



## River Street Historical District Gets Green Light

by Franceska Gleason

The dream of capturing the feeling of a bygone era in the River Street Historic District is moving steadily towards realization.

Members of the Preservation Action Council of San Jose and the River Street Development Group have fortified efforts to produce a convincing design proposal package to the City Council on August 29. The package for this historic district will include a working site design, projected schedule and financial report.

During the July 6 RSDG meeting, members **Michael Garavaglia**, **Alrie Middlebrook**, **Andre Luthard**, and **Franklin Maggi** used scale building footprint cutouts to produce the first version of the plan site: nine houses plus one carriage house. Naturally, this plan is subject to revision as the design becomes more refined.

The houses are arranged around a courtyard, which will become a common meeting space and the location of the Italian Gardens. The arrangement is intended to draw people in, while rendering the project as an enhancement to the Guadalupe River Park and the City of San Jose. The RSDG also hopes that nearby Arena traffic will further expose the public to the River Street Historic District.

Another important meeting was held on July 13. PAC-SJ and RSDG members met with State Historic Preservation Office Representative **Clarence Caesar** to walk the site and discuss the project's progress. Mr. Caesar was very enthusiastic about the structures chosen for rehabilitation

and their present settlement. He also liked the transition of scale and architectural style.

Mr. Caesar felt that the project "shouldn't miss," in terms of its mixed-use designation and location of specific building uses. Considering the district's relatively small size and the relocation of the buildings from the original sites, Mr. Caesar was extremely optimistic that it would also qualify for National Historic Register Eligibility.

Another challenge was overcome at the July 19 RSDG meeting when each of the structures was paired with an investor, according to size and use requirements. Anticipated building uses will include office, retail, restaurant/cafe, museum, and possibly a micro brewery. It is also planned that professional-office owners will sublease to retail businesses to help make the district successful and financially viable.

The July 20 site-walk was the last big PAC-SJ and RSDG meeting at time of press. **Carol Amador** and **Terry Green** from the Public Works Department, **Daryl Boyd** from the Planning Department, and **Steve Smith** from the Santa Clara Valley Water District met to discuss issues such as parking and access options, location of future power and water lines, and the possibility of incorporating pieces of land that are currently under Water District jurisdiction into the project.

The nature of the proposed nearby Guadalupe River Park design, the fate of existing foliage during construction, and


*(Continued on page 6)*

## PAC-SJ to Participate in Tapestry in Talent

San Jose's annual Tapestry In Talent celebration on Labor Day weekend provides the public an opportunity to enjoy the works of skilled artisans and entertainers. Varied foods, information booths to showcase services, and volunteer opportunities in the Santa Clara Valley will be available.

PAC-SJ will have an information booth and will conduct walking tours through the downtown historic business district. Tours will start at the booth on Almaden Blvd. near Post Street, follow a loop down Post to First, to San Fernando, to Market, and back up Market to Post.

Volunteers are needed for 3-hour shifts in the booth, and also to act as tour guides. Tour information (for self-training) will be available on the buildings to be covered.

This is a great opportunity to inform thousands of attendees of the importance of historic preservation, and give them a chance to learn about some of the wonderful historic buildings in downtown San Jose. To volunteer for booth or tour duty, contact Tom King, (408) 286-7175. Come on out and enjoy the fun! 



# From the President

By Ellen Garboske

Well, I'm certainly going to run the gamut today—very good news, not so good news and very bad news! Let's start on a high note—the River Street Historic District is on its way after years of hard work by PAC's task force to keep the wreckers at bay, and the final work and persuasion of PAC and the River Street Development Group. Credit also goes to the city council members for their visionary vote on this issue. All-in-all good reason for celebration, but not for complacency. We know from past experience that glitches can happen, so we need to be on our toes and continue involvement right up to the reality of a relocated, restored and living historic district. (See page 1.)

At the same time that the San Jose City Council voted to support the River Street Project, council members made it clear that there would be no financial support for the moving and restoration of the Scheller house, which sits on San Jose State University property. University President Dr. Caret indicated the University would supply some funds, but their budget cannot cover full moving and restoration costs. PAC-SJ will continue to meet with University officials to explore possible funding sources.

I suspect most of you are aware of the latest outrage on the old Mosby ranch in the Evergreen area, so I will try not to rehash all the details. I'll just give a reminder of what happens if we don't remain ever vigilant!

Briefly, Louise Mosby owned and lived on a ranch in Evergreen for almost 50 years. The ranch included a number of structures which were listed on the Santa Clara County Heritage Inventory and dated back to 1875, when the ranch was the Evergreen stagecoach stop. In the 1980's Louise lost a long, unsavory legal battle to retain ownership of her property. Attorney James Matthews and the McTavish Corporation were given ownership of the property.

Louise Mosby died in 1991. In complete knowledge of the historic designation, the new owners defiantly tore down the historic structures in 1993 and received nothing more than a slap on the wrist. Now they've done it again.

In early July a developer had thirty-some heritage trees chopped down, including the largest elderberry tree in the United States. The developer claims he didn't know they were heritage trees, but owners Matthews and the McTavish

Corporation sure knew! They had been told previously not to cut those trees! Seems to me that's 3-Strikes and You're Out!

Strike One, Matthews, et.al., wrested ownership of the land from Mosby, under definite shadowy circumstances. Strike Two, Matthews, et.al., razed historic structures dating back to 1875, in defiance of the law. Strike Three, Matthews, et.al., allowed the developer of their property to remove scores of heritage trees, again knowingly, again in defiance of the law. No, we can't bring the buildings or the trees back. But YES! There's got to be some way to stop blatant disregard for the law and our heritage.

Maybe the developer really didn't know these were heritage trees, but I can't see how anyone could look at trees of that size and age and not suspect they might be important to the community. Unless the developer had his head in the sand, he must have heard about the previous historic building razing on that property when he applied for permits. Could

there possibly have been a collaboration between the owners and the developer to commit the act, brave the handslap, and reap the benefits?

I know this is getting long, and I know all developers aren't bad, so my apologies to those developers who do care about the historic environment. However, this whole situation reminds me of something I read recently.

The writer was referring to the Gold Coast area of Chicago and wrote that the area included some of the most valuable property in the state of Illinois. "Taxes had been jacked up, and development predators squeezed out the individual owners, tore down monumental old mansions and city landmarks and replaced them with sterile condominiums and office buildings. Having destroyed beauty and heritage in the name of progress and growth, the scavengers, like a pack of hyenas, moved on, seeking other areas of charm and grace to destroy."

Sad, isn't it? ❧

## News on the move...

- River Street is moving along
- The Scheller House is not moving—yet
- The largest elderberry tree in the US is removed—permanently!



*Preservation Action Council Of San Jose's*  
**Fourth Annual Yard Sale  
 and Salvage Auction**

**Saturday, October 14, 9AM-5PM**  
**240 South 13th Street, San Jose**



**H**ere's an opportunity to clean your closets, basement, garage and attic, *and* make a tax deductible donation to PAC-SJ.

This year's yard sale, which corresponds with the Victorian Preservation Association's annual house tours in the Naglee Park neighborhood, will feature the usual household treasures, and salvaged and restoration items.



However, last year's response to the architectural items was so overwhelming that the demand for items was greater than our supply. So, if you have any salvage items, or if you have large items that need to be picked up or photographed for display, please call John Frolli, (408) 258-6675.  
 (Please limit clothing to vintage or unique items only.)

*We hope to see you there!*

## Historic Home Tour October 14

*by Betsy Mathieson*

**T**he Victorian Preservation Association of Santa Clara Valley is hosting its sixth historic home tour, this one in honor of the association's 20th anniversary. Seven downtown San Jose homes will be featured:

- one 1878 Italianate
- one 1895 Queen Anne
- one 1906 Neoclassic bungalow
- one 1907 Colonial Revival
- one 1907 Craftsman
- two 1908 Craftsmen

Several of the tour homes are in the Naglee Park neighborhood, which is the location of the PAC-SJ yard sale being held that same day.

The tour is scheduled from 11 AM to 5 PM, Saturday, October 14, 1995. Tickets are \$12.50 in advance; \$15.00 at the door. Volunteer docents are needed (free admission!) Contact Tom Gay, 288-6325, for more information. ☞

## Karita Hummer Elected to California Preservation Foundation Board

**P**AC-SJ member Karita Hummer has been elected to serve as a trustee on the California Preservation Foundation Board. Karita was a Founder of the Preservation Action Council of San Jose and served as President of the Board from 1989 to 1994. She continues to serve on the board of directors and is currently co-chair of the River Street Task Force.

Karita also served on the Santa Clara County Heritage Council, Guadalupe Gardens Advisory Council, convened

- and chaired the
- "Destination Cities Task Force" and sits on the
  - State-level ISTEAC Council established by Caltrans. Karita is
  - a licensed clinical social worker and is Executive Director
  - of the Cleo Eulau Center in Palo Alto. She is a valued
  - member of PAC-SJ and our preservation community.
  - Congratulations Karita! ☞



## Brown Bag Walking Tours

Docents from the San Jose Historical Museum conduct free lunch-time walking tours highlighting historic structures in downtown San Jose. Each Thursday, through October, a different area will be covered in the 45-minute tour, with tours starting at 12:10 PM. No reservations needed:

1st Thursday, **St. James Park Tour**, meet at First & St. James Sts.

2nd Thursday, **Early Pueblo Town**, meet at First & St. James Sts.

3rd Thursday, **Old Business District**, meet at Market & San Fernando Sts.

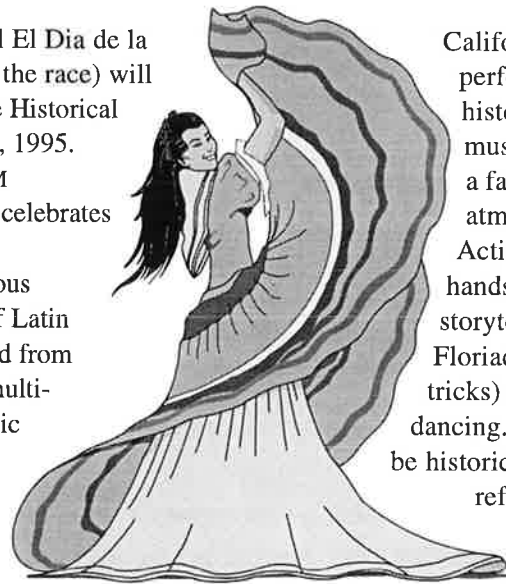
4th Thursday, **Old City Plaza**, meet at Market & San Fernando Sts.

5th Thursday, **East Santa Clara St.**, meet at Santa Clara & First

## El Dia de la Raza

The second annual El Dia de la Raza (the day of the race) will be held at the San Jose Historical Museum on October 8, 1995. Sponsored by the SJHM Association, the event celebrates the fusion between the European and indigenous peoples and cultures of Latin America. It's celebrated from Mexico to Chile as a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic event.

Participants include arts groups such as Los Lupenos de San Jose, Arte Flamenco de San Jose, Mariachi Tradicional de Nicolas Torres and Los



Californios performing historically based music and dance in a family atmosphere. Activities include hands-on crafts, storytellers, Floriadore (rope tricks) and folkloric dancing. There will also be historical exhibits reflecting early Hispanic San Jose. SJHM Association staff coordinator is Barbara Johnson, (408) 287-2290. ☞

## PAC-SJ to Host 1996 California Preservation Foundation Conference

The California Preservation Foundation was formed to promote and support historic preservation throughout California. CPF holds workshops on preservation issues, does research, and promotes and fights for legislature to protect our historic environment. CPF also gives direct assistance to local historic and preservation groups in their efforts to protect and restore historic resources.

This organization is vital to the effort to save our historic heritage. To support this effort, CPF holds an annual conference in different locals, both as a fundraising event and to present educational seminars within the community. CPF has chosen San Jose as the 1996 site, and PAC-SJ is honored to have been chosen as the local host.

Local historic and preservation groups have joined PAC-SJ in planning this important event, including groups from Gilroy, Sunnyvale, Campbell, Santa Clara, Los Gatos, Saratoga, San Jose, Cupertino, Los Altos and Santa Clara County.

The 1996 conference headquarters will be at the Hyatt Sainte Claire Hotel, one of San Jose's landmark structures. Activities will include educational sessions in historic buildings, walking

tours, receptions, dinners, a gala dinner/dance, an auction, tours to outlying locals, mobile workshops, architectural tours, a preservation bookstore, and opportunities to network with other preservation groups. There will be success stories, as well as a look at the benefits of preservation within a community.

Past conference attendance has been in the range of 500 to 1000 attendees. Many of the activities fill early, so mark your calendars for May 30 through June 2, 1996. Watch for more information in *Continuity* and in the mail as the date draws nearer. If YOU can help out with graphics, publicity, computer work or any other way, please phone (408) 947-8025. Leave your name and number and your call will be returned. ☞

### Volunteers Needed!

To volunteer for the 1996 California Preservation Foundation Conference, please phone (408) 947-8025.

# Last Historical Building Remaining at Valley Medical

by Beth Wyman

The medical compound known as the Santa Clara County Infirmary (1855–1913), Santa Clara County Hospital (1907–1967), and Valley Medical Center (1968–1995), has played an important role in the history of Santa Clara County for 140 years.

The Board of Supervisors was responsible for a system of public health and had created a Board of Health in 1854. In 1855 they established a Board of Directors for a County Infirmary and hired a physician to provide care in a variety of locations. This arrangement was less than perfect, and in 1860, seeing the need for a central facility, the Board established the County Hospital and Pest House, which was located on South Street (now Park Avenue) in renovated farm buildings.

In 1871 the County purchased 114 acres for \$12,400 for a new hospital on San Jose-Los Gatos Road (now South Bascom Avenue). This is still the site of the county hospital. However, the great earthquake of April 18, 1906 badly damaged or destroyed all of the 35-year-old buildings, and a new main hospital building was constructed in 1907.

Ancillary buildings were added as needed during the next 35 years. Included among these was H-12, constructed in 1917 as an isolation facility for patients with contagious diseases. An addition to the building was completed in 1925 and, during the depression years, when the hospital administration did not undertake many construction projects because of scarcity of funds, another addition was made to H-12 in 1937.

The construction of smaller buildings next to the hospital reflected the prevailing treatment method of isolating patients with particular diseases in separate structures. From the 1950s to 1968, H-12 was used for

polio patients, and from 1968 to 1989 the county coroner occupied the building. H-12 may be the only building remaining in the county that exhibits how pre-World War II, pre-antibiotics patient care was handled with a central facility for staff who literally “cocooned” themselves from the contagious patients in the wings.

After World War II, a program of hospital expansion was proposed and a bond issue was passed in 1955 to fund the project. In 1967 the name of the county hospital was changed to the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center. A new main hospital building was constructed in 1968 and a Rehabilitation Wing was completed in 1970. A major addition was completed in 1991 and another, the North Tower, is currently under construction.

Many of the truly significant campus buildings have been lost and the only remaining historical building (from the 1913–1914 post earthquake era) is H-12, a simply-detailed, wood-frame structure set on a concrete perimeter foundation with stucco exterior walls. Few changes had been made to the building until recently when an interior remodeling was completed for temporary office space during North Tower’s construction. No changes to the exterior are planned.

The building will eventually be used as a medical museum and library containing documents and artifacts relevant to VMC’s long history as a medical provider in the community. It is hoped that visitors will actually be able to handle machines that were

previously used in patient care such as an Iron Lung.

Jerry Smith, VMC Emergency Staff and VMC historian, was the mover and shaker for a hospital historical group started by Dr. Milton Chatton, a hospital administrator. It was Jerry’s

efforts that “preserved” H-12 in the VMC Master Plan for the North Tower.

In 1993 Jerry took an additional step and proposed a State Point of Interest designation for H-12. The proposal was approved by the County Historical Heritage Commission and the County Board

of Supervisors in 1994. The designation was approved by the State Landmarks Commission on May 5, 1995.

During this process, Jerry Smith was diagnosed with terminal cancer and passed away on May 24, 1995. The hospital group is publishing a 1996 historical calendar in his memory, and they are planning to request that the H-12 library be named in his honor.

Another related legacy that belongs to Jerry is the annual Firefighter’s Chili Cook Off, which benefits the Burn Unit at VMC. Jerry’s wife, Linda, is head nurse in the Burn Unit, so this became one of Jerry’s “projects.” The event was initiated approximately 10 years ago and lost money the first year. In the second year, there was a \$1,000 profit. Subsequently, the Firefighters have donated approximately \$100,000 each year to the Burn Unit. ❧

## Valley Medical Center AKA:

❖ **Santa Clara County Infirmary (1855–1913)**

❖ **Santa Clara Hospital (1907–1967)**


# Architectural Lecture Series To Showcase Santa Clara Valley Structures

The Heritage Council of Santa Clara County, and local historical and professional organizations will present a public architectural lecture program. Notable architectural historians and practitioners will share their knowledge and images of the buildings and structures of Santa Clara Valley and environs, both past and present.

The series will include five lectures on historical architects and builders, and will kick off the development of a slide and image library at the San Jose Historical Museum. The collection was developed from donations of slides

and other images, and through the establishment of a special Image Bank Fund. The Bank will also act as a repository for documentation performed under environmental procedures by government agencies. Lecture proceeds will benefit the Image Bank Fund.

Heritage Council members will receive a special mailing later this summer with lecture dates, locations and speakers.

Seating is limited. Ticket pre-purchase is encouraged. Contact: Leslie Masunaga, (408) 277-4017, Kristiane Maas, (408) 848-6515, or Franklin Maggi, (408) 297-2684 for more information. 

## Schedule

### September 12

Gil Sanchez, Hispanic Architecture of Central California

### September 26

Sally Woodbridge, Historic Architecture in Downtown San Jose

### October 10

Michael Crowe, Art Deco in the Bay Area

### October 24

Sara Boutelle, Julia Morgan, Architect

### November 7

Nancy Newlin, George Page, Architect

## RIVER STREET

CONTINUED FROM COVER

the coordination of the RSDG with the Army Corps of Engineers' construction schedule were also important topics. Members expressed their desire to build and maintain a good working relationship with both the SCVWD and the Corps to facilitate future design and construction decisions.


There's also good news about the toxics report. It seems the only on-site chemicals are in an oil drum, which can be easily removed. There has been such minimal seepage that only a small amount of earth immediately surrounding the drum must be removed. This technically classifies the site as uncontaminated and frees toxic cleanup money for other aspects of the project. Whew!

In addition, the various subcommittees of the RSDG are off and running. The Financial/Legal Committee is in the process of negotiating with all involved governmental agencies, as well as determining a more formalized structure for the group.

The Architectural/Historical Committee is developing a site plan that coordinates the final selection of historical structures with the proposed district landscape and all functional concerns.

The Fund Development Committee is currently investigating various financial options from government agencies and private foundations to secure grant moneys to help fund the project.

Finally, the Building/Construction Committee is in the process of developing a construction management contract with Barry Swenson Builder, as well as cost estimates, scope of work, and construction schedule for the relocation and rehabilitation of the structures. The committee is also beginning the Historic Certification Application Process with the US Department of the Interior.

There is, admittedly, a lot of work to be done between now and the August 29 Council Meeting. However, we are optimistic as the pieces fall into place and the once far-off vision of the River Street Historical District on the bank of the Guadalupe becomes a reality. 



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

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### Watchdog Report

*The DOG is wandering,  
off on a chase  
Tracking down rumors  
to make his case  
of the lack of respect  
for historic preservation  
in our community  
and across the nation.  
He'll be back soon  
from his adventurous lark  
to warn of dangers  
with his acerbic bark  
He's sometimes abrasive,  
manners he does lack,  
but disobedience and all  
we'll welcome him back.*

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enclose it with your check, and mail to:  
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# CALENDAR

## AUGUST

No PAC-SJ Board of Directors meeting

## SEPTEMBER

2-4 Tapestry In Talent Celebration (see page 1)

18 (MON) PAC-SJ Open Board of Directors meeting,  
Mother Olson's Inn, 72 N. Fifth St., 7PM

12, 26 Archetectual Lecture Series (see page 6)

## OCTOBER

5, 12, 19, 26 (THU) Thursday Brown Bag Walking Tours (see page 4)

8 (SUN) El Dia de la Raza, San Jose Historical Museum (see page 4)

10, 24 Archetectual Lecture Series (see page 6)

14 (SAT) Victorian Preservation Association (VPA) Home Tour (see page 3)

14 (SAT) PAC-SJ Yard Sale, 240 South 13th Street (see page 3)

16 (MON) PAC-SJ Open Board of Directors meeting,  
(location to be announced)

### CONTINUITY

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