

Volume 21, No. 2

Dedicated to Preserving San José's Architectural Heritage

Summer 2010

#### **INSIDE**

COVER STORY- San Jose Loses
Another Gem

#### PRESERVATION ISSUES

- 2 ED Message
- 4 Vacant Building Ordinance
- 4 Re-use of Former YMCA
- 5 A Bad Year for Preservation
- 6 Fate of Airport Mural
- 8 Saving Part of Alviso
- 10 Juana Briones House Named "Most Endangered"

#### **PAC\*SJ NEWS**

- 11 PAC\*SJ Calendar
- 12 Save the Date! Nov. 12th
- 12 SJ Landmarks Commission Sponsors Photo Contest
- 13 New Book Release—"Mid-Century by the Bay"

#### PRESERVATION ARTICLES

- 14 Lowe's Honors IBM 025
- 16 They Left Their Mark: Architect Series, Donnell Jaekle
- 19 W.A.O.N. Celebrate 100 Year Clubhouse
- 20 Exploring SJ Landmarks
- 22 Do You Have Old Films?
- 22 "Cinnabar To Quicksilver"
- 23 Membership Form
- 24 Board and Staff Roster

# San Jose Loses Another Gem



Yes, San Jose lost <u>another</u> historic building. Most of the Delmas Church at 217 Delmas Avenue near Park Avenue burned to the ground in the early morning of March 23<sup>rd</sup>. The number of historic structures lost to fire in San Jose is out of control. Historic preservationists have been pleading with the City of San Jose for years to implement an ordinance to deal with negligent owners who let their historical buildings deteriorate until they either burn or fall down. In this case, the vacant building had a fence and boarded up windows but there was evidence that homeless people were living inside. The three Victorian houses on either side of the Church have been demolished.

It was hoped that the church could have been renovated and possibly developed for community access, since it would have been surrounded by a housing complex.

The Delmas Church, originally known as the Evangelical Lutheran Bethel Church, was built in 1907-08, had "a high level of historic integrity" and was "an excellent and unusual example of a Craftsman/Colonial Revival style church in San Jose" according

(Continued on page 2)

#### San Jose Loses Another Gem! (Cont'd)

to the 1999 state historical report. The building was also eligible for National Register of Historic Places status.

Over the years, various groups of Lutherans or Baptists occupied the Church. Most recently the Primera Iglesia Bautista Church resided in the building. The attractive steeple, round window, highly peaked roof and Craftsman features made a prominent statement and caught the interest of many passers-by. What a waste of such a unique historic resource! The preservation community is deeply saddened.









is published quarterly by the PRESERVATION ACTION COUNCIL OF SAN JOSE

The opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of PAC\*SJ itself.

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Please submit your letters, comments and suggestions to <a href="mailto:info@preservation.org">info@preservation.org</a> OR

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Top right and left, burnt Delmas Church rubble.

Above, the vacant Church in 2009.

(Photos/text: G. Frank)

## **Executive Director's Message**



Brian Grayson
PAC\*SJ Executive Director

We all know it's a tough economy out there and the negative impacts it is inflicting at every level – from individuals and their families to large corporations and certainly non-profit organizations. We are not immune from the unstable economy, but PAC\*SJ has always run a lean operation and we do an awful lot with not very much. In fact, we pride ourselves on how

much we accomplish given our relatively small budget.

This year, as we celebrate our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we can bask in many successes and ponder a number of losses as well. We look forward to new challenges and an improving economy, but in the meantime we have to face a reality that requires us to work even harder for dollars that are increasingly more difficult to come by.

We are working on our 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration gala that will be held on November 12 at the historic San Jose Woman's Club. This event will be a major fundraiser and will celebrate the work of the dedicated members of PAC\*SJ and especially those who founded the organization 20 years ago. We hope you will celebrate with us in November and make this not only our most profitable fundraiser ever, but also our biggest and best event ever.

You will read elsewhere in this issue that 2010 has been a bit of a bumpy ride for preservation in San Jose. We have already faced a number of difficult challenges and the year is not yet half over. In spite of some of the setbacks outlined in this newsletter, we have also had some good things happen involving preservation.

Most recently, the City Council unanimously approved a new Vacant Building Ordinance. Although too many historic buildings were lost while this revised ordinance languished in City Hall, we finally have a stronger ordinance that will hopefully prevent the loss of further structures due to "demolition by neglect."

Some provisions in the ordinance are not as strong as we would have preferred and we did raise those concerns to the

We all know it's a tough Council. Hopefully they will be reviewed as necessary as the ordinance is enforced. We encouraged the Council to not only require alarm systems on historic buildings but also to require that these alarms be monitored on a 24-hour basis. We also suggested that there are appropriate times when fire sprinkler systems should also be required.

The end result though is that the Council unanimously supported the ordinance and added additional protections to our most vulnerable historic resources.

A new contest focusing on historic buildings was unveiled recently in celebration of Historic Preservation Month. San Jose's Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) presented the first Historical San Jose Photo Contest. Nearly 150 entries were received featuring photos of historic San Jose. In addition to cash awards and prize ribbons, PAC\*SJ provided preservation-related books to the winning photographers. The prizes were awarded at a reception in the City Hall rotunda. Vice Mayor Judy Chirco participated in the program and Councilmember Nancy Pyle also attended. It was a wonderful first effort and we look forward to an even bigger and better one in 2011.

Other recent highlights include a well-deserved honor for Vice Mayor Judy Chirco who was recently honored by State Senator Joe Simitian as the 11<sup>th</sup> Senate District Woman of the Year. In addition to being a two-term Councilmember and Vice Mayor, Judy also serves as the liaison to the City's Historic Landmarks Commission and has been a good friend to PAC\*SJ.

And finally, I want to mention that John Weis, Assistant Executive Director of the Redevelopment Agency, has announced that he is leaving the Agency to return to his native Massachusetts. John has always been available to us and worked hard to make things happen. In fact, without his efforts, we would probably have never secured the funding from the Agency for the Mid-Century Survey that was completed last year. We wish John well and thank him for his assistance during his many years in San Jose.

So, as we reflect on 20 years of PAC\*SJ, we look at what has changed and what has stayed the same. Perhaps the most consistent element during our two decades has been our members and strong volunteer base. We could not have survived without the hard work and dedication of many, many volunteers. On behalf of the Board, I want to thank everyone

(Continued on page 7)

### Neglected, Vacant or Abandoned Buildings Ordinance

On May 18, 2010, the San Jose City Council voted to approve an ordinance amending the San Jose Municipal Code regarding neglected vacant houses. The following are the highlights of the ordinance change

- The title of the ordinance was changed from Neglected Vacant Houses to Maintenance and Rehabilitation of Neglected, Vacant or Abandoned Buildings and will expand the provisions of the existing ordinance to include any neglected vacant or abandoned building.
- It will require that all vacant or abandoned buildings be rehabilitated within 180 calendar days after the building is vacant unless the building meets certain maintenance or other requirements specified in the ordinance. (Rehabilitation in this case means only to the level that the building is safe and is not an eyesore in the neighborhood.)
- The amended ordinance will require all vacant or

abandoned historic buildings or structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places, California Register of Historic Resources or City of San Jose Register of Historic Landmarks to have an operating security alarm system approved by the City's Director of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement. The amended ordinance also clarifies that vacant or abandoned historic buildings deemed unsafe by the Fire Marshal may be subject to additional fire alarm system requirements consistent with the California Fire Code

PAC\*SJ is concerned that historic buildings not listed on a register will not be protected by this ordinance revision. The Director of Planning said that the issue of Structures of Merit would be addressed at a later date. The City will communicate the passage of this ordinance to the County and ask that any County owned historic structure within San Jose be afforded these same protections.

Judi Henderson

#### Re-use for Former YMCA



The former YMCA building on Third and East Santa Clara Streets (100 E. Santa Clara) now serves emerging Silicon Valley start-ups and small businesses who are affiliated with the Environmental Business Cluster (EBC), the US Market Access Center (USMAC), and the Entrepreneur Center (eCenter). This enterprise, the San Jose Innovation Center, enables local and international businesses to operate efficiently in a unique office space while expanding their operations through synergy and innovative technologies.

The historic building is freshly painted a deep teal with white and yellow trim. The interior has been renovated with a modern ambiance, with the assistance of the San Jose Redevelopment Agency. This may be one of the last structures to be renovated with RDA assistance until the economy improves. The YMCA structure was designed by well-known local architect, William Binder, in 1913.

This San Jose Innovation Center program is a collaborative effort, operating for the last 15 years, between the San Jose

Redevelopment Agency, the San Jose State University Research Foundation, and the Humboldt State University Sponsored Programs Foundation. The program has benefited the City of San Jose by increasing our business base and producing many new jobs. 🗷

## A Very Bad Year for Preservation

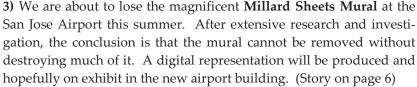
2010 has not been a good year for historic preservation in San Jose. Along with drastic budget cuts that seriously diminish the Planning Department and its historic preservation staff, we have lost many of our historic resources in San Jose.

1) The historic and unique **Delmas Church**, on Delmas Avenue near Park Avenue, completely burned in April, due to lax security. Homeless persons were not kept out of the vacant building despite pleading from preservationists to require the owner to take steps to protect the structure. PAC\*SJ has been requesting a city ordinance to protect our vacant historic buildings for several years, spurred by the loss of the Donner-Houghton home (2007) and the IBM 25 Building (2008). See cover story and pictures.

2) The infamous Letcher's Garage, on North  $1^{\rm st}$  Street and St. James, was demolished by Barry

Swenson Builder in April to make way for more condominiums. Those wonderful old bricks and large wooden trusses from 1905 are gone forever. The historic metal doors have been reported to

have gone to History San Jose. (See Spring Continuity for story).



- 4) The former Martin Luther King Library is slated to be razed this summer. This perfectly solid building was the original structure in a plan for a large city plaza back in the 1970's and is an excellent example of that era. Has San Jose not heard that the greenest building is the one that is still standing? We shudder to think that all the energy it took to build that building will be completely wasted.
- **5)** The City of San Jose is considering selling the beautiful **Hayes Mansion** since they can't afford payments on the \$60 million dollar loans.
- **6)** The County may have to close the **Santa Clara County Archives** but is attempting to find funds to keep it open at least part time.
- 7) The interior of **Hangar 1** at Moffett field will be gutted this summer and removal of its roof and skin will begin in the fall of 2010.
- 8) **BAREC:** After over a decade of controversy, the last farmland in Santa Clara, 17 acres of history and a previous agricultural research site operated by UC, was plowed over to prepare for yet another housing project. \*\*OME (Photos/text: G. Frank)



Top right and above: the remains of the Letcher's Garage on the corner of No. 1st St. and St. James. Bulldozers razed the historic buildings in March.



Continuity, Summer, 2010 PAC\*SJ PO Box 2287, San José, CA 95109-2287

## **Fate of Airport Mural**

On Tuesday, May 18, the Public Art Committee on behalf of the Arts Commission approved a plan for the removal and relocation of Millard Sheets mural at Terminal C of Mineta International Airport. In true Silicon Valley style, the mural will be digitally documented at a high resolution and reproduced for installation at another location in the airport. The City will work with the artist's son, Tony Sheets, to try to save and reinstall vignettes from the mural at the airport and, perhaps, other locations. This decision followed a public meeting on Thursday, May 6, co-hosted by the Preservation Action Council, Office of Cultural Affairs and the Airport Department. At that meeting, the City shared the reports and engaged in a thoughtful discussion about options. Understanding that the original mural cannot be saved intact, the community consensus was that the option of a digital reproduction was an excellent alternative, and one that could work within the Airport's schedule for the completion of its renovations.

The City and Airport approached the preservation of Millard Sheets' mural very seriously and consulted expert fine art conservators to obtain a clear understanding of the technical issues and alternatives. The work of these professionals included in-depth investigations focused on saving the canvas in its original state. They looked at the content and composition of the canvas, paint, primer, research into the wall structure, and the adhesive materials used to mount the mural to the wall. (See picture on right).

After more than a year of investigation, it became clear that there is no easy answer to preserve the painting itself. The conservator reported that there is no way the mural can be removed in one piece: the materials and assembly method make this impossible without considerable damage to the artwork. Removing the canvas and wall together as one assembly was also explored. Unfortunately, removing the wall in segments would cause considerable, irreparable damage to both the painted surface and canvas, which would preclude it from ever being restored effectively. Moving the entire 28-ton wall would be prohibitively costly, estimated at well over \$1 million, and still would present serious

preservation risks and additional transportation, storage, and relocation challenges.

Fortunately, technology now provides an option for retaining the mural image in a way that was not possible when Millard Sheets first painted it: an extremely high-resolution digital image can be captured, and that image can produce a high-quality, large-scale reproduction of the mural. Murals generated from digital images can be created on many types of material with excellent results and many additional long-term benefits. This option is now a leading approach to mural conservation nationally, and it could allow for the Sheets mural to have a continued presence at the Airport.

Throughout the process of investigating the options the City stayed in close contact with Tony Sheets and with concerned

(Cont'd on page 7)



# Fate of Airport Mural (Cont'd)

community members. After reviewing the technical findings, Tony Sheets, concluded:

"Those responsible for this new terminal construction have worked endlessly to explore ways to remove the mural, hiring several experts in the fields of art restoration and architectural preservation. The conclusion of all, including myself, is that successfully removing the mural intact in anything but small pieces is not possible. Removal of the pieces is not possible without sacrificing the mural as a whole."

With the completion of the Airport's new Terminal B and related improvements, Terminal C is scheduled to be demolished this summer. Preserving it digitally and reinstalling it at the airport will insure that it will be enjoyed by future travelers in and out of San Jose.

Millard Sheets (1907-1989) was a renowned California artist known for his stylized depictions of daily life. He is credited with over 200 architectural designs and murals that span the United States. His artwork hangs in 46 museums in 15 states, including the Smithsonian, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum, the Chicago Art Institute and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. Locally his presence is evidenced in many building designs, mosaics, and wall paintings. His work can be seen throughout California on the entrances of buildings that were formerly "Home Savings of America" banks.





Above, Researchers test the mural canvas. Left, various solvents used to attempt removal of the mural from its backing.

Further information on the project on the conservator Reports, related background information and the full text of the May 6, 2010 letter from Tony Sheets to the community may be viewed at: www.sanjoseculture.org/downloads/InfoSheet\_Links\_SheetsReports.pdf.

Photos/text: Barbara Goldstein, City of San Jose Public Art Director

## Executive Director's Message (Cont'd)

who has helped us achieve our many successes and most of all who have helped us survive to begin our third decade of service to the San Jose community.

Have a good summer but don't forget about PAC\*SJ. We'll be staying busy monitoring all things preservation. Watch for details about our November 12 fundraising gala and plan to attend and celebrate our 20th anniversary.

Brian Grayson
Executive Director
Preservation Action Council of San Jose

## Saving Part of Alviso (Cont'd)

In Alviso, a small building sits on Liberty Street, near North First Street, that most recently served as a community center. Years ago it was used as the woodshop to accompany the larger two-story Alviso School next door. Later, the small structure served as a firstgrade classroom and then was turned to face Liberty Street. Stucco covers the wooden building that served school children for so many years. Now, citizens of Alviso are alarmed that the City of San Jose may have plans to demolish it.

Next door, the larger two-story Alviso School was torn down around 1970, without notification or warning to the Alviso citizens, and immediately after voters elected that Alviso was to become part of San Jose. Inhabitants of Alviso still claim that the election was rigged with the addition of non-resident voters. The final count was 189 for consolidation and 180 against. After the election Alviso citizens gave the small school



building to the City of San Jose with the agreement that San Jose would maintain it. The lot where the large school was razed is now paved over with a trailer toward the back that serves as a Post Office. To make matters worse, three years ago the City of San Jose removed the two historic palm trees that had presided over the 1900 school building (see picture below).

Down a few streets from the old school building, at 1060 Taylor Street (formerly North First Street) sits an attractive log building that presently serves as a community police center. This 1937 building, built by volunteers with donated materials and land, was built to serve as Alviso's City Hall. The exterior logs have been recently painted and appear to be in good condition, but unfortunately the interior knotty pine walls have also been painted. In later years the former City Hall served as boat dock headquarters, community center, economic opportunity center, library, and post office.

Behind the former City Hall, sits a small garage-type structure with a large door at the far end. This building, which appears



in a sad state of repair, was the original volunteer fire house, staffed by Alviso volunteer firefighters and thought to have been built soon after WWII. It housed the Alviso fire engine that was subsequently given to the City of San Jose.

(Continued on page 9)

Above, the former school room, today, that served as a wood shop, first grade classroom, and finally a Community Center until recently.

Left, the larger Alviso School that was torn down around 1970. The smaller school room building next door was turned later to face Liberty Street. The two palm trees were removed about 3 years ago.

## Saving Part of Alviso (Cont'd)

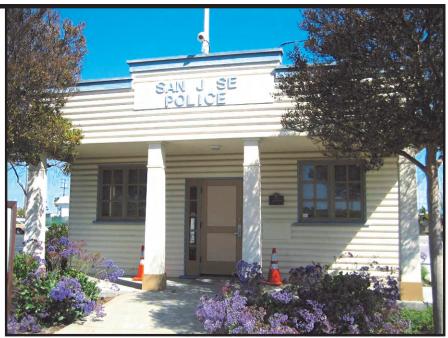
The old school building, the first City Hall, and the original volunteer fire department building are all reminders of the former independent Alviso city and its unique history. These three community structures are all that are left to express that Alviso was its own city, originally incorporated in 1852.

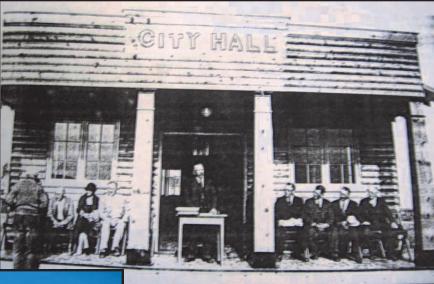
The good news is that Matt Morley, from General Services of the City of San Jose, stated that "there definitely are no plans to tear down any of these three historical buildings in Alviso." He said that for the present, the former schoolhouse and the former firehouse will remain vacant until a plan is developed to rehabilitate them. The schoolhouse contains asbestos and the firehouse is badly in need of renovation. The former City Hall will remain a police center. So hopefully Alviso residents can rest easy that these three significant buildings will remain to tell a portion of Alviso's interesting history as one of the Santa Clara Valley's oldest cities. (Continued on page 10)

Top, the former City Hall of Alviso as it looks today. It serves as a community police center.

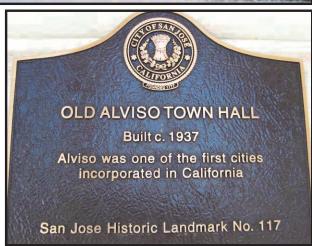
Right, the Alviso City Hall in early days

Below, the former Volunteer Fire Department garage, built and staffed by volunteers with donated materials and the assistance of WPA.







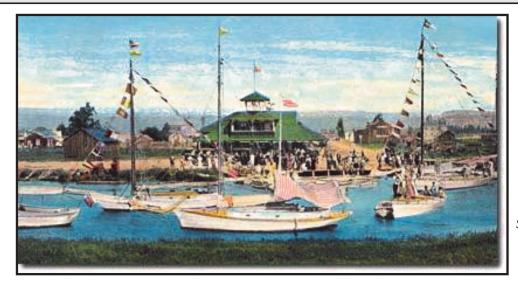


## Saving Part of Alviso (Cont'd)

#### **Brief History of Alviso**

The Alviso land was first granted to Ignacio Alviso in 1838 and became the Rincon de los Esteros Rancho. Ignacio Alviso, with his father Corporal Domingo Alviso and family, arrived in the Santa Clara Valley at the age of three with the de Anza party in 1776. As an adult, Ignacio Alviso realized the potential for a port and built a dock to handle trade and passengers between San Jose and San Francisco. Later in 1849, the township of Alviso was laid out from a portion of the Rancho and the first steamboat from Sacramento arrived. By 1852, the town of Alviso was incorporated and served as an important hub between San Francisco and San Jose. But in 1864 the San Francisco-San Jose Railroad bypassed Alviso and contributed to the town's slow economic decline. Still, transport of fruits and vegetables continued. Alviso Mills, founded in 1853, prospered and later Bayside Canning Company (owner Thomas Foon Chen, aka "the Asparagus King", and his father, Sei Yin Chew) successfully operated along the port until 1936. Steamboats, schooners, yachts, shrimp boats, barges and houseboats continued to utilize the slough. But by the 1970s dredging became unfeasible and the grass, silt and reeds choked the slough, preventing maritime vessels access to the port.

In 1886 the South Bay Yachting Association was founded and later became the South Bay Yacht Club, building an attractive clubhouse in 1903. The Yacht Club still stands after being moved to the north and twenty feet higher in 1985 to escape more damage from common floods in Alviso — floods that were primarily caused by the Santa Clara Valley agricultural industry heavily drawing up underground water and causing subsidence of the land. \*\*C3\*\*



Left, the thriving
Alviso Port in 1916.
Yacht Club and Alviso
town in
the background

Present day photos: G. Frank

Vintage photos: Robert Gross

Sources: Richard Santos, Robert Gross, & http://www.historysanjose.org/ neighborhoods/alviso

## Juana Briones House Named Most Endangered

On May 19th of this year, the National Trust named the Juana Briones House in Palo Alto as one of the top eleven most endangered landmarks in the country. The historic house, which has been modified over the years, was named a California State Historic Landmark over 50 years ago but now faces demolition.

The National Trust summarizes the importance of the life of Juana Briones as follows. "Long before the Gold Rush, Juana Briones' remarkable life made her a well-known figure in early California history. Her story of an independent, resourceful business woman and healer resonates with people of all cultures, classes, races and ages. Hers is a unique and largely unknown story, one that can't be forgotten." . 🗷

To view pictures of the Briones House go to <a href="http://www.preservationnation.org/travel-and-sites/sites/western-region/juana-briones-house.html">http://www.preservationnation.org/travel-and-sites/sites/western-region/juana-briones-house.html</a>.

## PAC\*SJ Calendar 2010

- June 21 Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6 - 8 pm, Le Petit Trianon, 72 N. 5th St., San Jose
- July 19 Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6 - 8 pm, Le Petit Trianon, 72 N. 5th St., San Jose
- Aug 16 Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6 - 8 pm, Le Petit Trianon, 72 N. 5th St., San Jose
- Sept 20 Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6 - 8 pm, Le Petit Trianon, 72 N. 5th St., San Jose
- Oct 18 Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6 - 8 pm, Le Petit Trianon, 72 N. 5th St., San Jose
- Nov 12 PAC\*SJ's 20th Anniversary Celebration at the San Jose Woman's Club, 75 North 11th Street, San Jose. 6:00 pm — 9:30 pm.
- Nov 15 Monday, PAC\*SJ Annual Meeting/Board Meeting, 6 - 8 pm, Le Petit Trianon, 72 N. 5th St., San Jose

#### **Local Events**

- PAC\*SJ Garage and Salvage Sale, 4 Yards Full! June 4th Friday 7:00am-7pm, June 5th Saturday 7:00am-3:00pm, 260 South 13th St.
- The Alameda Neighborhood: Rose, White & Blue Parade and Festival, Free, July 4th, 10 am. Parade begins on San Carlos St.
- VPA (Victorian Preservation Association) will hold the grand opening celebration of their Andrew Hill house on July 25th at San Jose History Park.
- Little Italy: 30th Annual Italian American Family Festa, Free, August 29th (11-8 pm) & August 30th (11-6 pm) at the Guadalupe River Park.
- California Pioneers of Santa Clara County: BBQ lunch at History San Jose Park, Sept. 5th. Celebration of California Admission Day.
- PAC\*SJ's 20th Anniversary Celebration, November 12th, San Jose Woman's Club.

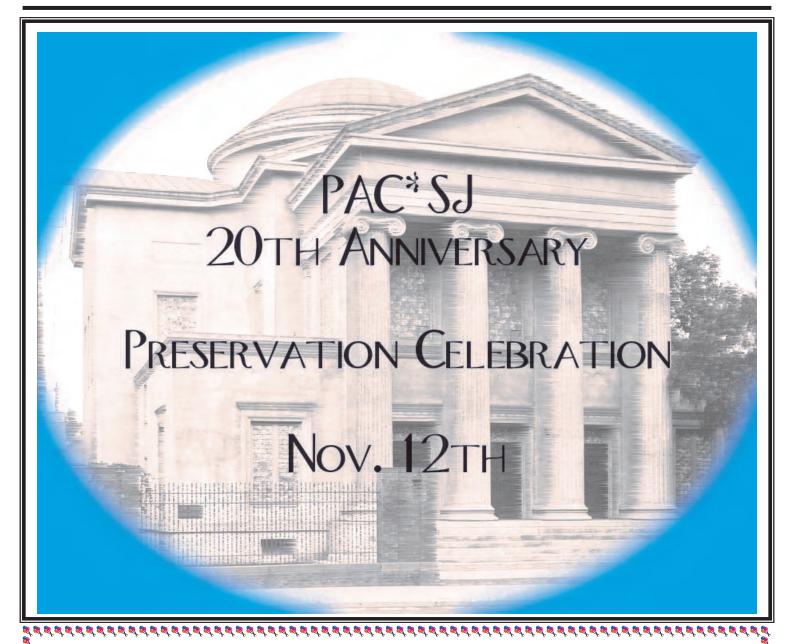
## **ADVERTISE IN CONTINUITY!**

Continuity is distributed to over 600 San José preservationists, homeowners and decision-makers. It's a great way to get your message out to your best potential customers! For ads larger than the business card, you must supply camera-ready artwork, or PAC\*SJ can provide it at an additional charge.

Buy ads in 6 issues and SAVE! Plus, all multiple-issue ads come with a free membership!

	Business Card		1/4 Page	1/2 Page	Full Page
	Single issue \$50	Н	Single issue \$100	Single issue \$200	Single issue \$375
	3 issues \$120		3 issues \$250	3 issues \$450	3 issues \$700
_			4	ı	

## **SAVE THE DATE!!**



In October of 1990, the Preservation Action Council of San Jose was founded with a Board of Directors and an Advisory Board. They began the long fight for rescuing valuable historic buildings in San Jose and educating the public on the importance of preservation. One of PAC\*SJ's first efforts was to save the First Church of Christ Scientist (pictured above) on St. James St. from the wrecking ball. Twenty years later we still face challenges for this project, but hope it will soon be restored to its previous grandeur. We will honor PAC\*SJ's early advocates of historic preservation at our 20th Anniversary Celebration on November 12th.

Please plan on attending the festivities and pay tribute to these dedicated people who started it all. Enjoy gourmet delicacies, spirits, entertainment, auction, and friends!

6:00 pm at San Jose Woman's Club, 75 So. 11th Street, San Jose

### **Landmarks Commission Sponsors Photo Contest**

The San Jose Historic Landmarks Commission sponsored an Historic Photo Contest to celebrate Historic Preservation Month. Approximately 150 photos were entered and 18 awards were presented to students and adults on May 18th in the Rotunda of San Jose City Hall. The winning photos, truly an inspiration, were on display while all entries were shown digitally on a large screen.

Adult winners were: Mary Andrade, Joshua Marcotte, Steve Peiracci, Paulo Philippidis, Chris Schmauch, Helen Williams, Luis Castill, Margaret Ma, and Ronald Horii.

Student winners were Jordan Brazie, Brian Adams, Alexander Eischen, Jesus A. Piceno, and Justine Otero. Some winners won twice.

The Landmarks Commission hopes this becomes an annual event. So get your cameras ready for next year. 🗷



Left to right, Brian Grayson-PAC\*SJ Executive Director, Mary Andrade-Overall Winner of Photo Contest, Nancy Pyle-San Jose Councilperson, Judy Chirco-San Jose Vice Mayor, Heather Jackson-Historic Landmarks Commission and Photo Contest Chair and Patricia Colombe-Historic Landmarks Commission Chair.

(Photo/text: G. Frank)

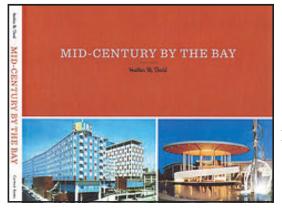
#### New Book Release

#### Presenting

# "Mid-Century by the Bay"

A Celebration of the San Francisco Bay Area in the 1950s and 1960s by Heather M. David

Design by Benjamin Shaykin Published by CalMod Books, Hardcover with Book Jacket, 152 pp. Text and 200+ images, First Edition.



Price: \$40.00 To purchase online, please go to www.calmodbooks.com

Heather is a former PAC\*SJ Board Member



## Lowe's Honors IBM Building 025



The newest Lowe's Home Improvement store in San Jose (5550 Cottle Road) has opened with design features that emphasize the original IBM Building 025. Similarly colored tiles resembling the original Building 025 decorate the upper structures of the building. At first glance one is reminded of the historic IBM building that was



Above left, tiles adorn Lowe's Indoor Lumber Yard. Above right, front of main store. Below, photo of IBM building 025 before the 2008 fire.

built in 1957, on this land, with multicolored tiles that symbolized IBM punch cards.

After a long controversy and legal battle, Lowe's and PAC\*SJ were negotiating a plan to save one small wing of the historic IBM building 025. Then it was mysteriously destroyed by fire in March, 2008, and all hopes to save a small segment of the significant local history of the IBM Campus were dashed.

A display with interpretive panels located in the Lowe's parking lot across from the Indoor Lumber Yard honors the history of the IBM Campus. There are eight large panels behind glass that describe the importance of the IBM Facility. Each panel contains background text and historic pictures of the past history of the IBM Cottle Road Campus. Some of the descriptions are summarized below:

Why San Jose? In 1943, 43 IBM employees and their families relocated from the East Coast to start the IBM Card Manufac-

turing Plant Number 5 in San Jose. IBM felt it was important to have a presence on the Pacific Coast and San Jose was a home community, advantageous location, and with good schools and facilities.

Birth of the Industrial Campus: A campus setting for research and manufacturing was a bold new concept that IBM pioneered in the early 1950's. The low-rise buildings, laid out by function, were spread out over 210 acres, resembling a college campus. A cafeteria, lounge, casual pastel interior décor, and ample parking (Continued on page 15)



## Lowe's Honors IBM Building 025

were just a few of the many benefits for employees.

Visionaries: IBM president Thomas Watson, Jr., architect John S. Bolles, landscape architect Douglas Raylis, sculptor Gurdon Woods and muralist Lucienne Bloch shaped their vision into a workplace that stimulated creativity. Many companies emulated the successful IBM Facility in the following years.

The Cottle Road Campus: This former IBM Campus, including the Advanced Research Building 025, was a pioneering research, laboratory and manufacturing facility in the 1950s and 1960s.

Information Age Incubator: The development of the "flying head" disk drive technology, one of the most significant inventions in information storage technology took place here. The revolutionary work spawned new technology firms and not only contributed to the economy of San Jose but to the world's new information age.

Lowe's Grand Opening Day was held on March 11th. On that day a check for \$300,000 was presented to the City of San Jose to go toward historic preservation and preserving our historic neighborhoods. A portion of future sales tax will be contributed next year as further mitigation for the loss of the IBM Campus.

OB





Top, view of Lowe's display (north side) honoring the history of the IBM Cottle Road Campus. Above, same display viewing the south side. Display holds glass panels with historic text and pictures of the IBM Campus. It resembles the architectural design for the former IBM style seen in the lower left photo.

(Photos(present day only)/text: G. Frank)







Left, two photos of the exhibit panels describing **IBM** history.

### They Left Their Mark: Architect Series by Jack Douglas, SAH

#### DONNELL F. JAEKLE: PROLIFIC DESIGNER

Donnell Jaekle (1902-1972), unlike many architects in the 1920's and 30's, seemed to flourish. Much of his output consisted of functional commercial and factory buildings for clients throughout the Bay Area. He had a major impact on the city of San Jose.

Jaekle was born in Napa on May 22, 1902. His parents and other family members continued to live there, but the twenty-five year old Donnell moved to San Francisco in 1927. I can find no evidence that he attended any architectural school, so perhaps we can conclude the he learned his skills through work as a draftsman for one of the firms in San Francisco. He received his state certificate in January 1933.

Most of his early commissions were for homes on the Peninsula: San Mateo, Los Altos and Burlingame. His





first San Jose commission was in 1938 for the Trace Park subdivision. This was one of the first of the new subdivisions that blossomed after World War II. Another, one of the largest of these subdivisions, was the Rosemary Gardens tract (also one of his commissions) near the San Jose Airport. (See aerial photo on next page.) This was a development of dozens of two bedroom cookie-cutter homes (one-car attached garage), which was spread over

a fairly large area. The McKeon Construction Company was the builder for Rosemary Gardens, and Jaekle became their principal architect. At the same time he was also doing quality homes in such areas as Willow Glen, Hanchett Park and the Rosegarden. (Continued on page 17)

Top, a Jaekle home on McDaniel Ave. (1938)

Center, a Jaekle home on Emery (1939)

Right, The Westinghouse Building on Stockton, now demolished.



### They Left Their Mark: Architect Series (Cont'd)

Jaekle was also very involved in the post-war expansion of commercial structures. He did a number of storefront locations on North Fourth Street, Lincoln Avenue and on streets around the train station. Bakery design was one on his specialties (Langendorf on Phelan Avenue) - he won an award for a number of these in San Francisco. Two other particularly well-known commercial buildings were the Westinghouse building on Stockton Avenue, and the Regal Pale Brewery on Sunol Street.

When our famous Hawaiian Gardens burned down in 1952, Jaekle did the plans for the restoration. It was re-named the Italian Gardens in the 1960's and still remained one of our famous eateries. Also one of his designs was the popular Art Deco drive-in at the corner of Twelfth and Santa

Clara Streets. Like many of his commercial buildings, this has lost many of its stylistic touches due to extensive restoration.

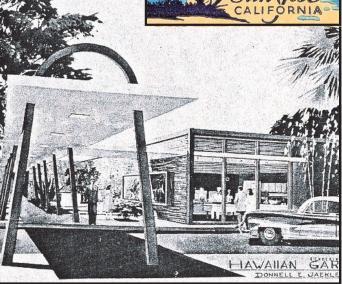
Jaekle went into partnership with Donald French of San Bruno in 1954. They established new offices at 586 North First Street. Jaekle and his wife were living in Saratoga when he passed away in 1972.

Jaekle served his clients well with sturdy, functional buildings. Not a designer of great originality, he was, never-the-less, one of the most prolific architects of our time.

#### Jack Douglas, SAH

Thanks to Gary Goss for the use of his valuable architect files. (More pictures on page 18)





Top, aerial photo of Rosemary Gardens.

(Courtesy of Sourisseau Academy, SJSU)

Above, Hawaiian Gardens restoration plan. Left, 992-998 N. 4th St., Jaekle's block of 5 stores.

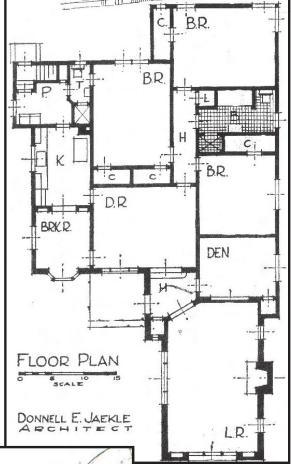
### They Left Their Mark: Architect Series (Cont'd)



Above, the first house to be built in the new University Square Subdivision located on Park Avenue starting at the 2400 block. The seven-room house of English design was designed by Donnel Jaekle. Floor plan to the right.

Below, the Delta Gamma Sorority House (built in 1948) at 360 E. Reed Street. Another Donnel Jackle building.

(Photos: Jack Douglas and G. Frank)





#### **Notable Quotables**

"A great building must begin with the unmeasurable, must go through measurable means when it is being designed and in the end must be unmeasurable."

—Louis Kahn (1901 or 1902-1974); A world-renowned architect based in Philadelphia. Design critic and Professor of Architect at Yale School of Architecture from 1947 to 1957.

### W.A.O.N. Celebrates 100 Year Old Clubhouse

Congratulations to "We and Our Neighbors" (W.A.O.N.) on the 100th anniversary of their Clubhouse. The rustic redwood building sits at 15460 Union Avenue, on the corner of Union and Los Gatos-Almaden Road, San Jose. The Clubhouse was built in 1910 and has been used for a social gathering place for the ladies all these years. The building is a San Jose City Landmark and a National Historic Landmark (since 1978). For many years a small room, constructed within the Clubhouse, served as a branch of the San Jose Free Library.

Recently the structure has been renovated and beautifully restored. In 2007, the late Tona Duncanson, preservationist and staff member for council member Judy Chirco, recommended the club contact a professional to assist them with the restoration of the National Register building. PAC\*SJ Board Member, Jim Zetterquist, was selected



to serve as project manager and historic consultant. Upon completion of the project, Mayor Chuck Reed and Judy Chirco awarded Jim with the District 9 Star Award for his efforts as a master restoration builder, champion of the preservation of local history and activist and community volunteer. Congratulations to Jim!

The W.A.O.N.'s anniversary party on May 15th celebrated the Clubhouse's fresh, new look and welcomed all from the community. Refreshments and a birthday cake were served and speeches were made, including the reading of the welcoming speech from 1910 which was amazingly appropriate today. A touching video was shown describing the renovation of the Clubhouse and highlighting interviews of the members' fond memories of past days at the Clubhouse. The video was written, directed and produced by PAC\*SJ member Bill Foley. Judy Chirco, San Jose Vice Mayor, was in attendance and spoke. One of her quotes was: "The old is the new green!" PAC\*SJ certainly agrees with that.

The "We and Our Neighbors" Co-President, Charlotte Taylor, told the large gathering that the continuing goal of "We and Our Neighbors" is to increase their involvement in the community and serve as a hub for local history. 🕊



Above, "We and Our Neighbors" Clubhouse, built in 1910. Below left, the renovated stone fireplace. Below right, one of the many beautiful reproduction chandeliers inside the Clubhouse.

(Photos/text: G. Frank)



### **Exploring Our San Jose Landmarks**

Here are the next two San Jose Landmarks from the City list. Check previous Continuity issues for descriptions of earlier landmarks at www.preservation.org.

#### HS85-30: Overfelt House & Gardens, 2281 McKee

This community park is a natural sanctuary devoted to the search for peace, reflection, solitude, and cultural education and understanding. Visitors can enjoy natural wildlife sanctuaries, hiking trails, beautiful trees, shrubs and flowers, peaceful ponds, an amphitheatre and cultural points of interest. The recently renovated Overfelt House, on the northwest side of the park, serves as the visitor center. The Sun Yat-Sen Memorial Hall and Chinese Cultural Gardens serve as an interpretive/cultural center on the southeast portion of the park.

The Overfelt House represents an 1870 vernacular residence with Italinate features. It has been altered in the past but it retains the exterior integrity. The two-story frame residence has ten rooms, low pitched multi-gables and a hip roof. The porch was enclosed about 50 years ago and some of the original detailing was removed.

William Overfelt was instrumental in developing one of the first free public schools outside of the City of San Jose by donating the land for the Berryessa School. After William Overfelt died in 1876, his wife, Mary Overfelt, followed through with the plans to build the present Overfelt house and operated the ranch for 54 years. In 1959 their daughter, Mildred Overfelt, donated land to the City of San Jose toward a park, Alexian Brothers Hospital and Eastside Education Park. At Mildred's death in 1967 (age 94), her house passed to Francis B. Crocker (Overfelt's nurse) and then to the City at Crocker's death.

The park is located at 368 Educational Park Drive and runs along McKee Road. It is open from 10:00 am to sunset. Call 408-251-3323 for more information or visit online at http://www.sjparks.org/regional/overfelt.asp.

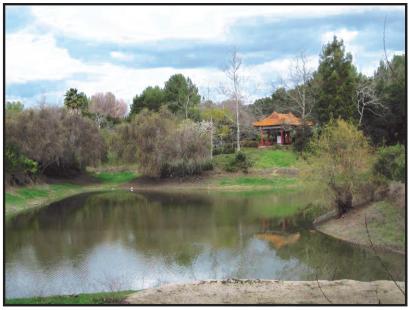
Source: Historical Landmark Nomination Form

Top photo, The restored Overfelt House sitting on the northwest side of the park.

Middle, view of a pond with Chinese Cultural Gardens in the background.

Lower, entrance to Chinese Cultural Gardens.







### Exploring Our San Jose Landmarks (Cont'd)

#### HS86-31: F. J. Smith Residence, 3550 San Felipe Road

Francis J. Smith (1843-1919) was born in Germany, came to Santa Clara County in 1867 by way of New York, and opened the first store and Post Office in Evergreen with his brother Charles C. Smith in 1868. The Smith Store and Post Office developed into the social center of Evergreen until it burned down in 1928. Francis (Frank) Smith became Postmaster of the Evergreen Village and was elected as a School Trustee in 1870. He married Catharine Shiely in 1865 while still in New York. In Evergreen, between 1869 and 1879, the couple had five children, Lizzie, Ka-



tie R., Joseph, Francis J., and Clara. Katie Smith was a highly respected school teacher in Evergreen, San Jose and other local towns. An elementary school in Evergreen has been named after her. She lived in the Smith house until her death in 1973, at age 103, and for many years was San Jose State's oldest living graduate.

Francis Smith built his farmhouse on land purchased from the Chaboya family that originated from a Spanish Land Grant named Rancho Yerba Buena. The farmhouse was featured in Thompson & West's Historical Atlas Map of Santa Clara County (1876). The Gothic Classic Revival two-story farmhouse is built with solid redwood and originally had ten rooms. The house has had little modification and closely resembles the original structure but it is in extremely poor condition. There is a large plot of land surrounding the house and the over growth of trees and bushes somewhat hides the structure. The land is presently up for sale. The fate of this historic house is of great concern. 😘



Two views of the Smith Residence, which has seen better days.

(photos/text: G. Frank)

Source: Historical Landmark Nomination Form and "Historical Footnotes of Santa Clara Valley" by Jack Douglas, SAH.

#### The California Pioneers of Santa Clara County

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#### FII M ARCHIVE



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#### Do you have films from the 30°s? 40°s? 50°s? 60°s?

The California Pioneers of Santa Clara County are assembling a FILM ARCHIVE of the history of Santa Clara Valley, and it is your films that will form its backbone. We are extremely interested in your old films of historic events, places and people. Future generations will be able to see San Jose as you saw it and understand history in a way that still pictures cannot express. Film doesn't last forever, and under the wrong conditions can decay quickly. The Pioneers have the equipment, expertise, and facilities to digitally convert, exhibit, and store films, preserving them for future generations and allowing you to view and share them more easily.

16mm, 8mm, Super8 or VHS footage is welcome and can be returned to you after being digitally converted. In return we will provide you a DVD copy of your film.

To lend or donate your films to the California Pioneers to posterity, please contact Bill Foley iamsparatacus@gmail.com or 408-317-8249.

#### Cinnabar to Quicksilver

<del>^</del>

The book, FROM CINNABAR TO QUICKSILVER, by Jim Campbell, author and artist, is a history of New Almaden, the second largest quicksilver mine in the world. The book illustrates the history of the first mining claim in California. and is published by New Almaden Quicksilver County Park Association. Contact Jim Campbell for your signed first edition copy at 408-265-7554 or Cammac75@wahoo.com.



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Please contact us at (408) 995-5400 or visit our website at www.trianontheatre.com for more information.

# **Preservation Action Council of San Jose**

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#### Join or Renew Today — Membership Form on Page 23



The Preservation Action Council of San José (PAC\*SJ) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation dedicated to preserving San José's architectural heritage through education, advocacy and events.

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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