

**PRESERVATION
ACTION COUNCIL**



CONTINUITY

PRESERVATION ACTION COUNCIL OF SAN JOSE NEWSLETTER

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Photo By Franklin Maggi

IBM Building 25: Historic?

This 1957 IBM research facility designed by John Savage Bolles embodied Silicon Valley innovation. IBM Building 25's cutting-edge architecture was as groundbreaking as the disc drive technology invented inside. But unless city officials protect Building 25, it could soon be replaced by another modern-day symbol: Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse.

Read more on page 6.



From the President

It's summer and the livin' is supposed to be easy and relaxed but it's been far from that for PAC*SJ. We've been busy on several fronts dealing with a wide variety of issues.

Executive Director

It's with regret that I inform the membership of the resignation of Kate Boruff, our executive director. Kate tendered her resignation for health reasons, but she hopes to continue as a volunteer and assist us as her health permits. Kate brought a high level of expertise and professionalism to PAC*SJ. On behalf of the board, I want to thank Kate for her tremendous contributions and wish her well. The search for a new executive director, continues to be a top priority. The Executive Board plans to conduct interviews in August and announce an appointment in September.

Fox-Markovits Building

PAC*SJ submitted comments for the draft Civic Center garage environmental impact report opposing the demolition of the Fox-Markovits Building. Once again we have to stay vigilant. We were successful in fighting to protect the Houghton-Donner House from being moved or losing a portion of its parcel. Now, as a result of shifting the garage location to avoid severely impacting the Houghton-Donner house, there's the possibility of losing the Fox-Markovits building. Thanks to Tom Simon for drafting our response.

Grant and Donations

Efforts are underway to find a new matching funding source for the Knight/National Trust grant. Although the Redevelopment Agency Board committed some months ago to provide \$20,000, the mayor recently froze all spending on agency projects without signed contracts. We will work with the Redevelopment Agency in hopes that this pledge will be honored. Many thanks to a PAC*SJ member, who prefers to remain anonymous, for donating \$2,000 towards the production of our newsletter. This is a wonderful gesture of support that is most appreciated.

Volunteers Needed

PAC*SJ's work is nonstop. We need help with these projects:
Newsletter—Can you research and write articles or contact prospective advertisers? *Contact Patt Curia, (408) 294-3599*

Membership Picnic Aug. 9—A day full of activities in picturesque and historic Alviso. Can you help with planning or assist on the day of the event? *Contact Ellen Garboske, (408) 446-5474*

Annual Attic & Garage Sale Aug. 22-24—Can you help staff the sale? *Contact Ellen Garboske*

Salvage Sale Sept. 20—Can you help with preparation or on the day of the event? *Contact Norman Fittance, (408) 286-0596*

Annual Preservation Celebration Nov. 14—Our biggest fundraiser of the year requires a wide range of talented people! Can you help with planning, logistics or staff the event? *Contact Patt Curia or Ellen Garboske*

Committees—Our committees also contribute to our ongoing success as an organization. Call the office at (408) 998-8105 to volunteer for any of the following committees: Advocacy, Board Development, Education or Fundraising.

And finally, kudos to PAC*SJ Board members Beth Wyman and Jack Douglas for the great downtown tour they gave for the San Jose State University Alumni Association as highlighted in the July 3 edition of *Metro*. So, you can see there is a lot going on. We need everyone's help to keep PAC*SJ a vital and growing organization. To those of you already giving of your time and talent, thank you. To those of you who are going to share your skills with us, thank you in advance.

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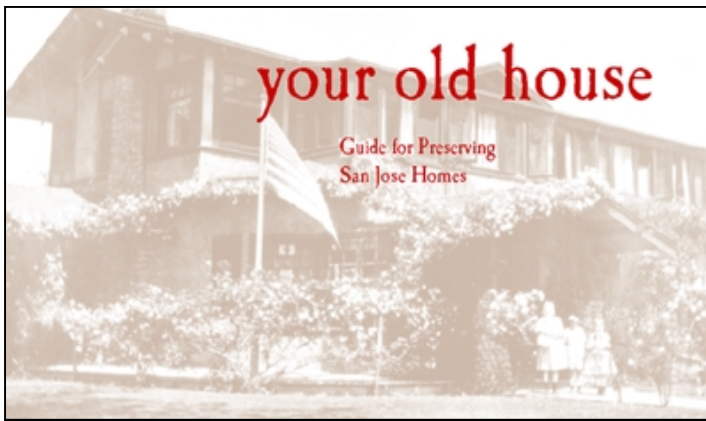
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Residential Design Guidelines Final

The Historic Preservation Office of the City of San Jose Planning Department and the RDA finalized the residential design guidelines entitled “Your Old House: Guide for Preserving San Jose Homes.”

The guidelines were prepared for property owners planning exterior alterations and additions, however they do not dictate solutions. The following is a list of common changes that can have a significant impact on a historic neighborhood:

- The construction of a new structure
- The alteration or restoration of exterior features of a historic house
- Addition to a structure
- The removal or demolition, in whole or in part, of a historic house
- Applying a new exterior siding material
- Adding a new window, door or dormer
- Creating a driveway or a parking area
- Building a deck, fence or garage
- Enclosing a porch

Paid for by the Redevelopment Agency, the guidelines were created with help from Colorado consultant Nore V. Winter who met several times with citizens and representatives from historic neighborhoods. Winter led this constructive and educational process within budget and deadline.

The guidelines are in final draft form, pending review by the San Jose City Council. View and print the document at:
<http://www.ci.san-jose.ca.us/planning/sjplan/Historic/Index.html>

Watchdog Report

I’m ba-a-a-ck in the best place on earth and ready to nip at a few heels and make it even better! I’m sure you missed me while I rambled along the trails and rails looking to see if it’s really greener on the other side.

My tongue’s been hangin’ out, salivating looking forward to that favorite hometown treat, a dog from Mark’s Hot Dogs! But wait, what’s going on here? No hot-diggity dogs because Mark’s hasn’t opened as promised. Latest word is it will open sometime in August. Grrrr!



I did find good eats at the California Theatre Topping Off Ceremony. Swinerton Construction knows how to throw a bash as well as hoist an I-Beam. I left my paw print on the beam, right next to Irene Dalis’ signature, before it was raised to its final location. I can hardly wait for Opera San Jose to move to its new digs so I can howl along with them.

Guess things are going to get tougher before they get better. CIM reports that it won’t be bringing the Knitting Factory into the old Woolworth building. Too bad, that would have livened things up a bit downtown. Waitin’ to see what other changes CIM will make to its plans for revitalizing central San Jose. RDA also reneged on its \$20,000 pledge to sponsor the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s visit this fall and my undercover hound tells me Zannotto’s is going to close its doors downtown. Big disappointment—those two-legged butchers always had a bone or two to share with the Watchdog.

Hey, I may have to be on a leash but at least I will get to see lots of birds, walk the trails and smell the salt air when my master takes me to the PAC*SJ Alviso Historic District tour Saturday, Aug. 9. Master BBQer Jim Bunce is cookin’ and Rusty and Kate Lutz are making a big pot of beans.

My old salvage buddy, Jim Salata of Garden City Construction, won a Gold Nugget Award from the Pacific Coast Builders Conference for his work on the Jose Theater, now the Improv. Maybe that’s a sign of happier trails ahead. See ya on the Alviso levee!

Retailers See a Vibrant Future for Downtown

By Olga Enciso-Smith and Randy Zechman

The continued effort to make downtown San Jose a lively epicenter enjoyed by all is getting a boost from the DownTown Retail Advocates (DRA).

DRA members advocate for a downtown that speaks to its various stakeholders—from business owners to residents, workers, students, tourists, visitors and historic preservationists. The DRA focuses on economic development, media outreach, business incubation, business loans, marketing and promotions, consulting, education and training.

The DRA has two primary interests: creating a multicultural marketplace and strengthening the streetscape.

A multicultural marketplace would inhabit a downtown building to create a unique destination. The marketplace would promi-

nently showcase 20 to 30 ethnic businesses, ranging from retail, arts and restaurants to demonstrate this city's vibrant cultural environment.

Developing an exciting and quality downtown streetscape ambience is also a prerequisite for attracting retail customers. The DRA's Streetscape Sub-Committee has designed a project and advocacy agenda that includes beautification and enhancement through "Pots for Shops," and an artisan and designer portfolio/directory of local artisan talent and design businesses. The sub-committee also monitors and gives feedback and support to the Redevelopment Agency's Master Streetscape Program.

The DRA is open to all interested people willing to give of their time, talents and passion to improving downtown. Volunteers are welcome to attend meetings or participate in various working committees.

Contact

For more information, please contact DRA at (408) 280-1860, machupicchugallery@hotmail.com or contact Olga Enciso-Smith at (408) 977-0816, incagardens@hotmail.com

ANNUAL GARAGE & ATTIC SALE!

260 S. 13th St. near E. San Carlos St.

Aug. 22 Noon. Member reception at 6 p.m.

Aug. 23 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Aug. 24 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Volunteer BBQ 4 p.m.

Three yards full of treasures, including:

Rugs * china * household goods * linens * wicker * small furniture collectibles * 1920s toilets and sinks
small kitchen appliances * books * crystal and antiques * sports equipment * radios * vintage clothing
Halloween costumes * Barbie clothes

Donate

Clean out your garage and attic and donate your interesting items to PAC* SJ. Bring items to 260 South 13th St. during the month of August. Tax donation receipts are available upon request. Contact Patt Curia at (408) 294-3599 or send e-mail to pcuria250@yahoo.com

Volunteer

We need sorters, cashiers and displayers—call (408) 446-5474 to volunteer. Join us for a Members Only pizza and wine reception on Patt's porch on Aug. 22 and for the volunteer BBQ on Aug. 24.

Need Help Leaving Your Legacy?

By Patt Curia

A city is built one brick at a time—and now you can leave your mark with the help of new PAC*SJ Advisory Board member, Ken Fowler.

Ken, a senior tax manager for CBIZ Accounting Tax and Advisory Services, has an office in the historic Leticia Building. A transplant from Minnesota and Mississippi, Ken teaches a variety of accounting courses at San Jose State University.

“My graduate degree from Mississippi emphasized business history,” Fowler says. “It taught me to consider the impact of current business decisions on future generations.”

Ken’s knowledge of tax credits and incentives, as well as estate planning, will assist PAC*SJ members in protecting their homes and their legacy to San Jose.

“The tax laws proved an incentive with the various tax deductions and credits to donate and/or rehabilitate buildings,” he says.

You can make a lasting contribution to San Jose’s architectural heritage by mak-

***“ I feel fortunate
to be involved
with PAC*SJ. I
can help maintain
the physical rem-
nants of past
businesses for fu-
ture generations
to consider and***

—Ken Fowler



ing a bequest to the PAC*SJ in your will. Such bequests are tax deductible for estate tax purposes. To make sure that your intentions are carried out in accordance with your wishes in your will, be sure to use the organization’s full corporate title: **Preservation Action Council of San Jose.**

PAC*SJ was founded 12 years ago and

is a non-profit public benefit corporation supported by people who care about San Jose’s past and future.

For more information about donations of appreciated stock, real estate or estate planning, please contact our office at (408) 998-8105 or call Ken Fowler at (408) 295-3822.

New Directors Bring Passion, Expertise to Their PAC* SJ Posts

Helen L. Stevens is a native of Harlan, Kentucky, the heart of Appalachia’s coal-mining area. She earned French Literature and Language degrees, and has worked at universities throughout the United States. At San Jose State University, she’s currently responsible for 1,500 international students and scholars from 90 countries and the International House on S. 11th Street. She also is a recent graduate of the Community Leadership San Jose program. Stevens developed her fascination with architecture while in Buffalo, New York, which has a philosophy of preserving its architectural treasures. She says she’s a “believer in preserving and protecting the beauty and usefulness of structures from the past. Just because a city is ‘progressing’ and ‘up and coming,’ it does not have to tear down the old in favor of the new.”

Joe Melehan can trace his Santa Clara Valley roots back six generations. His grandfather, Joe Perrucci, founded Mayfair Packing in the 1930s, which was the largest independent packer of dried apricots and prunes in the world at one time. His family co-owned Sun Garden Cannery (tomatoes) near the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds. Melehan’s most concerned about preserving access to and raising the awareness of Santa Clara valley’s agricultural past. Joe’s business expertise will help PAC*SJ develop its strategic business plan. He’s taking a lead role in the Preservation Celebration. Besides PAC*SJ, Joe is an active member of the Presentation High School Parent Board and formerly served on the History San Jose Board of Directors.



Joe Melehan

Editor’s note: Helen L. Stevens was unable to be photographed before CONTINUITY went to press.



Photos By Franklin Maggi

Building 25 is surrounded by mature oak and redwood trees.

Historic IBM Building 25 vs. Lowe's

Location: 5600 Cottle Road

By Continuity Staff

When IBM erected the Advanced Research Building 25 at its Cottle Road campus in 1957, the building was a symbol of Silicon Valley innovation.

Today it might seem common fare for high-tech companies, but the one-story building with its floor-to-ceiling windows and symmetry was a notable shift from the industrial design of its day.

Now, city officials are debating

whether IBM Building 25 should be declared a landmark for its architectural attributes and history, or torn down to create another modern-day symbol: a Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse.

A May 22 historical report prepared for the Historic Landmarks Commission by Urban Programs of San Jose details IBM Building 25's history, and the impact of the proposed Lowe's big box store.

Designed by John Savage Bolles of Berkeley, California, the now empty building was developed to house IBM's top data-storage researchers, who made history with the advent of the flying head disc

drive. The data technology allowed online transaction processing, which companies such as American Airlines used to create real-time reservations systems.

Bolles accented the campus with natural light, courtyards, oak and redwood trees, tiled facades and a modern art collection, including "Research" a sculpture by Gurdon Woods.

The goal was to make the IBM Building 25 comfortable for employees—a novel idea at that time. As a result, *Factory-Maintenance and Management* named the building "Plant of the Year" in 1958 out of 900 sites.

IBM Building 25 was just one of Bolles' award-winning designs. His projects included San Francisco's Candlestick Park, Johnson & Johnson in Menlo Park and Paul Masson's Champagne Cellars in Saratoga. He also taught seminars at Harvard and was made a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects before his death in 1983.

"It is one of the finest examples of Modern Industrial architecture in Santa Clara County," states the report under review by the Historic Landmarks Commission. "The Advanced Research Building 25 meets the criteria for integrity as defined by the National Register of Historic Places...as defined by seven aspects: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. [The building] is significant to the architectural heritage and industrial history of San Jose."

Now at stake is whether Bolles' creation and the history made there will be preserved. In early June, the Historic Landmark Commission discussed the initial report and is now preparing a final report to go to the city's Planning Commission and City Council, according to a June 6 article by the *San Jose Mercury News*. City officials are expected to decide the building's fate by fall.

Preservation Options

IBM Building 25 has been closed since 1995. Ways to preserve the site, which was visited by Nikita Khrushchev during the Cold War, are being considered.

The historical report recommends that: "preservation and reuse of the architecturally significant building should be considered."

At the very least, the report calls on San Jose to retain and relocate the Gurdon sculpture, document the building's history and characteristics should demolition be approved, and that the building's historical information be incorporated into the future development.

Historic Landmarks Commissioner Justine Leong had her own ideas during the commission's June 4 meeting. Leong suggested that it would have been great to have a dot-com company use it as office space. It was unfortunate, she added, that the building was not marketed until two years ago when the economy was failing. She stated that it could be a classic Eichler-esque office building, whereas current offices are often sterile.



Building 25 Main Entrance.

Front façade of Building 25. The "bold geometric artistic pattern is interestingly reminiscent of early IBM tabulating punch cards," states the historical report.



"It is one of the finest examples of Modern Industrial architecture in Santa Clara County."

PAC*SJ for one would like to see the building preserved and to foster more discussions of its possible use.

"This building and campus would start the west coast trend away from the single manufacturing facility and set the standard for a bucolic setting that high technology campuses would follow," says PAC*SJ's former executive director, Kate Boruff. "The design was a radical departure from the solid wall construction of the past."

If you're interested in joining the PAC*SJ IBM Task Force, call the office at (408) 998-8105.

Historic Fox-Markovits Building or Parking Lot?

Location: 40 N. Fourth St.

By Bonnie Montgomery

San Jose's new Civic Center might make an unintended "mark" on history if plans go forward to demolish a treasured site—the Fox-Markovits building—to erect a parking structure for the city.

From 1894 to 1947 the Markovits and Fox Company operated a metal recycling business at 40 N. Fourth St. The Fox family remained in the business until only a few years ago. In 1919, the company commissioned Louis Theodore Lenzen to design a new Mission Revival industrial building for the site. Louis was the son and partner of pioneer San Jose architect Theodore Lenzen.

The building still stands, a rare and exceptional example of this style of industrial architecture, designed by a locally significant architect and associated with a well-known business. In 1998, Ward Hill, Glory Anne Laffey and Charlene Duval evaluated the building and found it eligible for the California Register. It also is a candidate for a city landmark.

But now the building is in danger of being paved over. The city has plans to build a structure on this block across the street from the new Civic Center. Finding a site for the garage has been complicated by the presence of three historically significant buildings: the Donner-Houghton House at 156 E. John St., the Roberts Temple at 77 N. Fifth St. and the Fox-Markovits building.

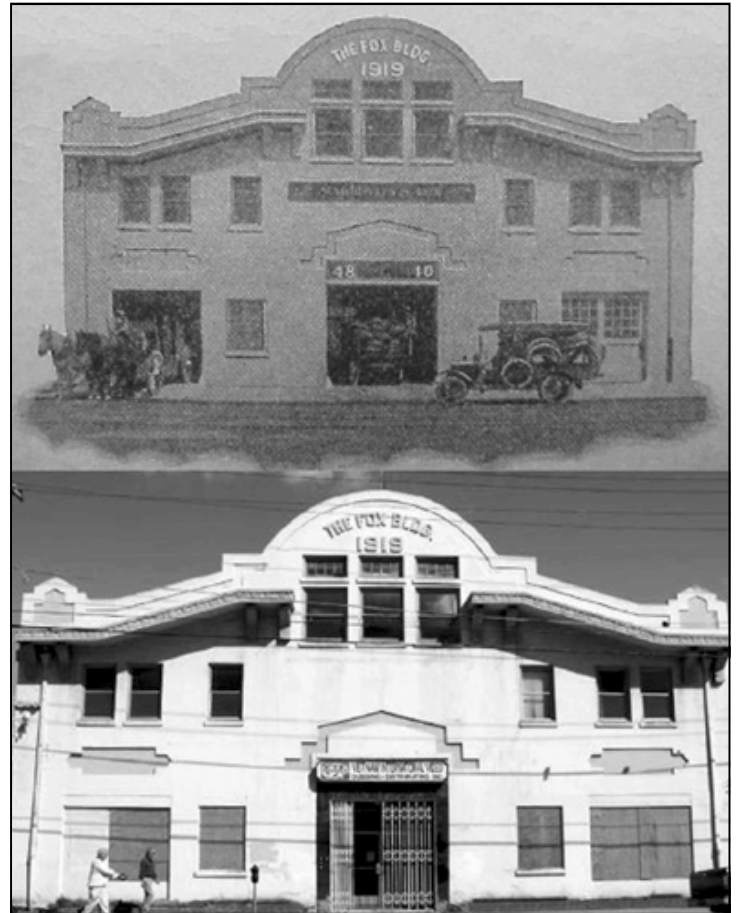
The 1999 final environmental impact report (EIR) for the Civic Center called for 845 on-site spaces and 995 off-site spaces. In May, San Jose released a draft supplemental environmental impact report (SEIR) on the Civic Center parking structure. The SEIR addresses the potential impacts of shifting 135 on-site spaces to the off-site garage, increasing the size of the Civic Center parking structure proposed for Fourth Street to 1,200 spaces.

Comments received by June 23, were placed into the final EIR to be considered by the Planning Commission on Aug. 13. Both PAC*SJ and the San Jose Historic Landmarks Commission submitted letters opposing the demolition of the Fox-Markovits building.

Several aspects of the original project have changed since 1999. A proposed child-care center won't be built, and an arts center meant to house the defunct San Jose Symphony has been delayed indefinitely.

PAC*SJ and the Historic Landmarks Commission proposed that the Civic Center project be built with reduced parking to save the Fox-Markovits building and reflect the reduced scope of the project.

"The slight compromise of the project objectives is clearly worth the reduction in significant impacts it affords," PAC*SJ board member, Tom Simon, wrote on behalf of the organiza-



Photos By 1923 San Jose guide book/Franklin Maggi

Top: Fox-Markovits building in 1923.

Bottom: The building in March 2003.

tion. "Project objectives should not remain inflexible for arbitrary reasons when the purposes of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) can be easily achieved by their modification."

Simon notes that the EIR does not thoroughly analyze the possibility of an alternative location. It "relies completely on the city's assertion that none of the other sites are feasible... Without an objective analysis, offering evidence and a factual basis, no conclusions about alternative sites can be drawn. This alone would seem to make the EIR inadequate for certification."

With no available funding or current plans to build on the arts center site, why did the EIR fail to consider using this location to supplement or replace parking for the Civic Center?

Simon concludes that: "PAC*SJ finds the loss or impairment of any of the historic buildings on this site unacceptable. The EIR needs to be modified and amended to promote the adoption of a project that prevents the significant impacts that will result from the currently proposed project, and to make it comply with the requirements and spirit of the CEQA."

Attend the Planning Commission meeting on Aug. 13 to voice your support of protecting the Fox-Markovits Building!

San Jose Selected for Preservation Grant

Trust visits Japantown and Naglee Park to help pinpoint conservation projects.

By Patt Curia

Preservation Action Council of San Jose was selected with three other communities to receive a Preservation Development Initiative (PDI) grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Developed last year by the National Trust and the Knight Foundation, the PDI leverages historic preservation tools to foster economic development.

R. McDuffie Nichols, director of the PDI program, visited San Jose last month for an initial survey of needs and to meet community stakeholders including representatives of the Redevelopment Agency and Councilwoman Cindy Chavez. After



“This initiative... proves the case that historic places can be driving forces in a local economy.”

lunch in Japantown and a neighborhood tour, Nichols expressed great interest in developing a project within the culturally rich district.

He later drove through Naglee Park, a conservation area, and was impressed with the quantity and quality of the neighborhood's turn-of-the-century housing.

This fall, a trust team of experts will return for a week. San Jose will receive strategic assessments and planning, technical assistance, loans and grants with a capitalized value of up to \$1.8 million to build preservation-based economic development



Photos By KateBoruff/Franklin Maggi

**Top: Historian Franklin Maggi explains the importance of the 1st Church of Christ Scientist on St James Square to National Trust leader Mac Nichols.
Above: Kate Boruff and Mac Nichols strategize in PAC*sj headquarters.**

strategies and implementation programs.

“This initiative demonstrates not just an appreciation for the built environment, but proves the case that historic places can be driving forces in a local economy,” stated Knight’s National Venture

Fund Director Lisa Versaci.

PAC*sj’s grant application proposes to create affordable housing, especially for the rental market, and simplify policies around rehabilitation of historically significant structures.

Bayside Cannery

Experts debating the best use for historic, Chinese-owned cannery that helped to shape Alviso.

Location: 1290 Hope St., Alviso

By Dawn Dakota Hopkins



In 1906, Sai Yen Chew founded the Bayside Cannery in Alviso, which he passed on to his son Thomas Foon Chew, a.k.a. the “Asparagus King.” This unique site, deemed a San Jose Historic Landmark in 1992, was once considered eligible for National Register listing as a thematic district in California’s ethnic-site survey. Today, there is a debate about how best to preserve this historic and cultural treasure.

As Santa Clara County’s first major Chinese-owned business, the Bayside Cannery complex once consisted of more than 60 structures. Foon was known for his innovative production ideas and for employing a rich diversity of workers, in addition to those of Chinese descent, whom he respected and treated well. By 1920, Foon grew the Bayside Cannery into the third largest cannery in the world, after Del Monte and Libby. Unfortunately, the two-story cannery building is the only one of significance on the site from this bountiful era in the county.

Though Chew was called the Asparagus King, the title did not originate at the Bayside Cannery but from his success in packaging green asparagus at his other cannery in Isleton. At the pinnacle of the Alviso cannery’s success, the site grossed approximately \$3 million per year for the high quality and variety of canned fruits and vegetables it produced. Chew’s renowned business came to an end after his untimely death in 1931 at age 42.

The building operated as a cannery under different ownership for a couple of decades after Chew died, and later served as a distillery and boat works facility. In the late 1970s, it was sold to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which currently owns the site and uses it as storage and offices for the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory.

There is interest in finding a way to preserve the Bayside



Photos By Franklin Maggi/Dawn Escorcio

Top: Interior space at the Bayside Cannery.

Below: The Bayside Cannery exterior and murals.

Cannery’s intriguing architecture and the history associated with it. A Spanish Colonial Revival style façade leads into a large open plan with a few small rooms in one corner. The interior space is especially impressive with triangular Howe truss system supporting the roof, which has been seismically reinforced with diagonal bracing. Accentuating the roof are two cupolas that were used to provide extra light for the utilitarian space.

In 1982, murals illustrating various scenes in Alviso’s history appeared on the stucco finish of the east façade and several other sections of the building. Clearly, the space has cultural value for the Chinese in California, the historical importance as a cannery in the Santa Clara Valley, and the area of Alviso.

While the building shows the effects of weathering and age, it offers many possibilities. PAC*sj Advisory Board member Franklin Maggi recommends using the space as an interpretive center or even a casual event space. An interpretive center could reflect any of those aspects as well as the wildlife of the Alviso Slough or the maritime activities of the area. Rather than promoting a re-use project, Maggi suggests focusing “the preservation campaign on increasing awareness of its significance” and helping provide Alviso with a much needed public space.”



Photo By Eric "ug" Carlson

Alviso's Historic District is home to the SBYA.

South Bay Yacht Club Turns 100

Location: 1491 Hope St., Alviso

Excerpt from 1996 "Brief History of the South Bay Yacht Club" by Clarence R. Boncher, South Bay Yacht Club past commodore and historian.

The South Bay Yachting Association (SBYA), parent organization of the present South Bay Yacht Club (SBYC), began in 1888 when Joseph Olcott McKee became its first commodore. Members met in the back room of Samuel E. "Shirt-tail" Smith's Haberdashery in San Jose at 10 S.1st St. where the Bank of America Building now stands.

During this time, Guadalupe River was realigned and connected to the Alviso Slough (also known as Steamboat Slough), strengthening the Port of Alviso's claim as a major shipping point for goods going to San Francisco and the Sacramento Delta regions. The enthusiastic sailors conducted races, regattas and overnight

cruises to Drawbridge, Newark, Hospital Cove on Angel Island, Sausalito, Drake's Bay, Half Moon Bay as well as San Diego, Baja California, Hawaii, Tahiti and other ports.

The current clubhouse was dedicated on June 24, 1903, and has been used as the Yacht Club since its dedication, making it the oldest active clubhouse on the West Coast. In 1972, the South Bay Yacht Clubhouse was listed in the National Registry of Historical Buildings and became part of the City of San Jose's Alviso Historic District.

Alviso has experienced great subsidence due to increased agricultural water use and population growth since 1903. As a result, between 1930 and 1960, the average elevation

PAC*SJ Members are invited to visit historic Alviso and enjoy a BBQ Saturday, Aug. 9. at the South Bay Yacht Club. See page 12 for

of the Santa Clara valley floor dropped 15 feet. The SBYC clubhouse was slowly disappearing behind ever-growing levees that proved inadequate against frequent floods—the worst being the 1983 flood when the water rose almost 6 feet deep in the clubhouse.

At this time, the SBYC and the Santa Clara Valley Water District agreed to move it

about 100 yards north to the corner of Hope and Catherine streets to an elevated site on the levee where it now stands proudly at the same elevation it was built at in 1903.

The clubhouse stands as a prominent landmark in Alviso with her tall flagstaff and yard-arm proudly displaying the South Bay Burgee.

Please Be Our Guest

The Preservation Action Council of San Jose Picnic

Visit the Alviso Historic District & the 100-year-old South Bay Yacht Club Saturday, Aug. 9

- 9 a.m.** Alviso's Natural Habitat with San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory staff & City of San Jose Trails Coordinator, Yves Zsutty
- 9:30 a.m.** History of Alviso with SCVWD Board Member Richard Santos
- 10:15 a.m.** Tour Bayside Cannery with Historian Franklin Maggi & Architect Leslie Dill
- 11:15 a.m.** Tour South Bay Yacht Club with Staff Commodore Russ Robinson
- Noon** BBQ at the South Bay Yacht Club
- 1:30 p.m.** Special children's activity

TOURS ARE FREE

BBQ: PAC*SJ members and their guests **\$5 each**

Children 12 and under **Free**

Non-members **\$10 each**

Join or renew today at

www.preservation.org

Directions

- From I-880 or Highway 101, Exit on Highway 237 toward Alviso.
- Turn North onto Zanker Road.
- Continue on Zanker Road to the Environmental Education Center entrance road (a sharp right turn at Grand Blvd.)



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Guadalupe Watershed
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PAC* SJ Highlight: The Rich History of Alviso

Originally inhabited by Ohlone Indians attracted by the bounty of fish and shore birds, the area was given by land grant in 1838 to Ignacio Alviso, who came as an explorer with Captain Juan Bautista de Anza in 1776. As the primary junction between San Francisco and San Jose, Alviso became a prosperous port where hides, tallow, grains, redwood and quicksilver from the New Almaden mines were shipped around the world. Through the port, ships could travel up the Guadalupe River to the Embarcadero de Santa Clara and the tiny community of San Jose.

1849: The town of Alviso is laid out by surveyor Chester S. Lymon, and the first steamboat, the Sacramento, arrives. Soon homes, taverns, stores and hotels spring up around the busy wharves and Alviso is crowded with steamboats and stagecoaches.

1852: The town is incorporated.

1864: The San Francisco-San Jose Railroad is completed, bypassing Alviso and ending its role as a major port for Santa Clara Valley.

1876: The narrow-gauge South Pacific Coast Railroad is built and stops in Alviso, but port use has already declined.

1890: P.H. Wheeler begins promoting "New Chicago" as a great new manufacturing center. He finances his vision by subdividing a large tract on the Northeast side of town into 4,000 lots, selling them from \$5 to \$200 each. In 1891 he builds the San Jose Watch Factory and hires employees, but the company can't cover the first payroll and the dream evaporates instantly. Many of the lots sold were actually on wetlands and couldn't be developed. Eventually the land is given to the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge and renamed the New Chicago Marsh.

1896: The South Bay Yachting Association, formed 1888, becomes the South Bay Yacht Club (SBYC). *See story page 11.*

1906: The Bayside Cannery is founded. *See story page 10.*

1920s and 1930s: Alviso gains the reputation as a rough place, with gambling and prostitution conducted under the nose of the Sheriff's Department until a grand jury investigation ends the lawlessness. In 1929, The Alviso Salt Company spends \$5 million dredging the tideland to make salt evaporation ponds, but like many others during the Great Depression, it went broke after its first harvest.

1968: The City of Alviso becomes part of San Jose. Currently a sleepy, overlooked location, Alviso has a unique and colorful past and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

~ Excerpted from the *Historical Footnotes of the Santa Clara Valley* by Jack Douglas


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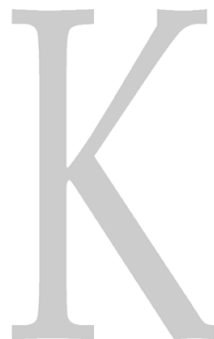
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Photo By Bonnie Montgomery

The Wehner mansion, photographed in July, is still in need of restoration.

They Left Their Mark: Architect Series

Daniel Burnham: A Master Builder Designs a Local Landmark

Location: 7871 Prestwick Circle, San Jose

By Jack Douglas

Daniel H. Burnham (1846–1912) was an architectural colossus whose influence far exceeded the importance of any of the noted buildings that he and his partner John Root (1850–1891) created in Chicago, Washington D.C. and San Francisco.

In the mid-1880s, when the architects were in Chicago, they were approached by William Wehner, a Chicago resident, who was relocating to San Jose to start a vineyard and winery. The home they designed for Wehner still sits on a hillside overlooking the Evergreen Valley where one of Santa Clara County's most

extensive and prosperous vineyards once flourished.

Daniel Burnham was born in Henderson, New York. His family moved to Chicago in 1854 where the young man attended public school. Instead of pursuing a university education he perfected his drawing skills in the office of the great engineer William LeBaron Jenny. Later he worked in the architectural firm of Carter, Drake and Wight where his co-worker was John Root. Burnham and Root set up their own practice in 1873. Root was acknowledged to be the creative innovator, but Burnham was the most outgoing and persuasive. In the end Burnham became the firm's chief administrator, planner and dealer with influential clients.

Ever mindful of new technologies, the firm was to make use of the development of elevator technology to become leaders in



Photo By Andrew P. Hill
Left: The Wehner mansion in September 1895.



Photo By Art Institute of Chicago

The architect.

high-rise office development. Chicago's Monadnock (1891) and Rookery (1887) buildings are classics of this era. The Mills Building (1890) in San Francisco is a fine example of their local work.

The Wehner Mansion

Soon after its establishment, the firm was doing residential designs for Chicago's elite.

Among these was William Wehner, an artist and entrepreneur who had perfected cycloramas, giant murals displayed in theaters and public buildings. Cycloramas as a public entertainment were wildly popular in the 1880s. So it's not so surprising that this well-to-do artist and showman would choose an up-and-coming Chicago architectural firm for his proposed California estate.

For Wehner's residence, the architects chose a Queen-Anne style that featured a shingle style originated by England's R. Norman Shaw and brought to maturity by McKim, Mead and White of New York. The rounded corners are reminiscent of the popular Romanesque designs of H. H. Richardson. A number of outbuildings, including a child's playhouse, were in the same idiom.

Chicago World's Fair

John Root died suddenly in 1891, just when the pair were planning Chicago's great World's Columbian Exhibition of 1893. Burnham's genius for organization, persuasion and tact came to the fore in the planning of this fair.

He gathered a group of the nation's most distinguished architects, such as Richard Morris Hunt, McKim, Meade and White, Daniel Chester French and George Post to design buildings that were unique, but all in the classical style and built around a lagoon. The master plan for the Fair Park was the work of the legendary landscape planner Frederick Law Olmsted.

The City Beautiful Movement

Although he designed no major projects for the fair, Burnham was the undisputed czar of an exposition that would influence Amer-

“Daniel Burnham was a master builder who, if not the country's greatest architect, was certainly its most influential.”

ica's building style for the next 40 years. At Burnham's suggestion all of the major buildings were to be painted white, and therefore the Columbian Exhibition was labeled “The White City.”

The apparent success of the design spurred Burnham to promote the beautification of all cities through comprehensive planning and uniform architectural styling. The concept, called the City Beautiful Movement, led to a number of civic centers, including those in San Francisco, Washington D.C. and Denver.

In 1904, San Francisco Mayor James D. Phelan encouraged the architect to do a master plan for the city. The plan was completed just prior to the great earthquake and fire of 1906, and it might have changed the face of the city if the locals hadn't been in such a hurry to rebuild. The only part of the plan to be completed was San Francisco's majestic Civic Center. San Jose's abortive attempt to turn St. James Square into a unified Civic Center in the early 1930's was also directly influenced by Burnham's “White City.”

Daniel Burnham was a master builder who, if not the country's greatest architect, was certainly its most influential. So with this in mind, we should be proud that the Wehner Estate is a city historic site.

ARCHITECT continued on page 18

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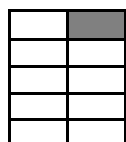
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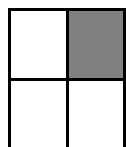
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Melita Kelly: Daughter of Santa Clara County Pioneers

LOCATION: 460 N. 15th St., San Jose

By Jim Arbuckle

Melita Kelly is the membership secretary of the Pioneers Society of Santa Clara County. Her father, Melvel Hall, was a descendant of the De Anza party. Melita remembers that when she and her father would walk downtown, he would always run into people who were his cousins—but he didn't really give a second thought to his family's long history in California.

Melita's mother Laura was born in Wisconsin, and she came to California as a young woman with her parents and sisters. Laura's father had retired and had a heart condition. At that time, he had four college-age daughters and he believed strongly in education for women, so the family moved to San Jose for the good schools and the mild climate. Each girl went to San Jose Normal School; three of them completed their studies at Berkeley and went on to teach high school. Laura married Mel Hall before she began teaching.

Mel and Laura Hall built a house at 460 N. 15th St. in 1915, the year they were married. Melita grew up in that home and lives there now. Andrew P. Hill, Jr. was the architect, and his original blueprints and builder's specifications are still in Melita's possession.



Photo By Bonnie Montgomery

Melita Kelly lives in her childhood home designed by Andrew P. Hill, Jr. and built in 1915.

Laura Hall joined the Pioneers Society of Santa Clara County in the 1960s, when she was first eligible as a 50-year resident of the county. Melita followed in her mother's footsteps only recently, after she retired from a career in the insurance and financial services industries.

Her three children, a daughter and two sons, are all good with numbers: one is an aspiring CPA, the second is a chemical engineer and the third is a database administrator. Melita is also proud to have two grandchildren.

Pioneers Society Announces New Membership

The Pioneers Society of Santa Clara County was organized in 1875, the second oldest such group in the state. Until recently, active membership was restricted to individuals who had lived in California for 50 years, or were the direct descendants of someone who had been living in California 50 years ago. An associate membership was only available to spouses of active members.

The Pioneers Society has recently approved new membership rules that allow people to seek active membership if they, or one of their direct descendants, lived in California 35 years ago.

The associate form of membership has also been broadened to include any

individual with a serious interest in local history. (An associate member may not hold office.)

The mission of the Pioneers Society is to preserve the history of California's pioneers by collecting and preserving historical materials, preserving historical places, encouraging research and scholarship and creating fellowship.

Many historical artifacts are presently stored with History San Jose, and two historical places have been bequeathed: the Jackson Ranch above Anderson Lake and the Hacienda Cemetery at New Almaden.

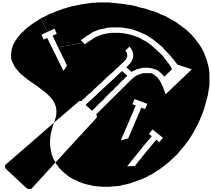
The Pioneers Society has for many decades sponsored an annual essay con-

test to encourage research and scholarship. Quarterly luncheons, occasional day trips and the *Trailblazer* newsletter all help in fostering community among the membership.

How to Join

If you would like to apply to become a Pioneer, please contact Melita Kelly, the Pioneers Society's Membership Secretary. She will mail you an information packet and application.

Melita Kelly
460 N. 15th St.
San Jose, CA 95112-1725
(408) 292-2385
melikel@pacbell.net



HOUSE SAVER

Q. My 1920s bungalow's lath-and-plaster ceiling is full of cracks. The section over our bed looks like it's about to detach from the lath and fall on our heads. Should I replace the ceiling with sheet rock, or can this be restored?

A. Don't pull off that old ceiling yet! Real plaster has a look, feel, acoustic properties, and often a rich decorative detail that can't be matched by its modern substitute: sheetrock. The House Saver has used plaster washers to repair ceiling and walls. These specially shaped and perforated steel washers are screwed through the center of the washer and through the plaster and lath. A supply list and simple instructions are included when you order from the Charles Street Supply Company. Minimum order is 10 dozen for \$16.50. Purchase them online at www.CharlesStSupply.com.

Got a question for The House Saver? E-mail preservesanjose@netzero.net



Photo By Patt Curia

Local handyman Rod Blair repairs Patt Curia's ceiling with plaster washers.

ARCHITECT: The Wehner Mansion

Continued from page 15

Editor's note

The Wehner mansion is the last reminder of Villa Lomas Azules, William Wehner's 3,000 acres of vineyards and orchards. The Villages adult community encompasses the original estate.

Because the mansion is in a gated private community, it's not accessible to the general public. The Wehner mansion was sold by the Villages to a group of private developers in the 1990s, and in 2001, San Jose granted the developers an historic preservation permit to restore the mansion for use as a multi-suite residence.

No apparent work has been done on the mansion in the past two years, and the permit was due to expire this July. Jack Douglas spoke before the Historic Landmarks Commission at its July 2 meeting, asking that inquiries be made into the developers' plans for the mansion because it appeared to be deteriorating further.

I went out to the Villages on July 9, and was met by one of the owner-developers, Carlton Craighead, who was very pleased to show me the mansion's interior and exterior and allow me to take

photographs for this story.

The interior is gutted and stripped to the lath, and the chimneys and fireplaces have been removed. The bricks are in the backyard waiting to be reused when the chimneys are rebuilt to current seismic requirements. A few touches remain from when the mansion was used as the 1978 Symphony Decorators' Showcase house. The doors, windows and interior trim are intact. Craighead pointed out recent vandalism, where someone had thrown rocks and broken a few second-story windows.

Craighead said that his group had just obtained a permit to re-roof the mansion and the two accessory buildings (and research confirmed that the permits were granted on June 23). He said the roofers were coming out in a few days to start on the accessory buildings.

We hope our members who live in the Villages will keep us up-to-date on the restoration's progress.

—Bonnie Montgomery

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August

9

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(See page 12)
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PAC*SJ Board Meeting
6 p.m. Le Petit Trianon
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22-24

Attic & Garage Sale
260 South 13 St. (See page 4)

September

20

Salvage Sale
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Downtown San Jose (See Page 19)

22

PAC*SJ Board Meeting
6 p.m. Le Petit Trianon
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