</sup> at the age of 87.

The former Main Library, which was renamed the Martin

Luther King Jr. Library in 1990, is a unique structure built during the later 20<sup>th</sup> Century Brutalism period. Some of the more distinct Brutalist features are: rough concrete texture, bold sculptural forms, minimal window and door decoration/trim, repetitive exterior designs, deep recessions and projecting sculptural forms that contribute to contrasting light/shadow areas, and a two-story pedestal (which is partially sunken below street level) supporting the upper floors. In spite of the security fencing surrounding the lower level, the patio landscaping around the two-story pedestal suggests a peaceful and inviting area, although maintenance is presently lacking. A balcony separates the pedestal from the upper floors and accommodates the entrances on each side of the building. A description of

*(Continued on page 8)*



*The sunken patio looking toward front of building from the sidewalk. Curved walkway in foreground and balcony walkway to front entrance at upper left.*



## San Jose's Former MLK Library – (Cont'd)

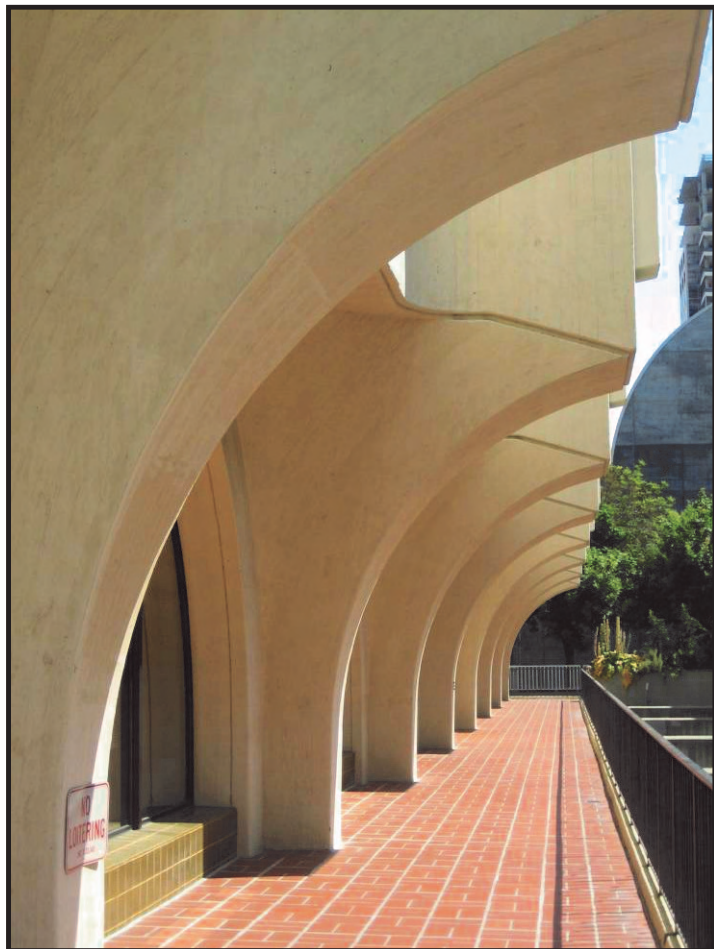
the building soon after it was completed included terms such as “appears to float” and “yet gives the impression of ageless strength” (1970 *Library Journal*).

The concrete walls of the former Library were cast in wood forms and are roughly textured. The repetitive cantilevered ribs, supported on arched buttresses, rise majestically to the top of the building and function as reading areas inside the building. Vertical slots, some with windows, embellish both the ribs and main walls. The flat roof protrudes beyond the top floor's recessed walls. The underside of the roof contains recessed squares that casts light/shadow contrasts.

The non-traditional traits that are not usually found in a Brutalist design include arches at the street level windows, green tiles on the window bulkheads, terra-cotta tiles on the exterior floors, and some decorative trim. The building



*Front entrance with sculpture. Arched window with double door entry. Slots on walls and protruding ribs (with windows) rise above main level arched windows. Note cut-outs at top of wall, the upper windows, sunken squares under roof, and décor at roof's edge.*



*The dramatic row of arched buttresses along each side of the building on the main balcony. They support the cantilevered ribs that rise to the top story, almost touching the roof. Terra-cotta tile on floors and green tiles under windows.*

appears more graceful than many true Brutalist examples, probably because it is designed to blend with the Auditorium's Spanish colonial style across the street. The building combines some Brutalist features with older Spanish Colonial styles and modern trends.

The fact that the previous Martin Luther King Library is not yet 50 years old is one of the arguments for demolishing it. But how can the architectural interest and value of a building be determined if there is inadequate time to objectively determine its worth. The importance of this building style, engineering design, details and craftsmanship, may become more significant as time moves forward. Governmental agencies, city staff and public opinions often change over time. There have been numerous structures destroyed in San Jose that we now lament over their loss.

*(Continued on page 9)*

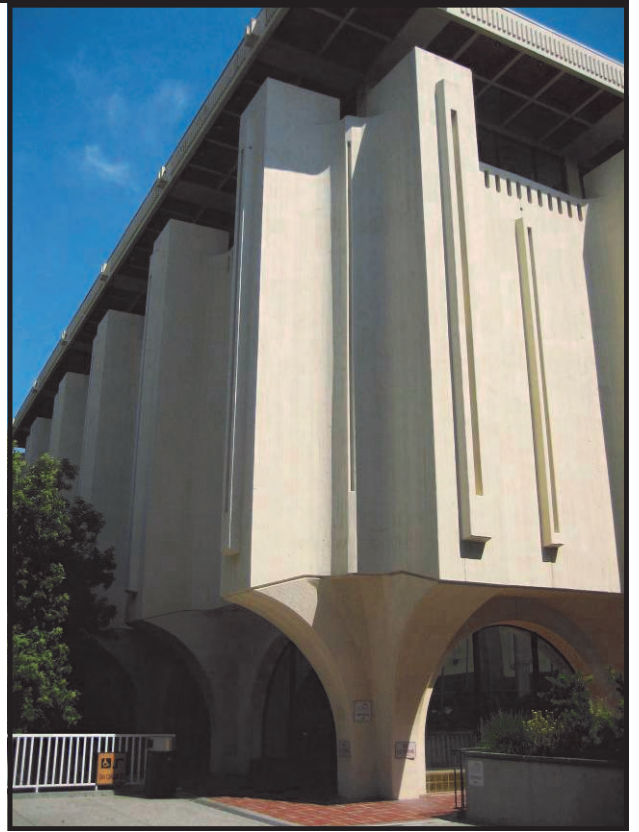


# San Jose's Former MLK Library – (Cont'd)

The former Main Library is a signature building during the rapid, extensive growth in San Jose in the post war industrial age. What makes a city interesting is its architecture from all of the decades. If we demolish our significant buildings constructed between 1960-1980, future citizens of our city will miss that portion of San Jose history and style. This was the largest public building (112,000 square feet) the City ever constructed at that time and was the first building as part of the Kennedy Fine Arts Center plan (which never was realized). It was a stepping-stone to the tremendous growth of San Jose.

And where does sustainable development come in? The Mayor and Council of San Jose tout all things green, yet they are willing to demolish a large, useful building just because it is in the way of another project. All the materials and energy put into the former Main Library will be wasted! Let's think outside the box and incorporate this unique structure into a benefit for our city. Let's develop smartly and maintain our environmental, cultural, social and economic sustainability. Development without a historic preservation component is not sustainable. 🌱

Source: DPR523A, B & L; L. Dill, F. Maggi, & J. Kusz; Archives & Architecture, San Jose



*One of four corners where buttresses and ribs meet.*



*View of patio, balcony, and supporting buttresses. Tripartite windows, rectangular below and arched above the balcony are flanked with bold columns.*



*Repetitive design of ribs with slots above arched windows along one side of the building. Front and back walls contain 8 ribs, sides of building contain 6 ribs.*

*(Photos by Gayle Frank)*

Preservation Action Council of San Jose &  
**The Fruit Cocktail Club**

# Invite you to

# Movie Night

**Thursday**  
**September 18**

**5:30 PM**



## Le Petit Trianon

**72 N 5th Street**

## San Jose

## FEATURING:

- + Nostalgic Food (1950's style)
- + Films highlighting early valley agricultural scenes of the Valley of Heart's Delight
- + Historic footage of Lick Observatory
- + Silent Auction
- + Trivia Contest and other surprises!

Celebrating our agricultural and cultural heritage.  
Period Dress (30's, 40's or 50's) and Hats are encouraged.  
Awards will be given for the best outfits and recipes.

**COST: FREE**

Please bring a 1950's dish to share. Limited Seating.  
Free parking on the street and in the garage across the street after 6 PM.  
More information: 408-998-8105 or [www.preservation.org](http://www.preservation.org)



# PAC\*SJ Salvage and Garage Sale Raises \$2500!

Thanks to everyone who made our recent sale in June a great success! We earned \$2500 for our education and program efforts. Special thanks to Patt Curia and her hardworking team and her gracious neighbors, the Salas and Wangsness families, who along with Patt, again donated their front yards to the sale on South 13th Street.

The unsold salvage items were consigned to the Golda Salvage Yard. As the items were being loaded up at the end of the sale, two customers from the weekend sale stopped to buy doors from the Golda truck. Neighbors donated items that were purchased by other neighbors on the same block, such as the wicker chaise that sat a few hours, then found a new home two doors down. The wonderful old roll top desk moved three blocks south, hauled by Jim Norvell in his red truck. This is recycling at its best.

As with all of our events, our volunteers made this happen. Please say "yes" next time Patt Curia asks you to help with food preparation, sorting items, selling, hauling or clean up.

Our Garage Sale Heroes include: Mary Lou Mason, Yolanda Reynolds, Gayle Frank, Rebecca Smith, the Dahl's, Tom Aldridge, Sheik Ali, Jim Norvell, Patti and Walt Phillips, Leslie Masunaga,

Rene Coca, April Halberstadt, Christi Bantz, Jane Luthard, Jane and Dave Guinther, Bev Blockie and many more who dropped in to say hi and stayed to help. Thank you to everyone who worked, donated, and bought.



*Left to right, Patt Curia, Leslie Masunaga, Yolanda Reynolds*

## Meet PAC\*SJ's New Board Member



*Anne Stahr*

Please join PAC\*SJ in welcoming our new Board Member, Anne Stahr.

Anne has observed the activities of PAC\*SJ for a number of years and believes in the substance of our purpose and mission. She has retired and now has time to devote to activities that interest her. Serving on the PAC\*SJ Board is one in which she believes she can be of service.

In a span of over 35 years Anne has acquired knowledge of Land Use policies of the City of San Jose. She was president of the League of Women Voters in the late 70's. She also served on the Horizon 2000 General Plan Committee that was responsible for the triggers for development in Coyote Valley that have been the subject of much discussion. She worked for San Jose Council member Judy Stabile for all of Judy's eight years in office and had responsibility for land use and budget issues. With this background Anne will be a true asset to our Board. Welcome Anne!



# PAC\*SJ Calendar—2008

- September 18** Thursday PAC\*SJ Movie Night, 5:30 - 9 pm , Le Petit Trianon, 72 N. 5th Street
- September 15** Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6 - 8 pm , Le Petit Trianon, 72 N. 5th Street
- October 20** Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6 - 8 pm , Le Petit Trianon, 72 N. 5th Street
- November 17** Monday, PAC\*SJ Annual Board Meeting, 6 - 8 pm , Le Petit Trianon, 72 N. 5th St.

## Visit Our PAC\*SJ Movie Night

### 2008 Movie Night and Meeting of the Fruit Cocktail Club Benefiting the Preservation Action Council of San Jose

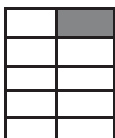
**September 18, 2008, 5:30 pm, Le Petit Trianon, 72 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street, San Jose**

Please join us for a fun evening where we will attempt to turn back the clock to a time when we lived in the "Valley of Heart's Delight", before there was a "Silicon Valley". If you have been to our Movie Night before, you know you will have fun, maybe learn something new and be able to share your experiences from a simpler time. This is a FUN, FREE, and EDUCATIONAL event. We are asking all to come in costume from the 40's, 50's or 60's, and bring a plate of food typical of that era. If possible, use recipes containing fruit cocktail or dried fruit. We will be showing historic footage of films documenting our agricultural heritage and a biography of James Lick . We are hoping that through our time machine James Lick himself will attend the event. You will have an opportunity to participate in a trivia contest and purchase some unique items in our silent auction.

The event is co-chaired by Jim Zetterquist, Joe Melehan and Bill Foley. All three are natives of the Santa Clara County. Jim and Joe worked in the canning and dried fruit business for many years. Bill is a film maker who focuses on local history. They think they know just about all there is to know on our history. Let's prove them wrong. Bring your friends and neighbors, get into character, and show your knowledge of our community when it was dominated by fruit trees and canneries. See you there!

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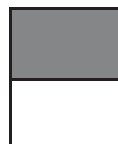
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# In Memory of Tona Duncanson

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*April 7, 1942 – August 4, 2008*



The San Jose historic preservation community lost a good friend this summer when Tona Duncanson died. Tona had been a cancer survivor for eleven years, but unfortunately, the cancer returned this year and took her life. She bravely fought this disease for a decade with little complaint.

I met Tona almost thirty years ago through the League of Women Voters. We became friends and later worked together for the San Jose City Council: I, for Judy Stabile, and she, for Trixie Johnson. When Judy was termed out of office in 1990, it was one of her priorities to leave her historic preservation role on the city council in good hands. She asked Councilmember Johnson to take over these duties and Trixie agreed. As her staff, Tona was given the assignment of representing Councilmember Johnson at San Jose Historic Landmark Commission meetings, and to be a resource for the historic community. Tona, and the two other councilmembers she worked for after Trixie was termed out of office, Linda Lezotte and Judy Chirco, continued in this role as liaison to the Landmarks Commission. I think this is a record in itself: I don't believe any other council staff worked for three different councilmembers on a continuing basis.

Tona attended most landmark commission meetings over a period of seventeen years. Anyone who has been on, or attended a landmark commission meeting knows this was quite a feat. She was always an advocate for historic preservation to her councilmember, the mayor(s), other councilmembers and the community. Tona, working behind the scene and was instrumental in saving many of San Jose's historic buildings.

On a personal note, Tona and I shared many glasses of wine, meals, theater productions and endless discussions about politics, a love we both shared. Tona was fun, smart, hardworking, compassionate, courageous and so down to earth. She had many friends, and I consider myself fortunate indeed to have been counted among them. I will miss her.

Tona was a long time member of Preservation Action Council and attended many of our events. Her wonderful smile and delightful laugh will be missed by all who knew her.

Judi Henderson

# Silicon Valley Googie - *by Heather David*

**Googie:** People either love it or they hate it. It's that wacky, whimsical, space-age architecture that permeated the American landscape in the 1950s and 1960s. Three parts Jetsons, one part Flintstones, Googie was a form of mid-century modern architecture designed to attract an ever-expanding American leisure class.

Following years of rationing, architects and builders entered into the post World War II years with a host of new materials to work with – sheet glass, plywood, new forms of plastic and concrete. The future appeared bright. The economy was booming. Now, how to lure in the American consumer?

The term “Googie,” as a subset of mid-century modern architecture, can be traced back to an article that first appeared in “House and Home” magazine in February 1952. The editor of “Architectural Forum,” Douglas Haskell, was driving through Los Angeles with the photographer, Julius Shulman, when the two encountered the John Lautner-designed coffee shop, Googie's (1949). So struck was Haskell by the restaurant's distinctive design, with its walls of glass and wildly abstract roofline, that a name was born.

**What is Googie?** Googie architecture can be difficult to define – organic and experimental, routinely unpredictable, sometimes just plain laughable. Common Googie design elements include boomerangs, amoebas, starbursts, domes, slanted or upswept roofs, zig-zag or butterfly rooflines, and the liberal use of natural or faux rock. Despite one's personal opinion of Googie, admittedly, it's hard to ignore.

Without further ado, folks, grab your roadmaps and start your engines because we are going on a mini Silicon Valley Googie tour.

1.) The space ship has landed... and it's in Sunnyvale. Long-time valley residents will recall that the **Bank of the West** at 380 South Mathilda used to be a First National Bank. Designed by architect Melvin A. Rojko, the bank was constructed in



*Bank of the West-Sunnyvale*

1962 and opened in 1963. There used to be four drive-in windows positioned around the circumference of the bank, much like a drive-in restaurant.

2.) Promoted as “San Jose's Newest and Finest Bowling Alley,” **Futurama Bowl** opened in 1961 at 5390 Stevens Creek Boulevard. Designed by the architects Powers, Daly, and DeRosa, Futurama featured 42 “automatic” lanes, a restaurant/cocktail lounge called the “Magic Carpet Room,” and a fitness center called the “Glamorama Room.” After a 30-plus year run,



*Courtesy, Alan Hess*

the bowling alley was closed to be transformed into a Safeway grocery store. All that remains today is Futurama's quintessentially Googie sign, revamped and re-purposed, its towering bowling pin supplanted by a giant Safeway logo.



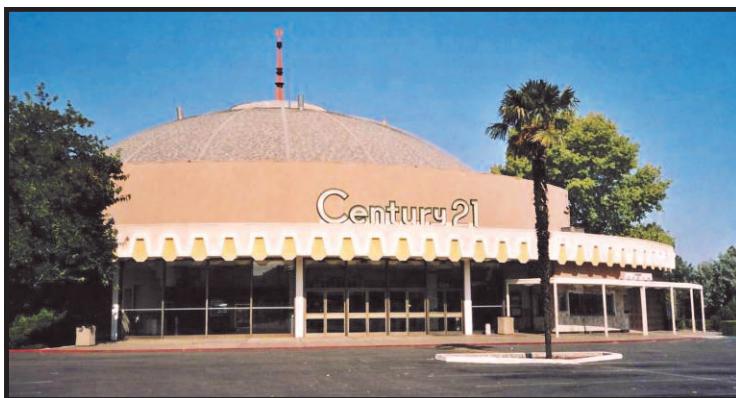
*Tan's Touchless Car Wash—Santa Clara*

3.) If George Jetson needed his space vehicle cleaned in Santa Clara, there's little doubt that he'd go to **Tan's Touchless Car Wash** at 3455 El Camino Real. Tan's is somewhat famous with Googie aficionados as the car wash is pictured in Alan Hess' “Googie Redux” book (2004). Note that the structure's roof is both bisected and supported by a succession of large steel boomerangs. The steel supports have been lightened through the use of circular cutouts. These Swiss cheese-like holes serve both a functional as well as ornamental purpose – think 1950s rocket ships. *(Continued on page 15)*



# Silicon Valley Googie (Cont'd) - by Heather David

4.) **The Century 21 Theatre** opened in 1964, the mothership in a quintet of dome theaters that would grace the San Jose roadside in the 1960s. Designed by the architect Vincent Raney, the Century 21 was originally conceived of as a movie house for the 3-strip Cinerama process but in all actuality, the theater showed films in 70mm. The Century 21 differs from the other Century theaters in that it was constructed almost entirely of concrete and it has a larger lobby. Located at 3161 Olsen Drive, off Winchester Boulevard, this mid-century gem is definitely worth a visit. It's one of just a handful of dome theaters in the Bay Area that has not been "halved."



5.) Some people may not know that the Flames Coffee Shop at 499 S. Winchester Boulevard used to be a **Bob's Big Boy** (1966). The Bob's building, with its rock pillars and convex roofline, was designed by the architects Louis Armet and Eldon Davis, oft considered the "godfathers of Googie." Fortunately, when the folks at Flames took over from Bob, they did little to alter the building's exterior. The building today remains remarkably well-preserved.



*Bob's Big Boy (Image courtesy of Armet Davis Newlove, AIA Architects)*

6.) **H. Salt Fish & Chips** got its start in Sausalito, California in 1965. It was not long before Mr. Haddon Salt's classic English fare caught on and several restaurants popped up around the SF Bay Area. The H. Salt at 905 Meridian Avenue in San Jose, formerly home to Mr. Donut, deserves recognition not only for its longevity but for its truly fabulous building. The butterfly roofline practically screams Googie and the oddly shaped backlit plastic sign is equally innovative. Note: further south, Swan Pools sits in a twin building at 1495 S. Winchester Boulevard.



*H. Salt Fish & Chips—San Jose*

7.) Some of the finest examples of Googie architecture are places of worship and San Jose's **Community of Christ Church** at 990 Meridian Avenue is no exception. Designed by local architect Hugh Kinsler and constructed around 1967, the building appears to be part space ship, part starburst. Note: this church has a fraternal twin in Southern California - the Vallejo Seventh Day Adventist Church in Glendale.

*(Continued on page 16)*



*San Jose Community of Christ Church*



# Silicon Valley Googie (Cont'd) - by Heather David

8.) Informal polls indicate that the **San Jose Water Company building** on the corner of Bascom Avenue and San Carlos Street is the Silicon Valley Googie fan favorite. Not much is known about this great mid-century building except that the structure appears as if it were on lease from Disneyland's Tomorrowland. The roof is supported by a series of evenly spaced boomerangs and the sign rests on a stack of concrete block screens.



9.) **Jimmy's Coffee Shop** has been situated at 222 West Capitol Expressway in San Jose since 1976. Located across from the Capitol Drive-In Theatres (1971) and open 24 hours,



*Above, Jimmy's Coffee Shop. Below, the interior of Coffee Shop*

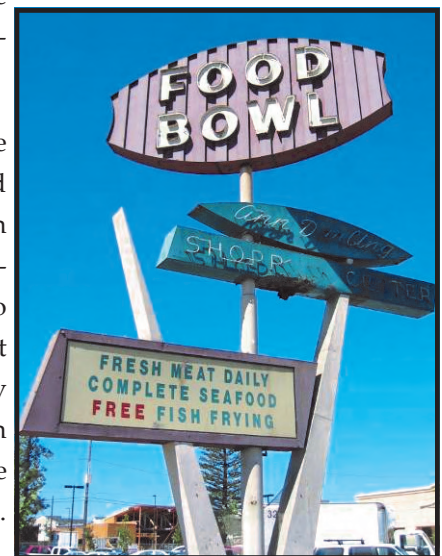


Jimmy's has been family owned and operated for the past three-plus decades. The building exterior is reminiscent of a tiki hut, modernized with plate glass windows and shingles. The interior, however, is really something to behold. From the vinyl-covered counter stools to the zig-zag ceiling and retro wall clock, this is pure Googie splendor – the likes of which we have not seen since the days of Sambo's.

By the late 1960s, Googie started to lose favor as an architectural style. After the assassinations of John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, and Dr. Martin Luther King, the future didn't look so bright anymore. Young adults swapped drive-ins and drag races for Vietnam and Civil

Rights protests. By the 1970s and 1980s, the overall architectural aesthetic in America was notably conservative. With the exception of coffee shops built in the mid-1970s, using earlier designs, no more Googie.

Thanks to books like Alan Hess' "Googie Redux," web sites like *Spaceagecity.com*, and organizations such as LA ModCom, there is an increasing awareness of the historical and cultural significance of Googie. In the past two decades, sadly, the Silicon Valley has lost some of its best examples of this increasingly rare form of architecture - Paul Masson Champagne Cellars, Alma Bowl, and Kiddie World's whimsical sign, to name but a few. Let us celebrate and work to preserve that which still remains. ♡



*Googie style Ann Darling Shopping Center sign off McKee Road in SJ*

# Exploring our San Jose Landmarks

Here are the next five San Jose City Landmarks from our list of 150. The numbers after HL (Historic Landmark) stand for the year the site qualified for City Landmark status (e.g., HL77=1977). The last *Continuity* issue discussed: HL77-4 St. Joseph's Church, HL77-5 Scottish Rite Temple; and HL77-6 Trinity Episcopal Church.

**HL81-7 Hayes Mansion :** 200 Edenvale, San Jose



This beautiful Mediterranean-style mansion was designed by local architect George W. Page for the wealthy Mary Hayes Chynoweth and family. The 60 plus room mansion was to replace their 40-room Queen Anne Victorian that burned in 1889. Mary died before the mansion was completed in 1905 but her lawyer sons, E.A. Hayes and J.O. Hayes, and their families lived there for a little over 50 years. The estate was a self-sustaining community with a Post Office, railroad and carriage station, power plant, men's



*Mary Hayes  
Chynoweth*

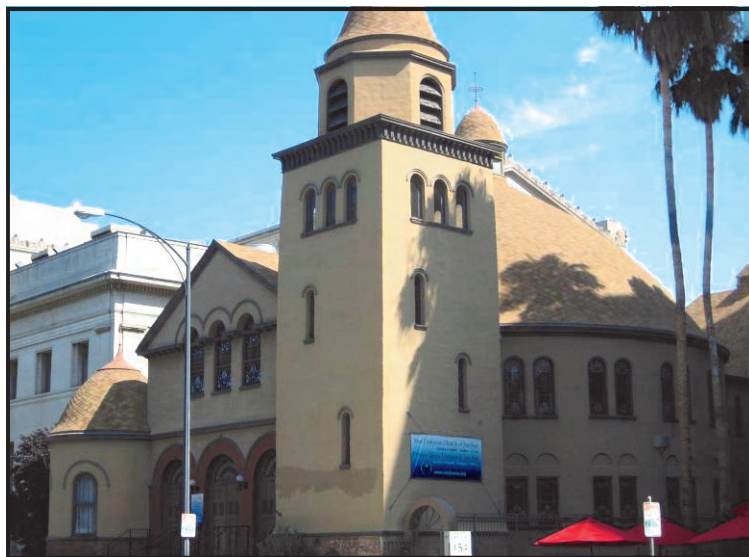


*Above, the earlier Hayes Victorian  
also designed by George Page.*

dormitory, chapel, and they grew their own food. The Hayes sons owned the San Jose Mercury News and were known for their political and community service. In 1975 the mansion was listed on the National Register of Historic Places and in 1981 became a city landmark. After restoration and additional construction, it now serves as a Conference Center. The mansion is available for self tours with a free brochure available from the hotel desk.

For more details on the Hayes Mansion story, see "The Gem of Edenvale" by Nancy Newlin.

**HL77-8 First Unitarian Church:** 160 No. 3rd St., San Jose



This 1892 grand church building was designed by architect George W. Page (who also designed the Hayes Mansion). The church is of the Romanesque Revival style and is one of the few churches in America patterned after the traditional Unitarian churches of Transylvania. Two towers flank the main entrance. Large triple arched stained glass windows decorate the upper façade. Inside, the central chapel is circular. In 1995, a tragic fire halted a comprehensive restoration project, but at a cost of 8 million dollars, the building was back for occupancy in 2001. This building is also registered as a California Historical Landmark.

*(Continued on page 18)*



# Exploring our San Jose Landmarks—(Cont'd)

## **HL77-9 Fallon House:** 175 West St. John St., San Jose



The Fallon House, built by Thomas Fallon in 1855, is a wonderful showpiece that illustrates life in early “El Pueblo de Guadalupe” (early San Jose). Thomas Fallon was a well-known citizen of San Jose and served as mayor from 1859-1860. His home was considered the showplace of San Jose. This 15-room Italianate Victorian is beautifully furnished in the era of the time. The two-story home has a rectangular floor plan, tall ceilings, tall windows with decorative crowns, a Victorian garden, and perhaps the first bay windows built in San Jose.

Take a tour of the Fallon House and hear about the scandal between Fallon and his bold wife Carmel, the daughter of one of the most prominent Mexican landowners (Castro) in California. Tours of the house (and the Peralta Adobe across the street) are by appointment. Call History San Jose at 408-918-1055.

## **HL77-10 East Carnegie Library:** 1102 Santa Clara St.

This landmark library was featured in a previous issue of *Continuity* (Winter, 2007). The Carnegie Branch Library is the oldest branch in the San José library system and the oldest public library in service in Santa Clara County. In addition to becoming a San Jose City Historical Landmark Building, the Library was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1990. After marking the 100-year anniversary in October of 2007, a groundbreaking celebration in

December of 2007 marked the expansion and rehabilitation of this classical revival building designed by Jacob Lenzen and completed in 1907.

The 7,281 square foot structure will expand to nearly 12,000 square feet. The design for the new expansion respects the integrity of the original historical structure, all of which is retained. Reopening is planned for mid-2009.



## **HL77-11 Kirk Farrington Residence:** 1615 Dry Creek Rd.



Theophilus Kirk became one of the Santa Clara Valley's first orchardist, a pioneer in the dried fruit industry and is credited with significant agricultural and horticultural advancements. In 1888 he and his wife, Elizabeth, built this Italianate Victorian ranch

house now known as the Kirk-Farrington House. One of their two daughters Ethel and her husband, Sidney Farrington, also resided in this home. The Farrington's son, Theo, and daughter-in-law, Dorothy Bogen Farrington, returned to the house and ran the ranch in the early 1950s. As a result of her mother-in-law's request that Dorothy never sell the Farrington House, and her own interest in historic preservation, Dorothy established the Farrington Historical Foundation in 1974 and chose the Junior League of San Jose as the beneficiary of the Trust.

The two-story redwood house has 11 rooms, 5000 square feet, 12-foot ceilings, crystal chandeliers, and antique furniture from the Kirk, Farrington, and Bogen families. Over the years the house was updated to include three bathrooms, a larger updated kitchen and a back porch enclosure. The house is surrounded by two acres of heritage trees, gardens and a barn. 🏡

Visit or drive by these wonderful sites of San Jose history. To view the entire list, map and pictures go to: <http://www.sanjoseca.gov/planning/Historic/landmarks.asp>

# How Brutal is Brutalism?

Brutalism is an architectural style that became popular from the 1950s to the 1970s. The name originated from the French term “béton brut” meaning raw concrete. The term was used by Swiss architect Le Corbusier and made popular by British architects and by architectural critic Reyner Banham in his book “New Brutalism” (1954).

Brutalism was referred to as the “celebration of concrete”. It used rough poured concrete in repetitive angular geometries. However, some Brutalist style buildings are not constructed with concrete but of brick, glass, steel, and stone. Conversely, a concrete building is not necessarily of the Brutalist style.

The Brutalists believed that practicality and user friendliness should be the foremost aim of architectural design. The philosophy strived for function over form. There are no fussy architectural details and a Brutalist building has a “rock-solid” design.



*Geisel Library at UC San Diego; Late 1960's designed by William Pereira.  
8 stories*

buildings may not blend with the surrounding environment and at times appear out of place. Brutalism at this point in time is under-rated and the most misunderstood period of Modern architecture.

The Brutalist movement diminished by the mid 1980s but in recent years the buildings have been updated to reduce the “rough” appearance by sandblasting, covering with stucco, or adding pre-cast elements. Today's minimalist styles with its simplicity and lack of superfluous décor resemble Brutalist ideas but without the heavy, bulky silhouettes. With a newer translucent concrete, LiTracon, the Brutalist movement could even regain popularity some day. ☞

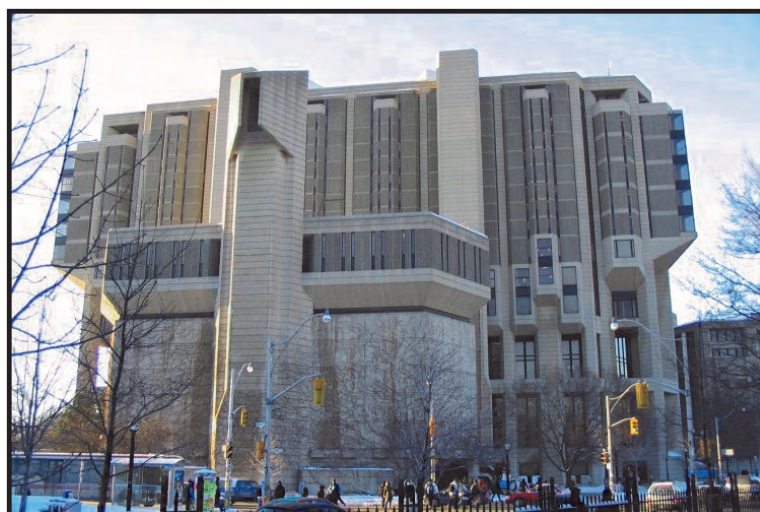


*Boston City Hall  
(Gerhardt Kallmann and N. Michael McKinnell, 1969)*

Many Brutalist buildings feature repeating open spaces resembling cement honeycombs. Often the location of the entrance to a Brutalist building is not obvious to a visitor. Corners are the norm rather than curves. Interiors are often well-designed, open and flowing from one space to another. The style was used when budgets were low, but many architects chose the Brutalist design because they appreciated the honest sculptural qualities and the uncompromising nature of its style.

The Brutalist movement stretched the limits of how concrete could be shaped. Some Brutalist buildings are not pleasing to look at; others are unique and interesting. Examples of a few famous Brutalist buildings are shown on this page.

Brutalist buildings are shown on this page.



*University of Toronto Robarts Library, completed 1973.  
Designed by Toronto Architects Mathers & Haldenby  
in collaboration with New York firm Warner, Burns,  
Toan & Lund. 14 stories.*



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We believe that historic preservation is **good for our quality of life, good for business, and good for the environment**. We aim to integrate a strong commitment to historic preservation into the land use and development decisions of the City of San José that affect historic resources, as well as into the private decisions of property owners and developers. We try to bring owners and developers together to create historically sensitive projects that make economic sense.

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