



# CONTINUITY

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Dedicated to Preserving San José's Architectural Heritage

Spring 2009

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## INSIDE CONTEXT STATEMENTS: PROCESS AND DISCOVERY

By Seth A. Bergstein, Principal, PAST Consultants, LLC

In the last newsletter, I described the established preservation planning approach and how context statements serve as the first step in the identification, evaluation and protection of historic resources. In this installment, let's peek inside a typical context statement.

### Organization and Structure

I like to think of these beefy documents as containing three big sections: the front end, back end, and the primary research findings in the middle. Or to liken a context statement to a building (an Eichler in our case), the foundation, structure and roof. The "front end," or foundation, includes the preliminary chapters of the document, in which we introduce the project, describe the project team and funding sources, outline project objectives, and discuss where and how the project is being researched. The foundation also contains a section outlining the three primary levels of historic resource designation: national, state and local. Although an experienced preservation planner likely works with these criteria daily and knows them in his or her sleep, an outline of the basic preservation framework benefits those without formal preservation training who may be using the document (*i.e.*, volunteers or novice preservationists).

Specifically for our San José mid-century context statement project, our foundation will contain the information described above, along with a discussion of what terms such as "mid-century," "recent past," or "modernism" actually mean when we are describing architecture of mid-twentieth century vintage. People say that when you place five architectural historians in a room and ask them to define modernism, you will get five completely different answers. Terms such as "recent past" or "mid-century" are merely attempts to classify the various – and often bizarre – examples of modern buildings found throughout the country, particularly in San José. Modernism is difficult to describe in stylistic terms because the very intent of its architects was to develop a style that departed from past architectural precedent. Modern architects were designing for the machine age. The horse and buggy of Victorianism was long gone.

The "back end" or roof includes a detailed bibliography, footnotes, and appendices. Sound research should use as much primary documentation as is feasible, given the project scope, and be supported with detailed references.

*(Continued on page 2)*

# INSIDE CONTEXT STATEMENTS (*Cont'd*)

Too often, reports (or architectural history books, for that matter) rely predominantly on the work of others, what is known as secondary documentation. Ideally, footnotes dovetail with the narrative, providing additional information that would bog down the narrative with too much detail. For the San José project, footnotes will provide additional facts that supplement and enliven the discussion. Appendices will likely contain lists of mid-century practitioners and/or properties of San José's mid-century vintage already designated as historic at the local, state or federal level.

Now for the fun part: the "middle" – or structure – of the context statement. We need the foundation to keep the building standing, the roof to keep the weather out, but it is the structure that contains and facilitates what goes on inside the building. Like the many approaches to structural framing found in our historic buildings, this section uses a variety of narrative approaches to codify the context statement's theme. A context statement for a particular neighborhood, such as the Washington Neighborhood Historic Context Survey by Archives and Architecture, on the City of San José's website (<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/planning/Historic/>), the "middle" would describe findings, themes and resources as applied to the neighborhood only. In this example, the neighborhood is the focus.

When the theme is a period of history, as is the case for our

mid-century project, the "middle" discusses the myriad forces that led to the development of historic resources constructed within the given time period. In this case, the time period is the focus. For both examples, the middle of the document provides a narrative that broadly defines the patterns from which the historic resources developed. The middle's remaining chapters then get down to specific historic resources found that support the theme: what they are, where they are, and how they can be evaluated for protection. We work from macro to micro in this middle section. In our case, the context statement will provide a broad overview of San José's development, with a focus on key events that led to development of mid-century architecture. The remaining chapters within the middle section define the various examples of modernism as expressed in the commercial, civic, industrial and residential buildings constructed between 1935 and 1975.

## Discovery from the Middle

The middle section is great fun to write because this is where discoveries are made. As an architectural historian, I'm thrilled to uncover new information about a particular building type, construction method, or designer that is either unknown or undocumented. The mid-century period is finally getting people's attention; the result is that funds are now being generated to study a largely overlooked period of our architectural history. Our project, funded by the City's Redevelopment Agency, is the first global study of mid-century buildings in San José. Literally thousands of buildings from this vintage exist. Discovery is possible everywhere.

The development of mid-century fire stations provides an informative example. Given San José's enormous growth, which began after World War II, the need for city infrastructure became paramount. The City initiated its first six-year capital improvement program in 1948 to address its needs for a rapidly rising population. This document, as well as numerous planning documents found in the History San José archives, discusses projected city expansions and the need for infrastructure support. In each case it became clear that existing firefighting capacity was inadequate, necessitating the construction of additional fire stations throughout the City. Numerous fire stations were constructed during the mid-century period, with many sporting elegant modern design concepts. The first image (see page 4) is Fire Station 14, taken shortly after completion.<sup>1</sup>

(Continued on page 4)



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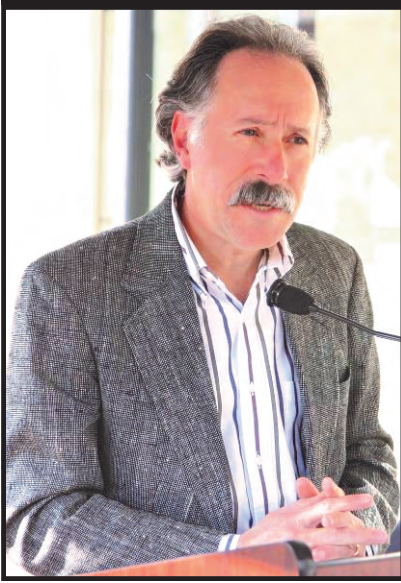
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# Interim Executive Director Message

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**Brian Grayson speaks at the  
Fountain Alley Dedication**

*(Photo Courtesy of  
San Jose Redevelopment Agency)*

It's hard to believe I have been the Interim Executive Director for over a year now. There is much still to be done and today's difficult economic condition only adds to the challenges. Most of us are painfully aware of how we are being personally affected by the turbulent economy. What we don't know yet is how this economic decline will affect the world of historic preservation, particularly at the local level. As we pursue raising funds for PAC\*SJ we face an ongoing challenge of asking each of you to help knowing that it is more difficult

for you to share your hard earned dollars with small nonprofits like us.

We're doing what we can to help our own economic situation and hope you will assist us. We have a series of events scheduled to raise funds for the organization. Coming up on March 22 is Bowl-A-Rama 2009 at the 4<sup>th</sup> Street Bowl. Look for more information in this newsletter and on our website. In the spirit of "Buddy Can You Spare a Dime?" ask your friends and family to sponsor you for 10 cents a pin. So get your pledges, come out and bowl, have a good time, and not only will you help our fundraising goals you will also be helping preserve one of the last remaining mid-century bowling centers in San Jose.

Other events to watch for include a Garage Sale where you will find all kinds of treasures. The sale will be held on April 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. If you have some special items you'd like to donate for the sale we will be accepting them starting later this month. See our Calendar on page 14 and our website for times and details.

The popular Hat Party will be held in June at an exciting location to be announced soon. Details will also be announced soon about our annual Gala that will be held on November 21, 2009.

Please plan to attend and participate in as many events as

possible to support our continuing efforts to preserve our local architectural heritage.

In addition to fundraising, we will continue working with the city, homeowners, developers, and others with a shared interest in historic preservation. We are concerned that due to budget shortfalls in the city, historic preservation issues may be on the losing end of budget cuts. We have established a good working relationship with the City's Planning Department and will work closely with them to ensure that historic preservation receives the attention it deserves.

We don't want the challenging economic climate to be used as an excuse for relaxing the rules governing historic preservation. We continue to believe that it is good for business and the environment, and we will take that message to as many decision makers as possible. If it's good for business and the environment, it only stands to reason that historic preservation is also good for the economy.

Taking a look at other activities we are involved in, the Mid-Century Survey project continues and is well into the second phase and on track to be completed later this year. The final document will help guide the city and us as we work to protect the many important mid-century structures that stand throughout San Jose.

You can help us by serving on a committee, applying to join our Board, attending events, contacting our elected officials, etc. There is much to be done and any assistance you provide will be invaluable. PAC\*SJ understands the near-crisis level budget deficit facing the City, but we also know that once historic structures are lost they are gone forever. Working together we can save the historic fabric of our city and maintain its unique character.

As I begin my second year in this position, I want to thank the Board for their continued efforts. We are a small but powerful organization and it is because of the dedication of our many members and volunteers. Thanks to all of you.

And lastly, I want to welcome Tina Morrill as our newest member of the Board. Tina brings a wealth of community experience and great enthusiasm. Although she has only been on the Board a short time she has already contributed greatly to our organization.

See you at the bowling alley.

**Brian Grayson, PAC\*SJ  
Interim Executive Director**


## INSIDE CONTEXT STATEMENTS (Cont'd)

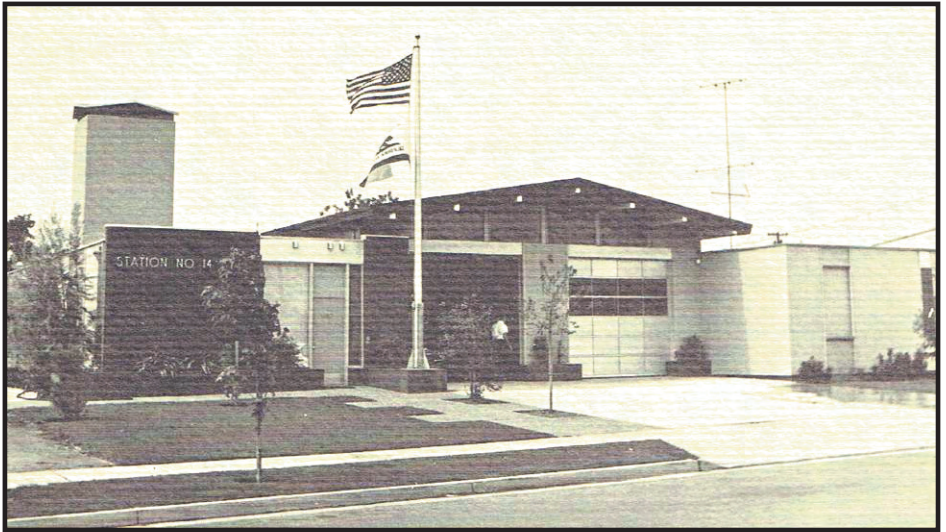
Although additional documentation is required to determine the architect of Fire Station 14, research has confirmed that these buildings were designed by the region's leading architects, such as Ralph Wyckoff, Binder & Curtis, Edward W. Kress, and Higgins & Root. Fire Station 8, on the corner of Santa Clara and 17<sup>th</sup> Streets, was designed by Ralph Wyckoff and described in a local newspaper as "single story, of modern design, and constructed of reinforced concrete and frame." The article notes how the architect resolved various design issues: "Ralph Wyckoff, architect who has completed plans for the new building, said it is designed so that the fire rig will be able to go in any direction from its doors without backing. At present, fire trucks must do considerable backing in order to go south on 17<sup>th</sup> Street from the Engine 8 house."<sup>2</sup>

After reading these documents, I hopped in the car and went fire station hunting. Winding down Saratoga Avenue, I approached Doyle Road and there it was: Fire Station 14, looking nearly as healthy (see current image) as it did in the planning document. I marveled at this practical example of mid-century design, still being used as originally intended.

Future Newsletter articles will detail what goes into the "middle" or structural framework of our mid-century context statement, along with some exciting discoveries made.

We intend our work with PAC\*sj and the City of San José to be a collaborative process that involves City officials, public citizens, and the numerous historians, architects, engineers, builders and preservation consultants in the area. We would appreciate any knowledge you have about San José's mid-century re-

sources and encourage you to share any research and documentation you may have. All previous work will be dutifully cited and credited. Please contact PAST principals Seth A. Bergstein (415.515.6224; seth@pastconsultants.com) or Paige J. Swartley (415.515.6227; paige@pastconsultants.com) with any questions, ideas or information, even if you think we may already have it. We look forward to a collaboration that benefits the community and the wonderful historic resources themselves. 



*Above, Fire Station 14 as it appeared in the 1965 publication, "San José: A Course for Continued Progress." (Photo: Courtesy History San Jose).*

*Below, Fire Station 14, at Saratoga Avenue and Doyle Road, as it appears today. (Photo: PAST Consultants, LLC)*



<sup>1</sup>City of San José. "San José: A Course for Continued Progress", 1965, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup>"New Fire House For 17<sup>th</sup> and Santa Clara Sts." Newspaper clipping found in AIA Santa Clara Valley Chapter Scrapbook, p. 86.

# Preservation Progress



## Milpitas Public Library

Congratulations to the City of Milpitas on their new public library at 160 N. Main Street. The City celebrated the opening of the Milpitas Public Library on January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009 with speeches and ribbon cutting on a bright sunny morning. Many citizens turned out for the event and proceeded through the new south wing, the restored Milpitas Grammar School at the center of the large complex, and finally the new north wing (Children's library). Mayor Robert Livengood stated that the library complex was twelve years in the planning and construction, and was finished below budget. Group pictures were taken of the many alumni from the school. Stories, music, dance and tours completed the day of the grand opening.

The much-loved Grammar School was built in 1916 by Theodore Linwood Wolf and designed by his brother, Frank Delos Wolf in a Greek revival architectural style at a cost of \$13,212. A previous wood school at the same location burned in 1912. By 1956 the Grammar School served as a city hall, library, and community center for the City of Milpitas. In 1993, the school was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The new 60,000-square foot Library has a bookshelf capacity of 300,000 volumes. There is a parking garage connected behind the structures and attractive street landscaping surrounding the building front. The original courtyard in the center of the historic school has been enclosed with a raised, translucent Tensile-fabric roof that allows sunlight in. The school portion of the Library has an auditorium, a conference room, and rooms for public access computers, periodicals, and group study.

Thanks to excellent leadership, vision and community involvement, Milpitas citizens can be proud of preserving this beautiful structure and piece of history. What an admirable example of adaptive reuse.



*Above, the restored Milpitas Grammar School is flanked by modern north and south wings.*

*Left, one of many columns and capitals in courtyard.*

*Below, covered courtyard in center of restored school.*



# Preservation Progress (Cont'd)

## San Jose Municipal Rose Garden

Historic preservation not only pertains to buildings and structures but also to landscapes, parks and gardens. Congratulations to the *San Jose Municipal Rose Garden* on regaining their full AARS (*All American Rose Selections*) Accreditation! The AARS is the governing board of public display rose gardens.

Thanks to the *Friends of the San Jose Rose Garden*, volunteers who contributed over 4000 hours, and the San Jose Parks Department, the AARS reinstated the National Accreditation to the *San Jose Municipal Rose Garden* on December 2, 2008. Due to severe cutbacks to the city's park maintenance budgets over the years, staffing levels at the Rose Garden were severely cut. As a result, this garden was placed on probation by the AARS.

On January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009, volunteers came out in force in celebration and to trim and care for the roses. The *Friends of the*

*Right, a few blooms left in January. Below, many volunteers pruning the hundreds of rose bushes on Jan. 10th*

*San Jose Rose Garden* is a 501(c)3 non-profit group dedicated to maintaining the roses at the Historic San Jose Municipal Rose Garden and was founded by Beverly Rose Hopper and Terry Reilly.

The San Jose Municipal Rose Garden is located on the intersection of Naglee and Dana Ave. in San Jose. For more information go to [www.friendssjrosegarden.org](http://www.friendssjrosegarden.org).



The origin of the San Jose Municipal Rose Garden is associated with Mrs. Fremont (Cora) Older and Mrs. Charles (Mary) C. Derby who both suggested a strictly floral and arboreal park to the San Jose City Council. In 1928, Cora Older made a passionate request to the San Jose City Council for the establishment of a Municipal Rose Garden in San Jose. The motion passed and by 1931, the first rose (Castilian) was planted at the ground breaking. By 1932 the Santa Clara County Rose Society planted 3500 rose bushes with plans for 2500 more roses. Later in the decade the Rose Garden was considered one of the finest collections of rose varieties in the U.S. The 5 1/2 acre Rose Garden was designed by John McLaren who also designed Golden Gate Park in San Francisco and the Hanchett Park Neighborhood in San Jose.

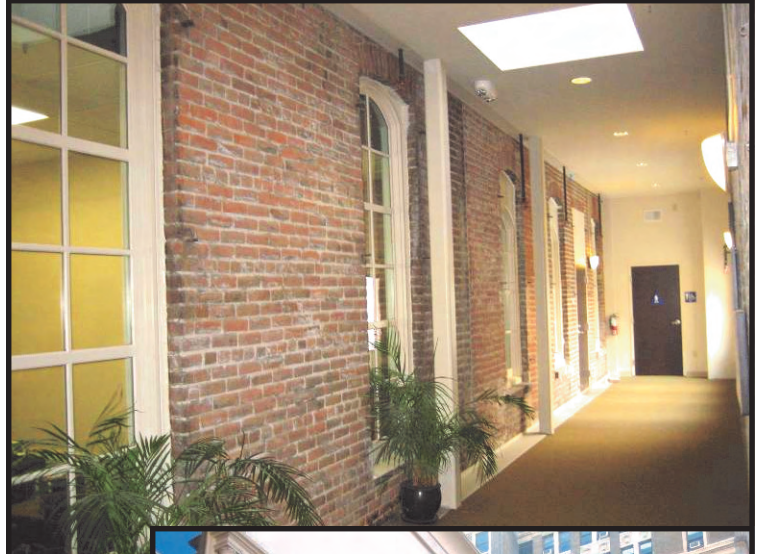
# Preservation Progress (Cont'd)

## Fountain Alley/Wilcox Buildings

On December 4th, 2008, the City of San Jose and the San Jose Redevelopment Agency celebrated the “coming back to life” of several historic buildings in our Downtown. A ribbon-cutting ceremony acknowledged the completion of the 1880’s Fountain Alley Office building (72 East Santa Clara St.), the Fountain Alley new brick walkway, and the Wilcox Buildings on the corner of First Street and San Fernando. Mayor Chuck Reed, Councilman Sam Liccardo, Harry Mavrogenes (RDA Executive Director), Ed Janke (Historic Landmark Commission), the SJ Downtown Association, and Brian Grayson from PAC\*SJ all spoke and extolled the merits of historic preservation.

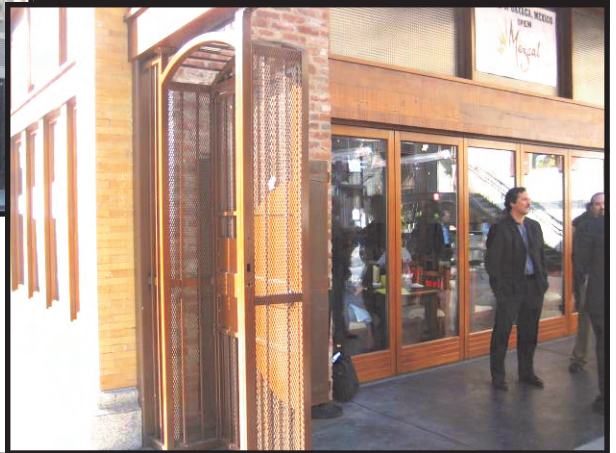
The buildings had been vacant for a decade, but now are inhabited with numerous businesses. Two new restaurants reside in the Wilcox buildings, *Billy Berk’s* at the First and San Fernando corner and *Mezcal* at 25 W. San Fernando St. The Fountain Alley Buildings have retail space of about 9,000 square feet at street level and almost 11,000 square feet of office space upstairs. Retail shops on East Santa Clara include *Popeye Louisiana Kitchen*, *Extreme Pizza*, and *Penguin Froyo* (frozen yogurt, ice cream, gelato and crepes). If you can, patronize these businesses and show them we care about their historic environments.

A grateful thanks to the San Jose Redevelopment Agency, the City of San Jose and to all those citizens who are dedicated to the restoration of these wonderful historic treasures. *(More pictures cont’d on page 8)*



*Top right, interior hall, second floor of Fountain Alley Office Building. Middle right, front of building facing Santa Clara St.*

*Above, the former Crescent Jewelers (Wilcox Building), now Billy Berk's. Right, behind Billy Berk's, is Mezcal restaurant.*



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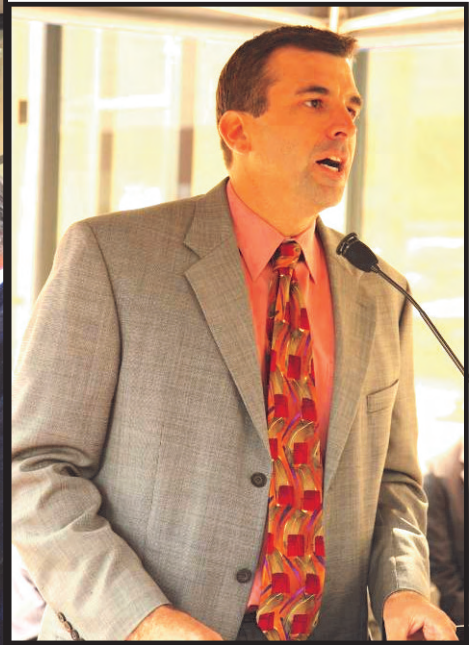
# Preservation Progress (Cont'd)

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## Fountain Alley/Wilcox Buildings (Cont'd)



*Mayor Chuck Reed cuts the ribbon at Fountain Alley.*



*Councilperson Sam Liccardo from District 3 speaks to the gathering.*



*Mayor Reed speaks to the guests at Fountain Alley and thanks all those who made the restorations possible.*



*Second ribbon cutting in the patio between Mezcal and Billy Berk's  
(Photos on this page Courtesy of San Jose Redevelopment Agency)*

# Preservation Progress (Cont'd)

## Roy's Station

A new café has arrived in Japantown. On February 9<sup>th</sup>, Roy's Station at 197 Jackson Street opened its doors after the family restored and rehabilitated their historic gas station, built in 1935. The owner, Carole Rast, told us that the station was run by her father and his two brothers since the late 1940's. Carole's father, Roy Murotsune, stayed on and operated the "full service" station until he retired in 1990. Many of the family members worked at the station over the years, including Carole.



The rehabilitation took over two years and lots of hard work. One example given by Roy's wife, Esther, was the cleaning of the original brick wall. After sandblasting failed to adequately clean the bricks, family members took to scrubbing the bricks with chemical cleaners.

The Café will serve hot drinks (coffee beans from *Barefoot Coffee Roasters* and tea from *Teance Teas of Berkeley*), cold drinks and blended drinks (frappes and smoothies). For the hungry patrons, sushi boxes, quiche, savories and delectable desserts will be sold. One of the highlights of the Cafe includes serving bottles of Coke



*Top, view of Roy's Station today.*

*Middle photo, left to right, Tamiko Rast, Miles Rast and Esther Murotsune (Roy's wife).*

*Lower left, the gas pump from the 1940's. Right, the original Coke machine used since 1956.*



(photos, except page 8, & text : G. Frank)



# ON THE RADAR

We don't have much to report on in this issue.  
Maybe it's a sign of the times.

## City of San Jose's Historic Preservation Officer

Sally Zarnowitz has served as San Jose's Historic Preservation Officer (HPO) since Courtney Damkroger left the city several years ago to become the mother of twins. Sally was staff to Courtney and then became the HPO when Courtney retired. Very versed in the lingo and rules and regulations of historic preservation, Sally led the city through some difficult preservation times. She was also a good friend to PAC\*SJ and was always responsive to our questions and concerns. Due to the severe budget cuts in the Planning Department this year, and the procedures of the civil service system, Sally has been "bumped" from her position. She will remain with the city in the Planning Department, but in another capacity. Anyone who worked with Sally will attest to her knowledge and evenhandedness in dealing with preservation issues. I know the Historic Landmarks Commission will join us in wishing Sally well, and hope that we will see her back in that position in better times. We will miss you Sally. Jodie Clark will become the new HPO.

## San Jose Public Market and Little Italy San Jose

PAC\*SJ's Board of Directors was presented two exciting projects since our last newsletter: the San Jose Public Market and the Little Italy San Jose project. I am tying them together because they both will add excitement to the area between San Pedro Square and the River Street Historic District.

**San Jose Public Market:** This project is being spearheaded by the McEnery family. John McEnery gave a presentation to the PAC\*SJ Board on the development in November. With some minor concerns which will hopefully be addressed as the project moves forward, the Board gave it a thumbs up. The basic outline of the project is as follows: The Lusardi Building at the corner of W. St. John Street and New Almaden Avenue will be converted into a public market, similar to Pike Place Market in Seattle and the Ferry Building market in San Francisco; an entrance to the building will be cut into the east facing side of the building allowing access to the Peralta Adobe grounds; and the former Hamburger Mary building on West St. John and the Storm property on San Pedro Square will be incorporated into the development as restaurants and shops. As part of this development, the City is hoping to convert the San Pedro-facing side of the first floor of the Market Street Garage into

retail shops and to expand the sidewalk so that outdoor dining can be accommodated. Future plans on San Pedro Square call for a high rise on the parking lot next to the Spaghetti Factory. PAC\*SJ has reserved comment on this phase for now.

**Little Italy San Jose:** Joshua DeVincenzi Melander (grandson of John DeVincenzi) gave a presentation on this project to the PAC\*SJ Board in December. Because the Italian community has strong historical ties to the area around West St. John Street and the Guadalupe River, it's only natural that they would look to this location to honor their heritage. The present plan includes leasing space on River Street for Italian businesses, an Italian Cultural Center, murals on the Highway 87 underpass, and a Little Italy arch at the corner of West Santa Clara Street and Notre Dame Avenue. Again, the PAC\*SJ Board was very enthusiastic about this project and wished Josh and his committee success.

**Judi Henderson**

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# Meet Our New PAC\*SJ Board Member



We welcome Tina Morrill to our PAC\*SJ Board! Tina is a native to the Bay Area and has been a San Jose resident for the past ten years, residing in the Vendome Neighborhood ([www.vendome.org](http://www.vendome.org)). She is currently a full time student at San Jose State University, focusing on a double major in Psychology and Behavioral Sciences. Prior to enrolling full time at SJSU, she paid her dues in "Corporate America" with her last ten years working in the field of training & education. She received a Training & HR Development Certificate from UC Berkeley in 2006.

Tina is passionate about education and life-long learning and seeks opportunities to bring knowledge to others. She views her position on the PAC\*SJ Board of Directors as one of reciprocity: She is eager to learn from the collective wisdom of PAC\*SJ and is anxious to contribute toward increasing the appreciation of our history by the City of San Jose and its community.

Tina is Chair of *Friends of Ryland Pool Committee*, President of the *Vendome Neighborhood Association* and a volunteer at the *Bill Wilson Center*. The environmental cause that has lately captured her attention is the disappearance of our honeybee population and the implications of their decline to our quality of life.

Tina says it is an honor to serve on the PAC\*SJ Board and to serve the San Jose community. And we say, thank you Tina, for joining us and sharing your enthusiasm and expertise.

## Save the Date

*March 20th, 2009 –5:00 to 7:00 pm– Explore the new Santa Clara County Archives  
A "Meet and Greet" opportunity for historical organizations and friends.  
at The Santa Clara County Archives, 1875 Senter Road (Senter at Needles,) San Jose  
Please RSVP to [ArchivesEvent@laffeyarchives.org](mailto:ArchivesEvent@laffeyarchives.org)*

## New Juana Briones Book Now Available

Jeanne McDonnell's long awaited, and carefully researched biography of Juana Briones has been published by the University of Arizona Press. Perhaps the greatest accomplishment of this work was the discovery of an actual photo of Juana Briones, but it is far more than that. Regardless of the outcome of our efforts to preserve the home of Juana, her name and fame will live far into the future, thanks to the good work of Jeanne McDonnell. It is titled "Juana Briones of 19th Century California" and can be purchased on line at <http://www.uapress.arizona.edu/BOOKS/bid1986.htm> or at any of the larger on-line sellers.

By Clark Akatiff

### What University of Arizona Press says about the book:

"Juana Briones de Miranda lived an unusual life, which is wonderfully recounted in this highly accessible biography. She was one of the first residents of what is now San Francisco, then named Yerba Buena (Good Herb), reportedly after a medicinal tea she concocted. She was among the few women in California of her time to own property in her own name, and she proved to be a skilled farmer, rancher, and businesswoman. In retelling her life story, Jeanne Farr McDonnell also retells the history of nineteenth-century California from the unique perspective of this surprising woman."

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# PAC\*SJ Book Sale

*Preservation Action Council of San Jose* has a limited number of copies of the following books to sell. Our storage space is limited and we would like to make room for our new "Pride Through Preservation" offering that should be available in March: *Signposts Revisited, A Collection of Streets and Roads Where We Live*. Please help us with our early Spring cleaning.

Title	Author	Price
<i>Touring Historic Willow Glen - Ten Walking Tours</i>	PAC*SJ/Willow Glen Neighborhood Assoc	\$18.00
<i>The Willow Glen Neighborhood - Then and Now</i>	April Halberstadt	\$10.00
<i>Land Grant to Landmark</i>	Francis Fox	\$5.00
<i>San Jose's Women</i>	Helen and Jim Arbuckle	\$5.00
<i>Road Trips Through History</i>	Dwight Young	\$3.00
<i>The Capital That Couldn't Stay Put</i>	June Oxford	\$3.00
<i>Economics of Historic Preservation - 2002</i>	National Trust	\$3.00
<i>Economics of Historic Preservation - 2005</i>	National Trust	\$10.00

If you are interested in buying one of these books, please contact the PAC\*SJ office, 408.998.8105, and we'll arrange for payment and shipping.

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## Restoring St. James Park

The **San Jose Redevelopment Agency**, the **City of San Jose**, with community assistance from the **St. James Park Advisory Council** (a group made up of long time St. James Park Activists) and the **St. James Historic District Neighborhood Association** (SJHDNA), are embarking on a construction project to make improvements to parts of **Historic St. James Park** (pictured right) in downtown San Jose. The improvements are described in the St. James Park Master Plan (Update 2002), but were never implemented due to a lack of funds. Although the Master Plan Update describes improvements to the entire park, the funding available is limited to what is being called "PHASE 1" which includes the west side of the park between First and Second Streets.



The Master Plan establishes strong guidelines for the protection of the historical character of the park and the need to upgrade the infrastructure of the park. *MPA Design*, a landscape architect based in Walnut Creek, has been hired to develop construction documents for this project. A groundbreaking ceremony is scheduled for March 25<sup>th</sup> and construction should be completed by August. All monthly meetings of the St. James Park Advisory Council are open to the public. For more information about specific times & dates please contact Peter Gerahty, St. James Park Project Manager at [Peter.Gerahty@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:Peter.Gerahty@sanjoseca.gov) or Frank Penrose, St. James Park Advisory Council, at [penrose964@yahoo.com](mailto:penrose964@yahoo.com).

Our thanks to the Redevelopment Agency, Sam Liccardo and the City of San Jose, and the tenacious, long time activism & advocacy from members of the St. James Park Advisory Council & the St. James Historic District Neighborhood Association, for securing the preservation of St. James Park and making it a reality in 2009.

**Frank Penrose**

# PAC\*SJ BOWL-A-RAMA 2009

## Buddy, Can You Spare A Dime?

Please join us in celebrating the colorful history of bowling at one of the last two mid-century bowling centers in San Jose.

Sunday, March 22, 2009 4:00 PM

4th Street Bowl

1441 North 4th Street, San Jose, CA 95112



## Three Ways to Participate

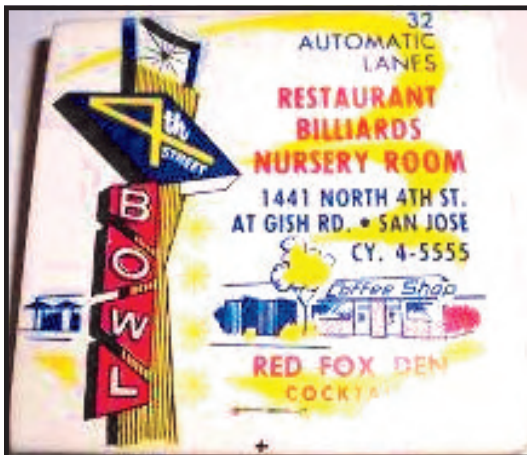
### 1) Come bowl with us!

Bowl on one of the predesignated teams OR form your own team of *5 players*. Each participating bowler is responsible for his/her bowling fees and must commit to raising at least \$50 in pledges.

- Sign up: Email or call PAC\*SJ at (408) 998-8105 and let us know if you want to join a team or form your own.
- Get Sponsors: Download and print out the Bowlathon Pledge Sheet from our web site. The *mini-mum asking pledge is 10 cents per point*, for one game of bowling. We are only bowling one game for fundraising purposes. Flat pledge amounts of \$10 and above are most certainly welcome!

### 2) Sponsor a PAC\*SJ Bowler or Team!

Email or call PAC\*SJ at (408) 998-8105 and let us know you wish to pledge an amount. Again, our minimum asking pledge is only *10 cents per point* and we are only bowling one game for fundraising purposes. Flat pledge amounts of \$10 and above are welcome!



### 3) Become a Corporate Sponsor!

Corporate sponsorships are available at \$250 per team. Your sponsorship will be highlighted on both our web site, in our newsletter, and at the event.

Proceeds will further our educational and outreach efforts in historic preservation. For more information, please call 408-998-8105 or email [bowling@preservation.org](mailto:bowling@preservation.org)

# PAC\*SJ Calendar 2009

- March 16** Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6 - 8 pm , Le Petit Trianon, 72 N. 5th Street, San Jose
- March 22** Sunday, **PAC\*SJ Bowl-A-Rama**, 4 pm, 4th Street Bowl, 1441 No. 4th Street, San Jose
- April 17, 18** Friday (8 am-3 pm), Saturday (7 am-3 pm) **PAC\*SJ Garage Sale**. 260 So. 13th St. San Jose  
Members may start bringing donations on March 21st to 260 So. 13th Street.
- April 20** Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6 - 8 pm , Le Petit Trianon, 72 N. 5th Street, San Jose
- May 18** Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6 - 8 pm , Le Petit Trianon, 72 N. 5th Street, San Jose
- June TBD** PAC\*SJ Annual **Fabulous Hats! Party**. More details to follow.
- June 15** Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6 - 8 pm , Le Petit Trianon, 72 N. 5th Street, San Jose
- Nov. 21** Saturday, **PAC\*SJ Annual Celebration**, Congregation Beth Am, 26790 Arastradero Road, Los Altos Hills, More details to follow.

**PAC\*SJ is looking for qualified applicants to be considered for openings on our Board. Help us pursue our mission of preserving the architectural heritage of San Jose and help educate homeowners, developers, and decision-makers about the importance of historic preservation.**

**If you think you would be interested, please review the Board member requirements and application on our website, [www.preservation.org](http://www.preservation.org).**

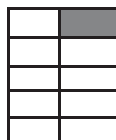
**If you have questions, call us at 408-998-8105.**

**We hope to hear from you.**

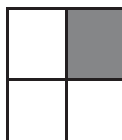
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3 issues \$450



**Full Page**  
Single issue \$375  
3 issues \$700

# San Jose's Last Great Bowls—by Heather David

The sport of bowling has its origins in the game of Kegelspiel, a nine pin game played by Germans and Dutch over four centuries ago. Early Dutch settlers brought the game over to America. The British variation of lawn bowling incited further interest in the sport, with the first dedicated facility established in New York in 1733 - Bowling Green Park.

By the late 1800s, the popularity of bowling had spread from the East to the Midwest. In 1875, in an effort to standardize the game, the National Bowling Association was formed in New York. While the sport existed in private gentlemen's clubs for the wealthy, for the masses it was more commonly linked with the bowling saloon.

The twentieth century brought two inventions that only heightened the sport's popularity – the rubber ball (1914) and the automatic pinspotter (1952). The rubber ball, replacing its wooden predecessor, not only knocked down the pins, it reduced the bothersome noise in the alleys. The automatic pinspotter eliminated the need for pinboys to reset the pins.

Post-World War II economic prosperity transformed the sport of bowling into a national pastime. An aggressive marketing campaign was launched to transform bowling, previously viewed as a sport of working-class men, into a preferred leisure activity for middle-class men, women, and children. Bowling alleys evolved into full-service recreational centers, including coffee shops, cocktail lounges, and nurseries. Some of the more elaborate centers offered fitness rooms, swimming pools, and beauty parlors. From 1946 to 1964, the number of bowlers in the United States doubled.

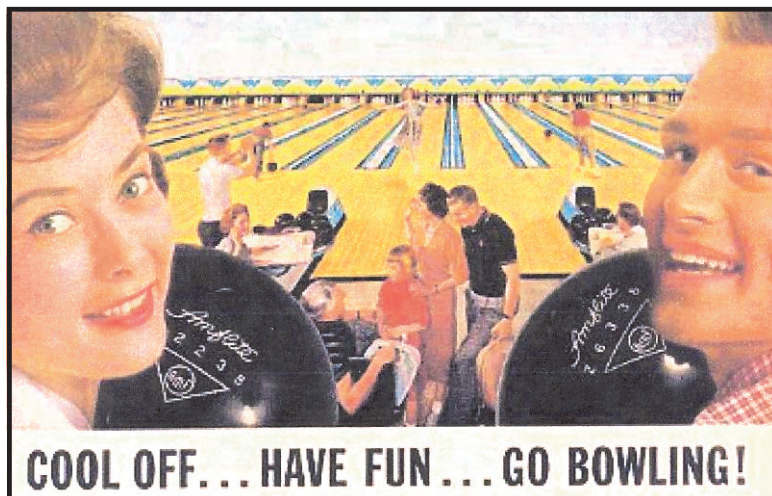
San Jose, with no shortage of land, saw the addition of 10 new bowling centers in the 1950s and 1960s - **Bridgeman's Bowl** (Downtown Bowl), **4<sup>th</sup> Street Bowl**, **Sherman Oaks Bowl**, **Mel's Palm Bowl** (Fiesta Lanes), **Saratoga Lanes**, **Alma Bowl**, **Ann Darling Bowl** (McKee Bowl), **Cambrian Bowl**, **Plaza Lanes**, and **Futurama Bowl**. Today, just TWO of these centers remain – 4<sup>th</sup> Street Bowl and Cambrian Bowl.

## The Survivors

**San Jose's 4<sup>th</sup> Street Bowl**, located at 1441 North 4<sup>th</sup> Street, is the last remaining bowling center in the downtown area.

The center opened in 1958 as the sister to the smaller 16-lane Bridgeman's/Downtown Bowl (formerly at 375 West Santa Clara Street). The state-of-the-art 4<sup>th</sup> Street Bowl, circa 1958, had 32 automatic lanes, a restaurant, coffee shop, billiard room, nursery room, and the "Red Fox Den" cocktail lounge. With the exception of the nursery, the same offering exists today.

*(Continued on page 16)*



*Top, vintage matchbooks from earlier San Jose bowling centers.*

*Above, a 1959 AMF magazine ad for bowling.*

## San Jose's Last Great Bowls (Cont'd)

Although 4<sup>th</sup> Street Bowl is currently in the process of a renovation, many of its original architectural features remain. Take, for example, its modern functional design - a streamlined rectangular building, adorned with a zig-zag roofline and concrete block screen detailing. To the far right of the main structure sits the 4<sup>th</sup> Street Bowl's highly popular coffee shop, a building that has changed little aesthetically in the past 50 years.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Street Bowl's interior also retains some of its original decorative touches. The "Red Fox Den" cocktail lounge, worthy of note (and a visit), is marked by a red vinyl door with a fox outlined in brass upholstery tacks. The back wall of the lounge features a wonderful hunting mural by the California artist, Andre Boratko.

The parking lot too packed at 4<sup>th</sup> Street Bowl? No problem. A quick jaunt across town and you are at San Jose's **Cambrian Bowl**. Independently owned and operated since 1958, Cambrian Bowl is located at **14900 Camden Ave.**, in the heart of the Cambrian Park Plaza Shopping Center. The suburban bowling center features 32 automatic lanes, a coffee shop, pizza parlor, cocktail lounge, and Skip Pavone's "World of Bowling" Pro Shop. Cambrian Bowl used to have a nursery, but alas, it is no more.

*(Continued on page 17)*



*Above, 4th Street Bowl sign and interior today. (Photos, H. David)*

*Below, the Ann Darling Bowl exterior and interior in 1960. (Photos courtesy of Arnold Del Carlo)*



## San Jose's Last Great Bowls (Cont'd)

Unlike 4<sup>th</sup> Street Bowl, a standalone structure, Cambrian Bowl is part of a commercial strip. Dating back to 1953, the Cambrian Park Plaza was constructed using a traditional ranch-style architecture. The façade of the Cambrian Bowl conforms to the shopping center's styling but incorporates a few modern touches, including two Googie backlit plastic "Bowl" signs.

The interior of Cambrian Bowl is decidedly more modern in design, from the vinyl geometric flooring in the entryway to the walls checkered with alternating red and white lockers. Cambrian's "Rip Van Winkle" Cocktail Lounge welcomes visitors with a colorful mid-century mural of bowling dwarves. A picture of the mural (artist unknown) is said to be featured in a 1960 issue of Look Magazine.




*Above, the Cambrian Bowl today.*

*Below, the sad remnants of the Fiesta Lanes sign. (Photos by H. David)*

Contrary to popular belief, the primary threat to our remaining mid-century bowling centers is not waning interest. It is the valuable land they sit on. In the majority of cases, San Jose's mid-century bowling centers have fallen to make way for high-density residential development. Such was the case with Mel's Palm Bowl/Fiesta Lanes, Saratoga Lanes, and Alma Bowl. Other centers, such as Ann Darling/McKee and Futurama Bowl, have seen their former spaces converted into big box drug and grocery stores. Ironically, as some of our older bowling establishments were in the process of being torn down, other local area bowling centers were under construction.

Over the past decade, there has been a resurgence in the popularity of bowling, with new centers sprouting up all over the country. From 2000 to 2007, bowling ball sales were not down. They were UP by thirteen percent. The difference between the bowling centers of today and the bowling centers of yesterday? Draft beer has been replaced with the martini. Hot dogs are out and sushi is in. The good ol' juke box has been fired and a DJ hired. The democratic, all-inclusive, mid-century bowling center has been replaced with "Bowling 2000" - the ultra-hip, uberghlam, "luxé lanes."



In recent years, the South Bay has opened two new "luxury" bowling centers - Strike Cupertino (located in the Vallco Shopping Center) and 300 San Jose (a chic facelift of the former Oakridge Lanes in South San Jose). While these new bowling centers may have gourmet menus and top shelf liquor, to many they lack the character of their mid-century counterparts. What made bowling such an integral part of the American cultural tapestry was not its association with (and courtship of) the upper classes... it was its ability to appeal to (and be an option for) the greater masses. 

## WARREN PORTER SKILLINGS: ARCHITECT FOR THE ELITE

Warren Skillings was born in Portland, Maine and educated at Bowdoin College. He did his architectural apprenticeship in Boston. Budding architects are drawn to cities that suffer major disasters, and such was the case when he decided to move to Seattle, Washington after a fire destroyed a large portion of it in 1889.

Arriving in Seattle that same year, Skillings set up his practice with James N. Corner, and he gradually became a leading Seattle architect. His work began to attract more attention when he was selected to design the Washington State Pavilion at the Chicago World's Columbian Exhibition and also the British Columbia Provincial Parliament Building. Skillings and Corner went on to design numerous substantial downtown blocks, most of which, unfortunately, are now gone.

With the nationwide financial crash of the 1890's, the construction bubble burst, and many architects had to look for work elsewhere. Skillings tried Alaska briefly, but then he settled in Eureka, California where he practiced until 1910, when he moved to San Jose. Perhaps once again, he sought commissions for new structures to replace those lost in the 1906 earthquake.

It wasn't large public buildings or commercial structures that he became known for in San Jose, but it was his numerous quality homes for wealthy businessman and medical doctors. These included: Stephen B. Hunkins, President of the Garden City Bank (98 South 12<sup>th</sup> St., 1911.); auto builder Warren Holmes (679 North 1<sup>st</sup> St., 1920, gone); Alex Hart (668 North 1<sup>st</sup> St., 1911) and Chester Herold, owner of Herold's Shoe emporium (190 South 15<sup>th</sup> St., 1913).

Other 1<sup>st</sup> Street entrepreneur clients included: Max Bloom (837 Morse, 1927); William Blauer, manager of the Garden City Bank (1280 The Alameda, gone); and jeweler Earl Bothwell who had one of the first houses in Naglee Terrace (525 South 16<sup>th</sup> Street, 1925). The homes of banker Frank Martin (1130 Hanchett) and Mrs. Lawrence Haven (1808 The Alameda, 1916, gone) were featured in an article about Skillings in the professional journal; *Architect and Engineer*.  
(Continued on page 19)



*Above, a Warren Skillings home at 525 So. 16th Street.  
Below, a fine example of Skillings work at 686 Margaret Street*



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

Skillings did an occasional non-domestic building, such as a motion picture studio for a San Jose film company (located in Santa Clara), and a fire station at 17<sup>th</sup> and Santa Clara Streets. But his mark was made in the fine prosperous looking homes in such neighborhoods at Naglee Park, Hanchett Park, the Rose Garden and the east foothills. Some of his work can also be seen in Palo Alto, Los Altos, Willow Glen, Los Gatos, Saratoga and Pacific Grove.

The citizens of Santa Clara County were fortunate that an architect of Warren Skillings's skill and experience arrived on the scene just as San Jose was emerging as a sophisticated regional center. His talent and aesthetic sense are evident in many of our eclectic period revival house styles.

The great depression brought an end to the boom years of the 1920's. By then Skillings was prepared to retire with his second wife Beatrice to his home at 1030 Fairview Avenue (1928). He died there on August 1, 1939. ☞

*Note: I am indebted to Gary Goss, architectural archivist of San Francisco, who provided me with much of the research material for this article.*

### ***San Jose homes by Warren Skillings:***

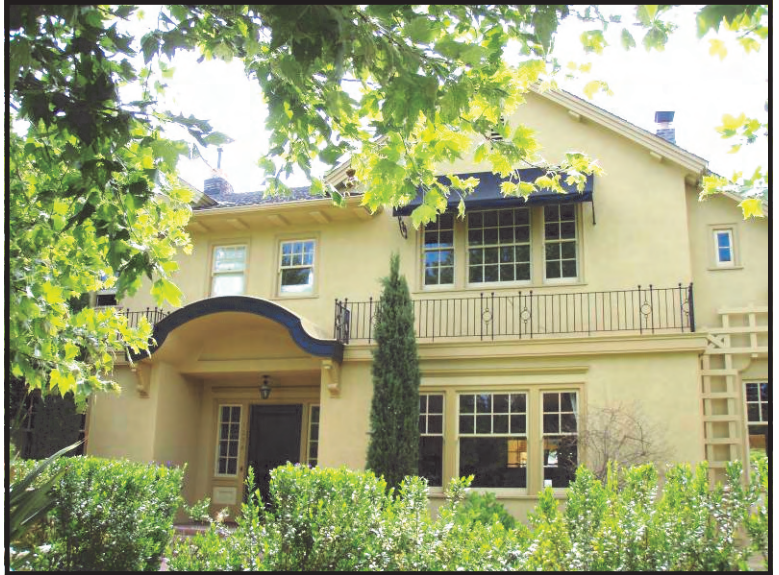
***top -1294 Hanchett,***

***middle -837 Morse,***

***lower left - 1253 Fremont, and***

***lower right - 1212 Yosemite.***

*(Photos by G. Frank)*



# Exploring our San Jose Landmarks

Here are the next three San Jose Landmarks from our list of 150. Check previous *Continuity* issues for descriptions of earlier landmarks at [www.preservation.org](http://www.preservation.org).

**HL80-15; New Century Block**, 52-78 East Santa Clara St., San Jose (pictured below)



This Italianate style building was originally built by Adolf Pfister in 1868 and was called the Pfister Block. Adolf Pfister served as mayor of San Jose and is remembered as the creator of the San Jose Free Public Library. The building is located at the southeast corner of South 2<sup>nd</sup> and East Santa Clara Streets. By 1901, the owners at that time (San Jose Safe Deposit Co.) added a two-story addition to the single story mid-block building and remodeled the corner building, including the addition of the 35-foot tower. The upgraded structures were renamed the New Century Block to celebrate the new 20<sup>th</sup> century and sold to the prominent de Saisset family in 1902.<sup>1</sup> The interior of the building has been remodeled many times. In 1984-1985, the building was restored by Saratoga Capital Inc. (Jim Fox) and Barry Swenson.

**HL80-16; Brohaska/Dalis Residence**, 124 Delmas Ave., San Jose. This house contributes historical significance to the Lakehouse Historic District because it represents the residential design of the neighborhood in the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and because two distinguished families lived there. The first owner, Theodore Brohaska, a musician and carpenter, served on the San Jose Common Council from 1909-1918. He built the house in 1911 and his family lived there until the early 1920's when it was sold to the Dalis family. Theodore Brohaska's parents, Gustave and Margaret,

established the San Jose Opera House in 1870. Theodore's brother Fred originated the first All-women's Band in San Jose. Theodore's sister, Tillie Brohaska, was a member of the All-women's Band, influential to the Brohaska Orchestra and taught music to children and adults for many decades. Much later, Irene Dalis, the youngest of the Dalis family, became a lead mezzo-soprano with the NY Metropolitan Opera. She returned to San Jose and became the driving force and Director of *Opera San Jose*. The Brohaska/Dalis house now serves as a residence for visiting performers.



The Brohaska/Dalis Craftsman style bungalow (pictured above) has distinguishing features such as fieldstone stringers flanking the front steps, matching stone piers, square porch posts, and a cantilevered square bay window. The entry has a recessed porch and a multi-pane Craftsman door.

**HL81-17; De Anza Hotel**, 233 West Santa Clara St., San Jose. The Hotel De Anza opened for business in 1931 and was considered a "first class hotel". William Weeks was the architect and Carl Swenson built the hotel within one year. The 10-story hotel with 144 rooms was the social gathering place of elite San Joseans and occasional out-of town celebrities.

The architectural style of the Hotel De Anza is described as Zig Zag Moderne/Art Deco with an elaborate Spanish Colonial Revival interior. The exterior and interior colors of terracotta, peach, and earth tones preserve the hotel's original appearance. The lobby highlights include elegant wrought iron balconies and a large chandelier, stenciled wood beam

(Continued on page 21)

# Exploring our San Jose Landmarks (Cont'd)



*Hotel De Anza today. Note the stepped-down and "zig-zag" Moderne construction.*

*(Photos (unless otherwise noted) & text by G. Frank)*

To view the entire San Jose Landmark list, map and pictures go to:

<http://www.sanjoseca.gov/planning/Historic/landmarks.asp>

ceilings, and double arched doorways. The Hedley Club Lounge has a one-of-a-kind original hand-painted ceiling, an expansive marble and cherry wood bar, beautiful hand-sculpted archways and an inviting wood-burning fireplace. Just outside the Lounge, the Palm Court Terrace, in Mediterranean décor, has ivy-covered walls and tiled fountains.

The De Anza was the first major hotel in San Jose to have a swimming pool. An L-shaped swimming pool was added and in 1951 a bathing beauty in a diving pose was painted on the west exterior wall to advertise this unique amenity.

After suffering deterioration in the 1970's and 1980's, the hotel revitalization was completed in 1990, thanks to the San Jose Redevelopment Agency, Saratoga Capital, Barry Swenson and Ken Rodrigues. The famous neon sign was illuminated again in San Jose. Hotel De Anza is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places. ☞



*Hedley Club Lounge in Hotel De Anza  
(Photo from <http://www.hoteldeanza.com>)*

## Election of PAC\*SJ Board for 2009

Here are the election results from the PAC\*SJ Board annual meeting on Feb. 23rd, 2009.

The following incumbent Board members were elected to a new term ending December 2010:

**Patricia Curia   Ellen Garboske   André Luthard   Joseph Melehan**  
**Frank Penrose   Helen Stevens   Jim Zetterquist**

Remaining on the Board are:

**Heather David   Gayle Frank   Rachel Gibson   Judi Henderson**  
**Julia Howlett   Tina Morrill   Anne Stahr**

The Board also elected the following officers:

**Judi Henderson** - Acting President/VP Advocacy

**Gayle Frank** - Vice President Communications

**Anne Stahr** - Treasurer

**Helen Stevens** - Secretary

**Joe Melehan** - Executive Board, Member-At-Large

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# MEMBERSHIP FORM

*Please type or print clearly.*

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*Please ask your employer about matching programs for your contribution.*

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*We mostly notify our members of events via email. Not supplying an email address will make it harder for us to notify you about our events.*

**I WOULD LIKE TO JOIN or RENEW MY MEMBERSHIP AT THE LEVEL OF:**

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|--------------------------|------------------------------|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Student / Senior (65+)       | \$20    |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Contributor / Small Business | \$100   |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Benefactor                   | \$1,000 |

**I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO DONATE \$ \_\_\_\_\_**  
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*Please make your check out to "Preservation Action Council of San José", and send it to: PO Box 2287, San Jose, CA 95109-2287.*

*As a member, you will receive our quarterly newsletter Continuity as well as invitations and discounts to our events.*

*To ask about benefits of higher membership levels, please call (408) 998-8105.*

**PAC\*SJ will not release your contact details to third parties without your consent. Please check this box if you do not want us to publicize your name as a PAC\*SJ member:** ☐

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Helping with the Preservation Celebration            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Helping with the Salvage Sale / I have a truck       |
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The Preservation Action Council of San José (PAC\*SJ) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation dedicated to preserving San José's architectural heritage through education, advocacy and events.

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

# PAC\*SJ 2009 Board

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Gayle Frank, *Vice President/Communications*

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