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Two Steps Forward, One Step Back: Preserving our Industrial Heritage

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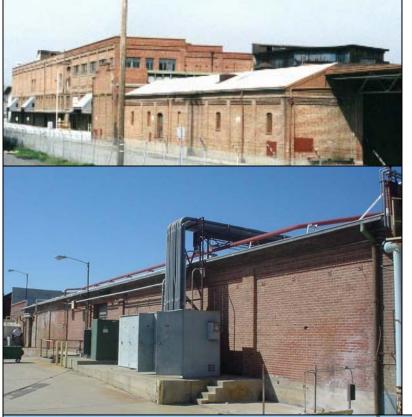
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Del Monte Plant #51, to be rehabilitated by Centex Homes.

#### **MIDDLE:**

The 1917 Warehouse #2, part of Del Monte Plant #3, slated to be demolished for a KB Home housing project

#### **BOTTOM:**

The Streamline Moderne GE Office Building, to be preserved as part of 55-acre retail development

# Two Steps Forward, One Step Back

Preserving San Jose's Industrial Heritage: Del Monte Plant #51, the GE Motor Plant and Del Monte Plant #3

Story on page 9!

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Jim Zetterquist, 2005 President

The mayor and city council voted to destroy the historic Fox-Markovitz building for the new city hall's parking structure, wasted \$3.2 million, and shirked any responsibility for the whole mess. Recently in San Jose's City Line, a publication for city employees, they stated that unfortunately, the "PAC\*SJ lawsuit resulted in significant schedule delays and

estimated 3.2 million in additional costs to the city". What they failed to point out is that PAC\*SJ informed the city council that they were not following the law regarding the environmental impact report for this project, or that their own Landmarks Commission advised them as to the same. They chose not to listen, leaving no other choice but to challenge them in the courts, where we prevailed. During the long drawn out process, we made several attempts to work things out with the city. Twice we worked out an agreement with staff, which the mayor and council rejected. The agreements would have been much less expensive than what eventually happened, with all money going back to the city itself to support its own preservation programs. Go figure! Hopefully they will see the light and history won't repeat itself.

Speaking of the new city hall, as I viewed it taking shape, I asked myself what this building was trying to say. We may differ in our opinion of the design, but it needs to convey a unified message of our pride in San Jose. We are California's first city, first state capitol and California's first center of higher education, just to name a few firsts. Businesses like Knight Ridder confidently sport their name atop high rises. Corporations invest vast sums for self-promotion by purchasing naming rights for sporting arenas. So, why not proudly shining in neon: "San Jose: City of Firsts" atop city hall? If we don't display our pride, we can't expect others to respect us.

Preserving our historic buildings is another way to display our pride in our heritage. Sometimes value

and worth are not readily apparent. In 1973, I bought my first car, a 1967 Corvette. My father questioned why I bought a 6-year-old car. It needed work and parts were hard to get. Over the next 10 years, the car became recognized as a classic. With restoration and a rise in demand, I sold the car for a 600% profit. Historic structures today are undervalued in San Jose in the same way. They need work and parts are difficult to get. When restored, however, they enhance business for those who occupy them, make wonderful homes and shape a city's unique character. **Historic preservation is good business for all**.

Despite great frustration, my cup is half full. Representatives from General Electric and architect Ken Rodrigues, met with PACSJ to talk about their wish to incorporate the historic motor plant office building into their plans for a development at Curtner and Monterey Highway. Thus far, this project is a fine example of how developers and preservationists can work together with the resulting project being unique and successful. Also recently, Jim Salata, Mark Cardoza and Mark Ritchie purchased the Historic Crescent Jewelers building located at 1st & San Fernando. All three have a wealth of experience in historic preservation and we look forward to working with them. Salata, along with History San Jose and Rob Bettencourt, also was involved with the reopening of the beautifully restored Pasetta House located at San Jose's History Park. The home contains Leonard McKay's outstanding historic local art collections. The San Jose Cinequest Film Festival was abuzz with local history. Erin McEnery's film documented the controversy over the Thomas Fallon statue, which pitted Hispanic community activist, Javier Salazar against then mayor, Tom McEnery. However you feel about the statue, all the talk about local history and art can only be good for San Jose. Kudos to all involved!

Finally, I am very excited about our upcoming **house tour** (see pages 3 & 4) slated for June 10 and 11. Here will be a real opportunity to meet the developer of a potential historic district from 1950. This one of a kind ranch style development will showcase 4 homes displaying 4 very different remodeling approaches. Food, fun, 50s cars and music will abound. Mark your calendars! Enjoy the tour, volunteer to help or both!

JIM ZETTERQUIST

## Upcoming Willow Ranch House Tour: June 10th & 11th 2005



The gates of Willow Ranch are always open

On Friday evening, June 10, the fun will begin. PAC\*SJ will host a 4 home house tour of America's most popular style - the ranch. A special \$75 per person tour/party will kick off the event. Food, music and optional 1950s attire will make this a night to remember. Guests of honor, including designer / builder Bob Dodge, will be present at the event.

On Saturday, June 11, tours will be conducted from 10:00-4:00 at a cost of \$25.00 per ticket. Docents will be in 1950s attire. The homes will give any visitor great ideas on how they can sensitively update their homes, whether they live in an Eichler, Victorian or anything in between.

The ranch style is derived from the early California adobe ranchos of the 1700's and early 1800s.



A Willow Ranch home.

A great example of this architecture is San Jose's Historic Landmark #1, the 1797 Peralta Adobe located on St. John St. These single-story structures with low front porches basking in the comfortable California sun encouraged entertaining, both inside and out.

In the 1950s, ranch style homes were best represented by Willow Glen's Willow Ranch designed and built by Bob Dodge and his uncle, Walker Vaughn. Architectural magazines of that period touted Willow Ranch as the ultimate in ranch style living. The high priced development was given an exclusive feel. Ranch style gates at its entrance were erected and homes were built on oversized 1/3 to 1/2 acre lots. The development was kept rural by building it in a walnut orchard. Streets were not paved,



PAC\*SJ Vice-President Joe Melehan's home in Willow Ranch.

and no street lights or sidewalks were allowed. Open yards without fences, clustered mailboxes on the street, and open breeze ways connecting homes to garages encouraged neighbors to interact. On Cottle Ave., the first street built in the pre-TV 1950s, homes had large front porches and front court yards with barbecues and fire-places which naturally led to neighbors getting together. On Westgate Ave., the second street built in the mid-1950s, homes incorporated large family rooms to facilitate TV watching and swimming pools that necessitated fences. Entertaining moved to the backyard. These homes reflect how architecture adapted to technology and is continuing to adapt to home theaters and high-tech lighting and security systems.

The four homes featured each reflect very different approaches on how to update and personalize one's home while remaining compatible with the neighborhood.

Recently, the Maestri home tastefully doubled its size, incorporating a new 450 sq. ft. kitchen with a real wine country feel, reflecting Vince Maestri's profession as a wine/liquor manufacturer and distributor. Ceilings were raised to 10 and 12 feet with layers of moldings. The back yard now has a new pool, waterfall and putting green. The owner's goal was to make the home open and livable, reflecting his San Jose and Hawaiian heritage. It is obvious that this home owner loves Willow Ranch; this is the third home he has lived in the development.

The Gallagher/Hyland home was the last home built in the development and is the largest. The couple owning the home are proprietors of Geppetto's Workshop, where she is a kitchen designer and he is a general contractor. The home has beautiful cabinets. The master suite has a vaulted ceiling, and there is also a back loggia with a fireplace and pizza oven, making this outdoor room a year round pleasure. The homeowners have successfully created a sophisticated elegant home while keeping it friendly for their large family.





PAC\*SJ President Jim Zetterquist in front of his Willow Glen home. Photo by Erin Day for the Willow Glen Resident.

The Zetterquist home is owned by a designer / contractor who has been remodeling his home for 26 years. Layer upon layer of moldings were added to rival any period home. The owner's goal was to give the home a real East Coast farmhouse look. The house includes a game room with elaborate exposed timbers and an 1800's bar. Recently, a 750 sq ft master suite that looks like it is straight out of a turn of the century European hotel was added.

The Melehan home has been sensitively enlarged with the addition of a large family room with a high cathedral ceiling and the addition of a master suite complete with fireplace dressing room. Photos adorn the walls and portray this family's deep roots in the Valley of Heart's Delight that extends back over a century. The kitchen was redesigned 12 years ago and shows that if done well, a kitchen can stand the test of time. The home owners goal was to keep the home true to the Ranch Style design. This home's spacious back yard with its outdoor kitchen and pergola will be open during the tour to enjoy snacks, purchase special gift items and chat with special guests. Though all unique, a common thread is reflected through all four homes: a love and commitment to their neighborhood and to the city of San Jose.

**If you would like to sponsor or attend** this event, please contact the office at (408) 998-8105, or email Alex Marthews at <u>alex@preservation.org</u>.

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Alex Marthews

It's sometimes suggested that whether a building is historic or not is purely a matter of personal taste. Some people think that only the White House is historic, and some people think that everything over 50 years old is historic, but they say that there's nothing objective to say who is right.

Luckily, this perspective, that historic significance is entirely subjective, is not true. There are clear criteria for what makes a building historic. Professional historic consultants spend their lives evaluating how significant historic properties are, according to objective criteria. For that reason, when PAC\*SJ is deciding which properties to get involved with, we use those professional evaluations, rather than our own esthetic taste, and challenge them only when they

omit highly significant information on the building's historic importance. We don't act as the consultants ourselves: like the State and federal authorities, we generally leave it to the professionals to tell us what's historic.

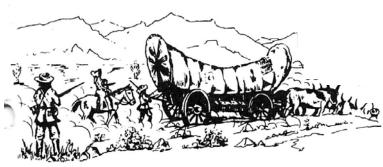
In San Jose, historic consultants evaluate properties according to a 134-point scale, which takes into account three things: the **architectural uniqueness** of the building (whether it is a notable example of a style or by a notable architect), its **association with historically significant people, companies or events**, and **the extent to which the building has been modified over time**. 33 points are needed for a building to be a Structure of Merit, and 67 to be a candidate City Landmark. A building like IBM Building 25, which scores high on all of these categories, rates at 119 points, and Del Monte Plant #3 at 87.5 points. All of the buildings we have litigated over are at least candidate City Landmarks, and are usually also eligible for the California and National Registers of Historic Properties.

This scale is a useful and important tool to help civic leaders work out how important a building is. This quarter sees the demolition of the Fox-Markovitz Building, which rated as a candidate City Landmark (over 67 points), and yet Mayor Gonzales described it in the final EIR hearings on the project as "not historically significant".

It's not acceptable for our civic leaders to favor their own personal feeling as to whether a building "looks historic" over a professional evaluation. If they declared that a project that pumped acid into the air would not damage the environment, everyone would laugh at them. The same applies to historic properties. If they want to disregard the wisdom of professionals, and demolish a genuinely historic property, they should at least be honest that that's what they're doing.

#### **ALEX MARTHEWS**

## The California Pioneers of Santa Clara County



Founded in 1875, the Pioneers are the County's oldestestablished heritage society. They collect and preserve historic artifacts, publish the quarterly newsletter "Trailblazer", and try to communicate to future generations a faithful and correct impression of pioneer history.

You can join the Pioneers if you are a resident or descendant of a resident of California for 35 or more years, or show an exceptional interest in the history of the County. The Pioneers meet at 11:30am for lunch on the first Saturday of March/ June/ September/ December at Lou's Village.

If you want to join, please call Melita Kelly at (408) 292-2385.

### THE DOG



There's a whole lot of action in my ol' hometown, keeps me running in circles, chasin' my tail. My ol' Pappy lookin' down from Doggy Heaven must be proud to know the emphasis is on "good" right now, with a few tidbits of "bad and ugly" thrown in to keep us on our paws.

A 3-bark salute to First United Methodist Church for their renovation of the historic 1928 Medico-Dental building at the corner of Santa Clara and Sixth Streets, now known as Vintage Towers. In just one-year's time, the church transformed this wonderful 12-story building into a prime example of what can be done, and quickly! It's nice to see pleasant digs available to these hard workers.

Don't miss the new Leonard McKay collection of 33 historic paintings by local artists. The exhibit can be seen in the Pasetta House out at History San Jose in Kelley Park. The collection includes works by Andrew P. Hill, A.D.M. Cooper and many other notable artists depicting scenes of early Santa Clara Valley and the surrounding hills.

Best of breed award goes to my ol' pal Jim Salata for being chosen to restore that very ugly Dr. Eu building! Took years to get this going, but it's in good hands now! Salata, Mark Cardosa and Mark Ritchie also earn kibbles for plans to renovate and reuse the mid to late 1800s and early 1900s buildings making up the Wilcox Block at South First and San Fernando. The former site of Crescent Jewelers will house retail shops and offices, targeted for completion in the fall of 2006. These guys don't fool around! Move 'em out!

Centex Homes has come up with a plan for the former Del Monte Plant #51 cannery site which has my tail-waggin' approval! Centex plans to preserve and transform three 1914 to 1930 cannery buildings into for-sale residential units, with ground floor parking. But the other Del Monte site on Auzerais is part of a convoluted plan by our exalted leaders to swap the city owned Brandenburg site at Julian & San Pedro Streets for the Del Monte parcel, to be used for a ballpark!

Ironic, since the Sodality Park baseball field was located right next to Del Monte, and attracted greats such as Babe

Ruth and Lou Gehrig back in the 1920s. I'm all for baseball and hot dogs, but the City honchos need to incorporate the preservation and reuse of some historic buildings from Plant #3 in their plans. Need some public hearings here!

The Downtown Association has a beautiful plan for how Fountain Alley could look with low-rise retail, housing and a fountain plaza. Reminiscent of early San Jose and very competitive with the successful design of Santana Row. Shame they're not supporting their own plan any longer: they've decided that a 200-foot tower could be good! That would bust through the City's Historic Guidelines like they never existed! So guys, go back to the drawing board—and check out what you've got drawn there already!

There's plenty of other high-rise proposals floating about. CIM wants to put 23 stories near the SJ Repertory Theatre, and Barry Swenson Builder is itchin' to get started on 16 stories at St. James and San Pedro Streets. With all that housing going in, do we really need one right smack dab in the middle of the Downtown Historic District as well?

A yip or two for some other good news...lots of rain, but NO downtown flooding. Is that the new Guadalupe River by-pass tunnel at work? Guadalupe River Parks and Gardens' grand opening is this September, with plenty of trails, grass, tennis, picnicking, carousel riding, and the charming River Street Historic District right next door. Lookin' good!

A few growls and biting remarks are necessary, or I don't earn my Kibbles & Bits! By the time you read this, the Fox-Markowitz building will be just a memory. I'm sure folks'll swarm to see the huge parking garage going in its place!

Old Tom Fallon still can't rest in peace. He's stuck in that dog-awful spot in the middle of Julian Street, but the protests continue. Former Mayor McEnery's offspring made a film about the Fallon statue travails, and stirred up the pot. I never thought the Fallon statue was intended to insult the Hispanic community, any more than celebrating pre-American California insults Native Americans. Maybe we should put this debate down!

Speaking of music, let's end on a high note...a 3-howl-salute for GE's proposal to preserve and reuse their historic office building on Curtner Avenue. Nice to have great minds recognize the importance of historic architecture AND preserving the history of a company that brought so many innovations into our lives.

HAPPY TRAILS TO ALL!

THE DOG

### SPECIAL REPORTS: An occasional series on the planning ideas that affect our lives

### EMINENT DOMAIN AND PRESERVATION

As preservationists, we believe in preserving neighborhoods, not just individual buildings. When a neighborhood falls on hard times, like Naglee Park and River Street did in the 1950s and 1960s, it's hard for anyone to imagine how dilapidated buildings can be brought back. It's easier and quicker to tear them down and start again, and cities and counties across the nation have been eager to do so.

The tool cities and counties use is the awesome power of "eminent domain". The Fifth Amendment forbids the depriving of any private person of their property "without just compensation", and presumes that governments can only take private property "for public use". In the Supreme Court's last ruling on this issue, Berman v. Parker in 1954, they ruled that eminent domain could even be invoked for private development, provided that the private development had a "public purpose". The ruling did not condition the use of eminent domain on a finding of blight or define what blight was, though it suggested that for housing it would involve "lack of sanitary facilities, ventilation, or light [...] dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty interior arrangement, or any combination of these factors". The facts of that case involved a very substantially dilapidated area of DC, where "64.3% of the dwellings were beyond repair [and] 18.4% needed major repairs".

Governments went on to use the power enumerated in Berman v. Parker not only to build freeways, schools, parks and other public amenities, but also to hand private property over to a different owner whose use of it might generate more tax revenues. San Jose, Santa Clara and Sunnyvale began to bulldoze substantial parts of their downtown cores, causing damage that we still see today. Loose definitions of blight enabled the City of San Jose in 1974 to declare large areas of North San Jose's orchards "blighted" and funnel millions of dollars into redeveloping the area for the high-tech firms that stand there today.

In California, the law has become clearer in recent

years. Before a city can condemn land and then transfer it to another private party, it must approve a local redevelopment plan and designate the area as "blighted". More than 80% of the area must be urbanized, and the area must also demonstrate substantial evidence of physical blight. On the strength of these clearer definitions, it has become harder to designate areas as blighted. RDA has been thwarted by property owners in court over the Tropicana Mall and the Fountain Alley Parking Lot. Its blight designation in North San Jose expires in 2025, and the area would not be blighted under current law. Still, in order to obtain \$500 million in funds for transportation improvements in North San Jose, RDA is actively lobbying the state legislature to pass two bills expanding the definition of "blight". SB 521, proposed by Senator Tom Torlakson, would add "lack of high-density development near rail" to the definition. AB 1472, proposed by Assemblymember Joe Coto, could suggest the inclusion of "outdated properties in economically depressed areas". The implications for historic districts are vast.

Twisting the definition of blight brings millions of dollars in federal funds to San Jose, and provided sorely needed funding for neighborhood priorities through the Strong Neighborhoods Initiative, but it also presents a threat both to property rights and to historic preservation. No matter how well you keep up your historic property, no matter how cohesive your neighborhood, an elastic definition of blight could give RDA the power to seize your property on the strength of "faulty interior arrangement", a perception that changes every ten years, or of proximity to actual or proposed rail lines like BART.

Right now, there is a case before the Supreme Court, the first case since 1954 to deal with the limits of eminent domain. In *Kelo v. New London*, the Fort Trumbull area of New London, CT, is a small neighborhood targeted for demolition to make way for a 90-acre redevelopment project.

Continued on page 9, second column

## Leader Article: Preserving San Jose's Industrial Heritage

San Jose. Capital of Silicon Valley. Former Prune Capital of the World. Architecture that ranges from the stately brickwork of closed canneries to the Atomic Age buildings symbolizing our status as the white-hot heart of the world economy. At PAC\*SJ, we care about good architecture of whatever age, and we're working hard to save some of the best examples of San Jose's magnificent agricultural and industrial heritage.

Take, for instance, **Del Monte Plant #51** at 50 Bush Street off The Alameda. The southern and older section of the Plant dates from 1914. In 1916, Griffin & Skelley merged with three other companies to form the California Packing Corporation. The northern section of the Plant was developed in 1925, and is unreinforced red brick in the typical Calpak Industrial Vernacular style. The District Manager's Office, constructed in 1930, is a self-contained brick building in a five-course American Bond pattern. The symmetrical facade is multiple shades of buff wire-brushed brick, with a stepped parapet gable, pilasters and metal frame windows (see photo, page 1).

PAC\*SJ became involved with this site in early 1999, when it became clear that the Castle Group intended to demolish the structures to build high-density housing. Sustained pressure from PAC\*SJ and the local community resulted in a change of plans: in 2000, they agreed to reuse the structures for loft housing instead. Castle Group developed financing difficulties, and sold the site to Centex Homes. Centex are modifying the planned rehabilitation in the light of the BART tunnel that, if built, would go directly under the building, making below-grade parking impossible. We helped Centex get their project approved, and it is now moving forward. Contact Devin Hassett at Centex Homes for more information, at (925) 415-1725.

The second example of industrial preservation is at the old **GE Motor Plant** site at 175 Curtner Ave. (Curtner & Monterey, opposite Oak Hill Funeral Home). GE plans a new retail development on this 55-acre site, which contains one building of major histori-

cal significance—the Streamline Moderne GE Office Building (see photo, page 1). GE has agreed to incorporate the preservation of this building into their proposal in the Draft EIR, meaning that its preservation and reuse will now be assumed as the project goes through the public process, rather than being just an "alternative" to GE's proposed project. We are glad that GE has made such an effort to preserve one of the very few notable buildings of this period in San Jose, the others being the Hotel De Anza and the recently reopened Vintage Towers or Medico-Dental Building (see page 10).

Continued on page 9.

### Special Report: Eminent Domain

The neighborhood was not designated as blighted, but was judged by the City to generate less revenue than the potential new revenue of the redevelopment project. The City argues that this means they can seize the land for a "public purpose". The residents argue that "public purpose" cannot mean anything that might bring in extra revenues to a City's coffers. It is a crucial case for determining the power of neighborhood property owners to retain their property, in the absence of meaningful physical blight.

We have seen many historic properties, like IBM Building 25 and the Fox-Markovitz Building, judged to be "outdated" when feasible reuses still exist. Expanding the definition of blight is a recipe for the systematic extermination of historic properties to serve whatever the "public purpose" of the moment appears to be. But real economic revitalization comes piece by piece, through the hard work of neighborhood people. Large, splashy redevelopment plans that will "save San Jose" are no substitute for coherent neighborhoods and communities.

#### **ALEX MARTHEWS**

Thanks to the San Jose Mercury News, the San Francisco Chronicle, the Washington Times, the Christian Science Monitor and the Economist for providing source material.

### Preserving San Jose's Industrial Heritage

Sadly, the news is not all good. When it comes to the last of the three structures we're reviewing, the outlook is bleak.

The KB Home housing project proposed for the **Del Monte** #3 **Plant** at 801 Auzerais Avenue took some strange turns this quarter.

Working with City staff, KB Home identified ways to save and reuse the historic cannery buildings on the site, in a way that accommodated more than 400 units of housing. Their own proposal offers no more than 385 units of housing, and comes in right at the bottom of the density proposed for the site (40.44 units per acre in an area zoned for 40 – 100 units per acre) - a higher density might make it more feasible to save the cannery buildings. The Historic Landmarks Commission recommended the adaptive reuse option, and so did planning staff in their March 4 staff report to the Planning Commission. Then, KB Home submitted additional economic information on the feasibility of the adaptive reuse alternatives. On March 8, the day before the Planning Commission meeting, planning commissioners received a supplementary memo from planning staff reversing their recommendation, and suggesting that they should approve the project without adaptive reuse.

The Planning Commission was uncomfortable with having had so little time to review KB Home's economic information, and agreed to PAC\*SJ's proposal to defer the matter for one month. The usual time for the next Planning Commission meeting would be April 13, but in the light of this deferral it was changed to April 11, which would allow City Council to consider and approve the project on April 12.

We are working with a firm of construction cost consultants to review the feasibility of adaptive reuse options. KB Home incorporates into their project high-cost remediation efforts that may not be necessary. We like the idea of housing units in the old cannery buildings, like what is being done at Del Monte Plant #51, but we would hate to see a historic cannery lost because the wrong project was proposed for the site.



Warehouse #4 (1941) and the iconic Water Tower at Del Monte Plant #3. All proposals for this site will save the Water Tower.

The City was investigating the Del Monte #3 site as a possible location for a new major-league baseball stadium. The Mercury News has reported that they have now decided not to pursue that site, and are focusing on the underutilized Diridon South site, just south of the Caltrain station. It has some historic structures on it that appear to be less significant than Del Monte Plant #3. Diridon South is closer to public transportation, and has the support of the neighborhoods, but the City faces a complicated task in assembling enough parcels to create enough room for a ballpark. That decision not to pursue the site would help the Planning Commission concentrate exclusively on whether the KB Home project is the right one for this site.

It is wonderful to see both Centex and GE acknowledge the value to our heritage of preserving San Jose's industrial properties. They seem to feel that having a historic structure present on a site can be a marketing plus. Now our task at PAC\*SJ is to persuade KB Home of the same.

Whatever the Del Monte #3 site ends up being used for, the historic structures on the site should be preserved and reused. Other canneries in San Jose have been reused for housing: we find it hard to believe that the same can't happen at Del Monte Plant #3 as well.

**ALEX MARTHEWS** 

### ON THE RADAR





#### St. James Historic District **Neighborhood Association Gains** Official Status (Downtown)

Our warmhearted congratulations this quarter go to the newly designated St. James Historic District Neighborhood Association, chaired by PAC\*SJ member Frank Penrose. This new neighborhood is based around the four new housing developments of the Plaza, St. James Place, Park Townsend and Villa Torino, and its registered boundaries go south to St. John Street, north to Basset, west to North San Pedro and east to portions of 3rd Street. You can join by emailing penrose964@yahoo.com, and PAC\*SJ will also forward any membership requests we receive.

The Association's members are already responsible for creating a Drug Free Zone in Saint James' Square, and are committed to the preservation of the historic structures on and around the Square. They are working in detail on the Park View Towers project that will rehabilitate the 1904/5 First

Church of Christ Scientist and build two high-rise condo developments. They have just received their first CAP grant, which will fund their newsletter, website and a National Night Out and barbecue.

The new neighborhood association will also be grappling with the just-issued San Jose Downtown Strategy 2000 Draft EIR, which talks about "framing the park on available sites with tall, high-density, mixed-income residential development consistent with the St. James Square Historic District Design Guidelines." Guys, you can have tall, high-density residential development fronting onto the park, or you can have development consistent with the St. James Square Design Guidelines, but, given the Guidelines' 72-foot height limit, you can't have both. Something's not quite right there!



February 10, 2005 marked the official reopening of Vintage Towers, formerly known as the Medico-Dental Building, on Santa Clara Street opposite the new City Hall. Councilmember Cindy Chavez, Reverend Jim Crawford and the church's Operations Director Cindy Manley were

all present for the ribbon cutting ceremony. The newly renovated tower has 57 units of affordable housing, along with a new fitness center and courtyard.

The 1925 Art Deco Building was designed by prominent architect William Weeks and holds City Landmark status. It was purchased from the City of San Jose in 2003 by First United Methodist Church.

Councilmember Cindy Chavez and Rev. Jim Crawford at the opening.



Vintage Towers



Silicon Valley Los Angeles

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**Architecture Planning Interiors** 

### ON THE RADAR

The Church experienced a rocky process getting approval for their project from the Historic Landmarks Commission. The chief conflict was over whether the windows should be restored or replaced by reproductions. The Historic Landmarks Commission ensured that the windows would be restored, but the cost of restoring the windows was three times as much as the cost of reproducing them. Still, the new Vintage Towers is a great success, and a magnificent addition to San Jose's stock of restored historic buildings.

#### **Crescent Jewelers (Downtown)**

On March 2, the City Council, acting as the Redevelopment Agency Board, approved the sale of Crescent Jewelers and its adjoining buildings, a City Landmark, to Wilcox Block LLC for

GE Energy



\$200,000. Wilcox Block LLC's principals are former PAC\*SJ member Jim Salata of Garden City Construction; Mark Cardosa of Biggs Cardosa; and Mark Ritchie of Ritchie Commercial. Given their deep roots in the community and commitment to preservation, we are confident that their pro-

ject will result in another successful and sensitive restoration of one of downtown's most recognizable buildings.

# Overfelt House Restoration (East San Jose)

Architect Gil Sanchez, FAIA is working on the restoration of the 129-year-old Overfelt House. The building is being seismically upgraded and prepared for future occupancy. When it is finished, the building, which is located in a park, will service as offices for the Parks Department. There will be a room where meetings can be held and possibly a small interpretation center installed at a later date. Nearby there is a short water tower that they hope to eventually raise to its original height.



There is no substitute for experience, especially in the world of power generation.

GE is a leader in cutting edge nuclear technologies, and has been for over forty years. With the proven Advanced Boiling Water Reactor (ABWR) and the introduction of the Economic Simplified Bailing Water Reactor (ESBWR), GE continues to demonstrate its commitment to helping nuclear power plants operate safely and with greater efficiency and output.

For more information, please visit aepower.com/nuclear.



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### PAC\*SJ CALENDAR

#### May 15 E Clampus Vitus / NAQCPA Plaque Dedication Event

At High Noon at New Almaden's Casa Grande, two historical bronze plaques will be dedicated. The plaques will designate and describe two Gold Rush era residences built by Barron, Forbes and Company of Mexico for their mine employees. Refreshments will be available from 11:45am.

#### 21 PAC\*SJ Backyard Fundraiser

Enjoy a backyard party at the home of Dan Pulcrano, CEO of Metro Newspapers, and help raise money to support PAC\*SJ! Dan will unveil his lovingly restored Rosenthal's Grocery sign, bought at a previous PAC\*SJ Celebration. **Contact the office at (408) 998-8105** for more details!

#### June 10/11 PAC\*SJ Willow Ranch House Tour (see pages 3-4 for full details!)

On Friday evening, PAC\*SJ will host a 4 home house tour with a special \$75 per person tour/party (\$70 to PAC\*SJ members!). Special appearance by Bob Dodge, the original designer and builder of Willow Ranch. 1950s folk guitar/banjo music and romantic violin from Bob LeBeau, exclusive party in Melehan Home with food and drinks provided.

On Saturday from 10am — 4pm, tour four homes for only \$25 per person (\$20 to PAC\*SJ members) Classic cars, 1950s-attired docents and 1950s music.

To get tickets at the reduced PAC\*SJ member rate, or if you would like to volunteer, contact the office at 1-408 998 8105 in advance!

#### Sept 11 PAC\*SJ / California Pioneers Present: The Haunting of Winchester: The Musical

Reception at 12:00pm, curtain 2:00pm, San Jose Repertory Theatre, 101 Paseo de San Antonio Cost: Balcony \$43 (*student:* \$31), Parterre \$47 (*student:* \$33), Orchestra \$55 (*student:* \$37) Meet director Michael Butler, historic architect Leslie Dill, and historian April Halberstadt for insights into this production and the life of Sarah Winchester. Light refreshments served on the terrace. Discussion follows the performance. Free parking available in adjacent lots. Tickets held at Will Call. Call Marie Rider at (408)251-7887 or Patt Curia at (408) 294-3599 for more information.

#### Sept 24 PAC\*SJ Presents: Remembering Frontier Village—A Wild West Celebration!

5:00pm, History Park, 1650 Senter Road, San Jose, \$60 to non-members, \$50 to members This year's Celebration will be the greatest and wildest and most Western Celebration ever! Along with the Live and Silent Auction, we will have barbecue served by the San Jose Fire Department, memorabilia from Frontier Village, gunfights, stocks, and of course the Silver Dollar Saloon!

### **ADVERTISE IN CONTINUITY!**

Continuity is distributed to over 800 San José preservationists, homeowners and opinion-formers. 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	$\vdash$	Single issue \$100	Single issue \$200	Single issue \$375
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_	1				

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<u>LIFETIME PAC\*SJ MEMBERS:</u> Keith Watt, Susan Brandt-Hawley, Greg Casella and Tom Simon.

### PAC\*SJ Garage & Salvage Sale

March 3-4's Garage and Salvage Sale was a great success, earning over \$3,300 to support our efforts!

Many thanks to members, 13th Street neighbors (especially the Salases) and Naglee Parkers for helping out. Members Kim Ortiz, Bonnie Montgomery, Jo Drechsler, April Halberstadt, Gwen Jennings, Andre Luthard, Lynnea Hagen, Lucille Boone, the Guinthers, Jim Bunce, Helen Stevens, Heinz Bodeker, Lucille Boone, Shaun Welch, Leslie Masunaga, Franklin Maggi, Donna Boehm, Annie Ewbank, Lorinda Foss, Alex Marthews, Edie Pricolo and many others all pitched in, getting soggy on Friday, tanned on Saturday and tired on Sunday! The Margasons innocently walked by the house on Sunday afternoon and were drafted into helping tidy the sidewalk. Former Naglee Parker Ron Willsey donated the core collection of the sale: 50 boxes of pottery, housewares, furniture and artwork. Jo Drechsler donated much of the salvage.

Your donations are important and are used in many ways. The Quilt Museum received a vintage quilt, and a 19" monitor went to SJSU's Sourisseau Academy. Many picture frames went to Lincoln High School's art classes. Several boxes of dishware will be the basis of the KidSave garage sale in May. Thank you again for a successful garage and salvage sale. PAC\*SJ would especially like to thank Patt Curia and Ellen Garboske, the Sale Co-Chairs, for all their hard work!



PAC\*SJ volunteers brave the rain to make the Garage Sale a huge success! Thanks to everyone who helped out!

### PAC\*SJ Clock Tower Tour



Exterior of the clock tower. Photo by Linda Larson Boston.

On Saturday, March 19th, PAC\*SJ held a free, member exclusive tour of the Old Post Office Clock Tower. Executive Director of the San Jose Museum of Art Dan Keegan and former PAC\*SJ member John Mitchell were on hand to discuss their project, It's About Time, which is an initiative to restore the clock tower to its pre-1906 Earthquake condition. They are currently working to raise the \$2 million necessary to cover the cost of restoration. PAC\*SI Member Beth

Wyman, Kathy Cambiano and Doris Burgess were docents, providing detailed information about the exterior of Old Post Office building and St. Joseph's Basilica. Dorian Clair, a San Francisco clock repairer who recently restored San Francisco's Ferry Building Tower Clock, provided details about the process of clock restoration. Councilmember Linda LeZotte also attended the event.

Approximately 30 members and their guests were allowed the rare chance to climb up into the clock tower. Once they got up the steep ladder, some folks got to wind and strike the clock, a real highlight and treat! Afterwards, members also enjoyed refreshments and wine.



Dan Keegan and Alex Marthews describe the plans for the restoration of the tower. Photo by Patt Curia.



Beth Wyman talks about St. Joseph's Basilica. Photo by Linda Larson Boston.

### PAC\*SJ: BOARD AND STAFF REPORT

#### Dawn Hopkins, Office Manager, Leaving PAC\*SJ



Dawn Hopkins

Dawn interned with PAC\*SJ in summer 2001, and was hired as a part-time researcher in October 2002, rising to Office Manager in 2004. Dawn manages the office, handles member relations, helps organize events, and makes the mission of the Board of Directors and of the Executive Director much easier. She has helped to make PAC\*SJ much more efficient and professional, all while

also serving on the Sunnyvale Historical Heritage Commission and coaching a girls' soccer team.

Dawn will be leaving to take up a full-time administrative position at the Quest Scholars Program at Stanford, which provides college preparation for students from low-income families. We wish her every success.

#### New Board Member Don Carloni



Don Carloni

Now serving as our new Treasurer, Don Carloni has been working hard to help set up PAC\*SJ's finances for the upcoming year. Don has brought expertise in monthly budgeting and forecasting for nonprofits that has already greatly improved our financial reporting.

Mr. Carloni, President of Venture CFO, is a twenty-five year

finance veteran who has practiced as a CPA in public accounting, held executive financial positions with such notable companies as Motorola and Sun Microsystems. He also founded a software training company prior to founding Venture CFO, and currently serves as the Treasurer of the Almaden Valley Counseling Service.

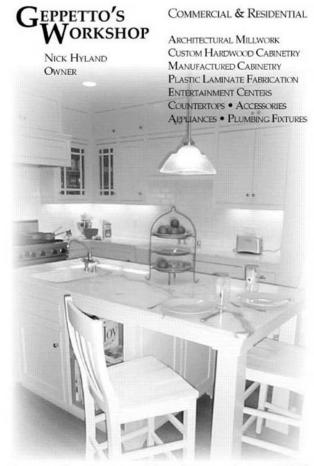
#### New Board Member Rachel Gibson



Rachel Gibson

Rachel Gibson works as the Toxics and Environmental Health Advocate for Environment California, a statewide environmental coalition. She has a BA and JD in law and an MPP (Master's in Public Policy) from the John F. Kennedy School of Government. She is interested in advocacy issues relating to historic preservation and environmental protection,

and will help us devise our intervention and litigation strategies.



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# FOR SALE

#### The Acton Farm House

The City of Morgan Hill Redevelopment Agency is accepting proposals for ownership of "The Acton Farm House". The House will be removed from the site and sold "as is" as personal property only, no land included. This house is estimated to have been built in the early 1900s and is believed to have been occupied by the Acton family which was a prominent family in Morgan Hill's History. The House is located at 55 East Forth Street in Morgan Hill. The house is lifted and ready to move. It will need major renovation on the interior and exterior. The proposal that best represents the goals of the Agency will be considered for ownership. Proposals will be evaluated on, but not limited to: historical preservation, future use of the structure, ability to complete the project, relocation site and cost or compensation to the Agency. The ideal proposal would relocate this house locally to be used as housing in a neighborhood with similar style homes.



The Acton Farm House in Morgan Hill

All applicants must fill out an Acton Farm House Application and return it to the City of Morgan Hill's Business Assistance and Housing Services Department (BAHS) located at 17555 Peak Ave, Morgan Hill, CA 95037 (City Hall) by April 15, 2005. To get an application or ask questions, please contact BAHS at (408) 776-7373 or e-mail Pendlets@ch.morgan-hill.ca.gov.



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### **JUST LISTED**

Two of San Jose's most historic and beautiful landmark Victorians are now available for sale. Call agent for information.

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- Offered at \$1,795,000



#### HOUGHTON DONNER MANSION

- 156-160 E. Saint John, San Jose
- Lot size is 18,900 SF
- Two free standing structures, one is a four plex and the other is the impressive historic 9 unit Houghton Donner Mansion with 9,000 combined square footage
- Zoning CG General Commercial
- Visible high traffic corner location one block from the new San Jose Civic Center
- Offered at \$1,995,000

Information believed to be accurate but not verified. If your property is currently for sale, this is not a solicitation for your business.

### House Saver: Question & Answer

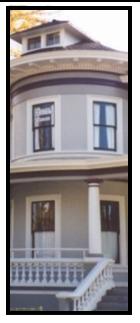
# Q: Should I install thermal windows in my pre 1950's house in San Jose?

**A:** This is a complex question. A simple answer is that thermal pane windows may not improve your utility bills and may lower the value of your home. Window manufactures have been good at promoting their products. We live in a mild climate where the benefits of thermal paned windows usually do not outweigh their cost.

Your best approach to improving your windows is to make the current windows efficient. This usually means removing them from the frame, cleaning/smoothing out the paint, replacing sash cords and reinstalling them with a snug fit that doesn't allow for large air gaps. I do not recommend buying the inexpensive weather stripping as this seldom lasts even a single season. I know of a craftsperson in San Jose who does window repairs, Mark Hughes, (408) 358-8211. There is a good book, Working Windows by Terence Meany.

Another approach is to install window coverings that will provide better insulation than an extra pane of glass. These can be purchased at San Jose Window and Shade Co., across from the Orchard Supply on San Carlos Street. This approach can potentially provide you with protection greater than the addition of storm windows.

Changing the windows on an old house will usually lower its value. This is most noted when the house has architectural character or is located in a neighborhood of older homes, an historic district or conservation area. If a change is required, one wants to stay with the original design and material. Unfortunately, wood today does not have the better characteristics of wood used 50 years ago. Changing to another material, vinyl or metal will drop the insulation factor of wood. Unless the replacement window is specifically made for the opening vs. an off the shelf model, the aesthetics of the house will be greatly compromised. Not only will this lower the value of your house, your neighbors' property values will also be compromised.



Scheller House

In San Jose, you will need to obtain a permit to change windows. For homes older than 50 years, you may have restric-tions on the type of window you are allowed to install. Should you still choose to go with thermal paned windows, do a good investigation. The frame, sash, glass and gas between panes all contribute to the efficiency of the window. The Screen Shop sells manufactured windows. They have a good reputation. Sheets Enterprises, (408) 292-1132, makes custom windows.

My experience and information performed independent of window

manufacturers has given me these opinions. Aside from the economical benefit of maintaining original windows, the current interest in "old homes", the environment (old windows do not require more trees to be cut or more energy used in the production of new products or the use of environmentally unfriendly products) and aesthetic nature of original materials, are additional issues to consider.

### NORMAN FINNANCE, BOARD MEMBER



is published quarterly by the PRESERVATION ACTION COUNCIL OF SAN JOSE

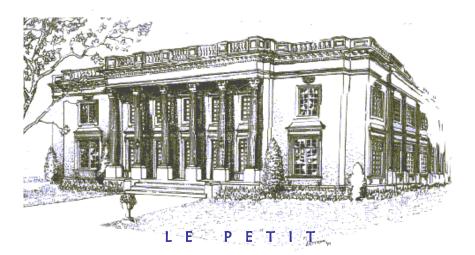
The opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of PAC\*SJ itself.

Editors: Alex Marthews and Dawn Hopkins

Please submit your letters, comments and suggestions to the mailing address below, or to <a href="mailto:info@preservation.org">info@preservation.org</a>.

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Versailles Courtyard can hold over 200 people for outdoor receptions.

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We are located near the new site for the Civic Center Plaza at 72 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street in downtown San Jose, just walking distance from SJSU, the County Court House, Post Office, restaurants and retail outlets.

Please contact us at (408) 995-5400 or visit our website at <a href="https://www.trianontheatre.com">www.trianontheatre.com</a> for more information.

### THEY LEFT THEIR MARK: Frank Lloyd Wright, Master of Modernism

Santa Clara Valley has been graced by buildings that were designed by many of the world's most renowned architects, not the least of which is one designed by America's iconic Frank Lloyd Wright (1869-1959). The Hanna House on the Stanford campus, built in 1937, is one of his most unique domestic dwellings. In this home he experimented with new construction methods and materials that would be widely used in post-World War II home building.

Frank Lloyd Wright was born in Richland Center, Wis-

Frank Lloyd Wright

consin, and the experience of living on the open prairies of that state led to his designs for the innovative prairie-style homes for which he became famous. Wright studied civil engineering at the University of Wisconsin before signing on as an apprentice in the prestigious firm of Denkmar, Adler and Louis Sullivan. His first independent commission, in 1893, was for the

Winslow residence near Chicago.

Early on, Wright looked for innovative approaches to structure and aesthetics. He was one of the first to experiment with steel and concrete cantilevers in domestic architecture. His famous "Falling Water" in Bear Run, Pennsylvania, perhaps his most widely known creation, utilized this concept. He was also the first to

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promote open planning for homes. eliminating the many walls common in earlier structures. In his later years he created movable walls and prefabrication systems that are now quite common.

Continued on page 20.



Wright's "Falling Water" in Bear Run, PA.

## Hayes Mansion Resources Sought

For revised version of The Gem of Edenvale, planned for 2005.

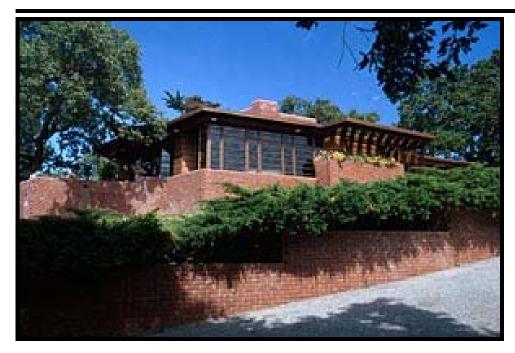
Looking for historical information about and photos of mansion, family, staff, architect (George Page), grounds, farm areas, aerial views, buildings, etc. from *private collections*.

Will cover the costs of copying photos and other materials.

Any items used receive credit in the book.

Contact: Nancy Newlin renascipublications@earthlink.net 408.297.4084

#### FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT



The Hanna House (1937) on the Stanford University Campus. Photo by L.A. Cicero.

#### The Hanna House

The Wright-designed house at Stanford was built in 1937 for Paul and Jean Hanna who wanted a home that would grow with their family. At that time Wright was promoting a light-weight, low cost modular home that could be prefabricated. He dubbed these "Usonian," and the Hanna house became a more elaborate prototype of this style. Even more unique is the fact that it is built on a foundation of a geometrically precise hexagon, so there are no right angles in the walls. The Hanna children, living in such an unconventional house and educated by John Dewey's inspired teaching methods, must have had a most creative childhood.

The house is poised on the crest of a hill with wonderful views of native trees and shrubs. Numerous terraces and decks extend out from every side. A cascading pool and a summer house were built after Wright's death by his assistant, William Wesley Peters. The Hannas gave the house to the University in 1975. The Loma Prieta earthquake of 1989 did severe damage to the house, not because of the design or construction,



Detail of the Hanna House. Photo by L.A. Cicero

but because the ground had not been properly compacted. It was restored at great expense, and in 1999 it was reopened as a conference and reception center for the University. Docent guided tours are given on a regular basis. Call the University information for times. Phone: (650) 723-2560; the website is at www.stanford.edu.

#### JACK DOUGLAS

#### **CORRECTION**

On page 22 of our last issue, Ernest J. Kump, Jr. was credited with designing "Chester High in Mountain View". The correct name of the high school is the Chester F. Awalt High School. It was later renamed Mountain View High School.

Contact Jack at jackdouglas@earthlink.net for copies of his **new book,** Historical Highlights of Santa Clara County!

### HISTORY TODAY: Reprints of Mercury News Articles by Joanne Grant

### Early San Joseans Asked: Is it a street or a river?

Originally published April 27, 1992.

Deep in its gravel and asphalt heart, River Street seems to have always aspired to be a river rather than a street.

First laid out in the summer of 1864 along the wooded banks of the Guadalupe River, its early residents got a taste of the street's preference in January 1866 when the river overflowed and claimed the street as its own.



Picture of the River Street area during the most recent flooding in 1995. Photo courtesy of Santa Clara Valley Water District.

It was the first of periodic floods, the last of which left the street under several feet of water in 1986.

In the early days, River Street ran from Santa Clara Street to what is now Park Avenue. Some time later, it was extended north to Julian Street.

Today, all is gone but the section from Santa Clara to St. James Street. And unless the city changes its plans and designates the street as a historic district, this stretch too could be gone in a year or two.

It was on a section from Santa Clara to St. John Street that seven cottages along the east side of River Street were swept away by a flood in December 1871.

The small homes, built the previous summer, were carried down the river until they slammed into a rail-road embankment about a third of a mile away,

according to newspaper accounts at the time. "Some of them were entirely demolished -- others appear but little damaged. The occupants wisely took the precaution to vacate in time, but with the loss of most of their effects," the Weekly Mercury reported.

On River just north of St. John, a fine 1 1/2-story house was partly turned around by the raging waters of the Guadalupe and the occupants were rescued by boat.

Two years earlier, in February 1869, another flood was equally unkind to River Street, but it didn't have as many houses then. One was pushed downstream with a woman and two or three children inside. The house was broken up but the woman and the children floated on the wreckage to the railroad embankment along Santa Clara Street and were rescued, the newspaper reported.

These and other floods prompted the newspaper to demand flood control measures, noting that the land along the Guadalupe and other streams "is the most desirable in the city."

Their demands apparently were ignored, but by the time the great flood of January 1890 came along, residents of River Street were ready. Their homes had higher foundations and, while water entered some of them, they all stayed put during the torrential rains that pushed the month's total to 6.52 inches.

Drier times also contributed to the street's history.

Early businesses, for example, illustrated the times. The tannery, operated from the early 1860s to 1904, turned out harnesses, bridles and other such equipment -- until the car replaced the horse. *Continued on page 22.* 



One of the early businesses, the Hotel Torino (Henry's World Famous Hi-Life) was the center of culture for the neighborhood.

### HISTORY TODAY: Is it a street or a river?

But perhaps the most famous early structure came when Italian immigrants began moving into the area and built a church at San Fernando Street that opened in 1906. Named Holy Family, the church was a miniature replica of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. It was demolished in 1969 to make way for the Guadalupe freeway.

Early homeowners are described as working class and researchers have been unable to find anyone famous who lived there. Their homes were typically simple structures and many of them have been demolished.



Frederick Wissman House (in 1992).

As many PAC\*SJ members know, the historically significant houses comprising River Street in 1992 were relocated in 1994-1996, through PAC\*SJ's efforts and particularly the efforts of our two longest-serving board members, Ellen Garboske and Andre Luthard. Nine of them now form the River Street Historic Business District, a City Historic District filled with small and thriving businesses.



The oldest home remaining is the two-story Italian villa style residence at 65 N. River St. Believed built about 1870 by Frederick Wissman, it was initially valued at \$325.

The house next door, at 71 N. River, built sometime between 1873 and 1884 by John A. Rudolph, is a two-story structure that today appears to be in "probably the best condition of any of the houses" in the neighborhood, according to a survey done to evaluate the potential for declaring the area a historic district.

That designation is pending [our emphasis], but whatever the outcome, history buffs believe the homes that didn't move during the floods should get some recognition.

**JOANNE GRANT** 

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River Street today

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an email address will make it harder for us to notify you about our events.	To ask about higher membership levels, please call (408) 998-8105.								
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☐ Volunteering at or managing events and tours	☐ Advocacy Committee								
☐ Testifying at public meetings and hearings	☐ Fundraising Committee								
☐ Writing articles for the newsletter	☐ Education Committee								
☐ Helping with Preservation Celebration	☐ Membership Committee								
☐ Helping with Salvage Sale / I have a truck	☐ Audit Committee								
☐ Pro bono legal assistance									
☐ Service Learning Partnership (evaluating properties for architectural significance)									



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 and good for business.

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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