

CONTINUITY

Volume 15, No. 3

Dedicated to Preserving San José's Architectural Heritage

Summer 2004

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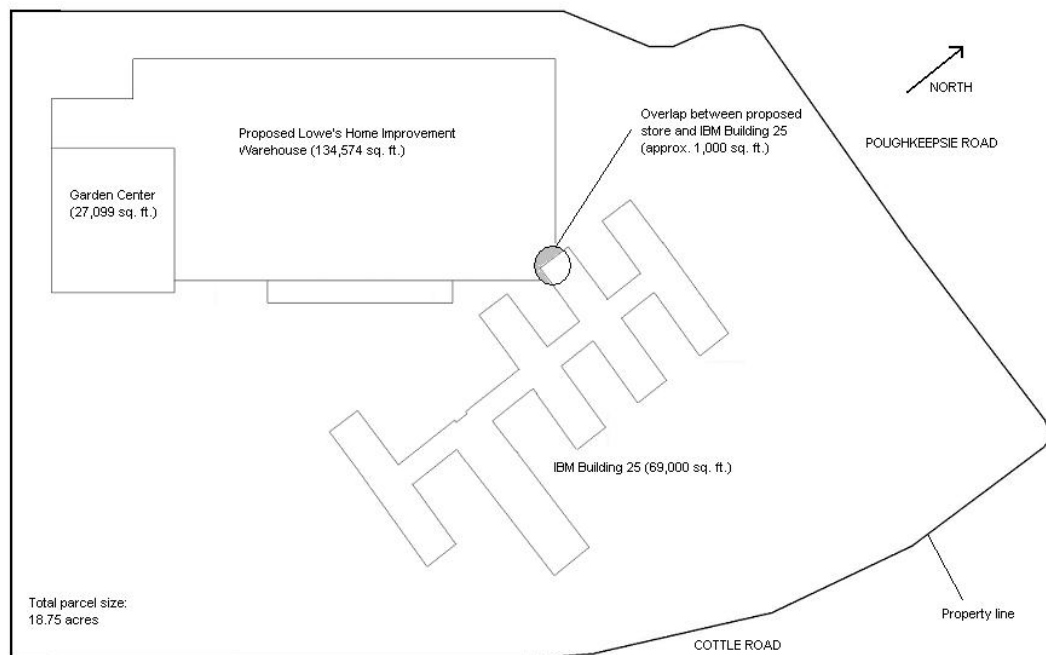
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Court to Lowe's: Saving 25 Is Feasible

In a stinging ruling on July 14, the Santa Clara County Superior Court rebuked Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse, Inc. for its inflexible business model, and endorsed PAC*SJ's argument that it is feasible to fit both a Lowe's store and IBM Building 25 on the site without altering the configuration or size of its store.



The southeast corner of IBM Building 25

Full story on page 6!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



*Jim Zetterquist,
2004 President*

As I returned from my eight-day vacation with my family, I asked myself the same question I always ask:

Why can't we do that in San Jose?

We visited Seattle, Victoria and Vancouver, BC. All of the cities were packed with tourists. The first thing we always do when visiting a new city is take a guided tour. We had a variety of options, such as double-decker buses, horse-drawn carriages,

buses that look like cable cars and even a WWII amphibious vehicle that took our tour on both land and water. Though tours cost \$20 per person, they were packed in each city. How would a visitor get the lay of the land in our great city? A tour could visit the historic downtown, Kelley Park, New Almaden, Lick Observatory, Alum Rock Park, the Wetlands of Alviso, Valley Fair/Santana Row and the Winchester Mystery House. Such a tour would give visitors the feel for the heart and soul of the city.

After getting an overview of a city, we then choose places of personal interest to further explore. In Seattle, one of the choices was the Underground Tour of Pioneer Square. This was a fascinating tour set up by a preservationist in 1965 to raise money to halt the demolition of historic buildings. This tour went through the abandoned basements of historic buildings, giving the visitor a trip back in time to turn of the century Seattle. Over 200,000 tickets are sold annually. All I could think of was a walking tour of downtown, including the shuttered First Church of Christ Scientist

and all the abandoned second and third floors of downtown historic buildings. All tour proceeds could go towards historic preservation. At the Space Needle, all I could think of was San Jose's Plan for the Past, which recommended that the city reproduce the historic 1881, 207 foot, Light Tower on Market and Santa Clara St. We were then off to Victoria, B.C. to visit Butchard Gardens, packed with thousands of tourists. Again I asked, Why not in the Guadalupe River Park and Gardens? We then toured Craigdarroch, a Victorian mansion built in 1887. The nonprofit running the site has always operated in the black, bringing in over 140,00 visitors annually. All I could think of was our own beautiful Peralta Fallon site. Though History San Jose runs a tremendously successful education program for children at the site, tours during the week and the gift shop had to be discontinued due to lack of visitors. The award-winning exhibit on San Jose history located in Manny's Cellar of the Fallon Mansion had to be closed due to the city not providing capital improvement monies to prevent the basement from flooding. Finally we visited Vancouver. Though it contained row after row of generic skyscrapers, a half dozen outstanding, unique and modern buildings were the architectural highlights. Despite being in a gorgeous setting on the water and at the foot of tree covered mountains, I felt something was lacking. A fellow tourist, from Boston, summed it up best with this insight, **Beautiful, but with all this steel and glass, what was here before 1970?** I am afraid it is only a matter of time before the only area that appeared to have any historic charm is demolished. In this case, I did not ask, Why not San Jose?, but, Is San Jose headed in this direction? If San Jose expects to increase tourism, which I admit is no easy undertaking, it has to start with self-respect. We need to educate our citizens about San Jose's unique heritage, and then spread the word.



Is this the future skyline of San Jose? Downtown Vancouver viewed from Puget Sound

JIM ZETTERQUIST'S TOP TEN LIST

Here is my Top Ten List of Ideas for San Jose city leaders to consider as a means to attract visitors to our great city:

1. Stop destroying what historic buildings we have left.

Historic resources like the Fox Building and IBM Building 25 tell the story of who we are. As Winston Churchill said, "First we shape our buildings, then they shape us". Buildings like the Donner House could be a real tourist attraction.

2. Develop a world class History Museum in the center of downtown for all visitors to get a sense of San Jose's identity. Unfortunately during the 50s, 60s and 70s people fled cities for the suburbs. The zoo, Japanese Friendship Garden and San Jose Historical Museum are located miles from downtown hotels.

3. Make it easy for visitors to see San Jose. Subsidize tours of San Jose, create self guided tours of the downtown, utilize state of the art technology, like interactive kiosks and wi-fi head sets.

4. Reproduce the 1850 State House capital building on Plaza Park and place a high profile Visitor Center within the building.

5. Educate our citizens about the rich heritage, and then promote it to the world. San Jose should utilize its local public access television by repeatedly playing program on San Jose's history. This would give visitors an overview of San Jose from their hotel room televisions. It would also be a

good tool to educate new San Jose citizens about the wonderful place they live in.

6. Make capital improvements on the historic buildings that the city owns and ensure these valuable resources are used intelligently. The shuttered historic Kelley House located in Kelley Park and the neglected Fallon House send a message that San Jose does not respect its heritage. This is not any way to encourage tourism.

7. Update and execute San Jose's 1989 Plan for the Past. In 1989, then-Mayor Tom McEnery directed a most impressive committee, chaired by Councilwoman Judy Stabile and including businessman Art Lund, Ed Mosher, Bruce Pohle, historian Clyde Arbuckle, Jack Douglas and Leonard McKay, to develop a plan capitalizing on historic preservation to enhance economic success and the development of San Jose. The Plan for the Past strongly recommended **documentation of our past, preserving and recreating our past** and finally **celebrating our past**. Somehow our leaders have lost sight of this most important city plan.

8. Create state-of-the-art historic exhibits, strategically located in both the new airport and convention center.

9. Develop a comprehensive inventory of all historic resources. Strategies need to be established and guidelines adhered to for utilizing these valuable resources.

10. Invest in some real public attractions in the downtown. Larger public funding is needed to make the Guadalupe River Park and Gardens draw the crowds it deserves. The Gardens should rival Butchard Gardens and capitalize on San Jose's rich agricultural beginnings.

This list is just a start. Email us with your ideas on improving tourism to historic San José!

I do look forward to the day when I visit a great city and ask myself, Why don't they do it like we do in San Jose? That will be the day when the only battles over historic buildings will not be about potential demolition, but about who is lucky enough to occupy them.

JIM ZETTERQUIST



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 comments and suggestions to the mailing
address below, or to info@preservation.org.

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THE DOG



Those two-legged varmints at City Hall have our home town so stirred up that it's a real dog race keeping up!

First, the good stuff - those heroes at **Zanotto's** are back in downtown, doggedly giving it a second try! Now all you humans show your support by throwing a little business their way. If they throw a bone back, save it for me!

The old **Crescent Jewelers** building and adjacent properties at First and San Fernando is finally due for a seismic retrofit and reuse of the site for retail and office space. Best of all, it is being done by good ol' local boys! The team includes my old friend **Jim Salata** and his cohorts **Mark Ritchie** and **Mark Cardosa**. Lots of experience in historic retrofits, they'll do a fine job.

Other structures up for seismic retrofitting and rehab are the 1880s-90s **Kotansky Properties** at 27-37 Fountain Alley and 28-40 E. Santa Clara Street, the 1867 **Porter Stock Building** at 83 S. First Street. All work to include historic architectural features. Also, at long last, the 1887 **Eu Building**, the decayed mint-green monstrosity at Second and Santa Clara St., is to be rehabilitated and reused as retail and office space – hooray! **Thanks to the RDA** for getting those projects going!

Two more miracles: After a hair-raising move of the historic **Hotel Montgomery**, the Montgomery and its **Paragon Restaurant** opened with several public tours and an invitational event for those involved in saving this grand old lady,

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including the **Preservation Action Council**. Never say Never! The other miracle is the beautiful 1920s **California Theatre**, which has been renovated as the home of **Opera San Jose**. When the California opens in September, **Symphony San Jose** will also perform there. Time for the City and all you citizens to show your support for fine arts. I'll be there to howl along with both of them.

Now for the bad stuff - can't avoid it any longer! Appears some of San Jose's top dogs need more obedience training. Not going to hash it all over, you can read it in the Murky News, but have to give a few pointed barks! The half-completed City Hall has become a tremendous financial drain on city funds. It won't hold half the city workers promised, and now we have a bidding scandal to boot! To borrow a phrase from my fellow columnist, **Leigh Weimers**, do you suppose the shine is off the "**Gonzodome**?"

Last November, these same top dogs adopted the **Downtown Historic Design Guidelines**, which limited development on the Fountain Alley Parking Lot to a height of 60 feet. The first project after the guidelines were adopted is now on the drawing board, and guess what! The Redevelopment Agency wants to make an "exception" and allow a high-rise condo tower on that very spot - **right smack dab in the middle of the historic district**, overpowering the venerable **Bank of America** building, and all the other surrounding historic structures! RDA is making another "exception" for another high-rise condo project facing St. James' Park, where the limit is 72 feet! This dog is OK with high-rise structures in the right places, such as near the **Rep**, or the **Almaden Towers** project, but why do it in the only few places in downtown that are in National Register districts? We just want the City to follow its own guidelines – hardly an extremist thing to do!

So in our lawsuit over IBM Building 25, the judge told Lowe's that there are feasible alternatives to demolition, and he's so right! Come on, Lowe's, how about using a little imagination, change your plans slightly, and you can still have the full size store you want!

Finally, mark your calendars for the best doggoned party of the year! Don't miss PAC's annual Founder's Day Celebration on Friday, November 12th...great food, silent auction, the liveliest live-auction items in the area, and lots of surprises! Watch for your invitation! See you down the trail!

THE DOG

VICTORY IN LAWSUIT OVER BUILDING 25



Building 25 Main Entrance

Two years ago, Lowe's brought its plan for a new store to San Jose — a plan that exactly duplicated their plans for new stores elsewhere across the nation. On its chosen site, however, lay a beautiful Modernist building, designed by John S. Bolles, where the flying head disk drive was invented. Lowe's chose to work on the presumption that the objections of preservationists would be swept aside, and refused to countenance alternatives that saved it. The City, anxious to show that it was "open for business", and facing a severe budget crisis, felt unable to resist. They accepted Lowe's assertion that anything other than its exact plan was infeasible, and certified the EIR for the project in December 2003.

In February 2004, PAC*SJ reluctantly decided to sue the City for violating state environmental laws. In July, the Superior Court ruled on the project in favor of PAC-SJ. The favorable ruling does not mean that it is completely certain that IBM Building 25 will be saved, but it does make it almost impossible for Lowe's to pursue the site plan it had previously envisioned.

Essentially, in order for Lowe's to be allowed to build according to its established business model, it must present "**substantial evidence**", from its own profit and loss figures, that *merely moving the proposed Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse to a different part of the site would reduce the profits from that store to a level that would make the project impractical and infeasible*. Since Lowe's and the IBM Building 25 can indeed fit together on the site, a credible showing of economic infeasibility seems impossible.

The Lowe's ruling also has broad implications for the way that development projects are approved in San Jose. The judge ruled that "**Speculation or surmise by the developer as to what a change in plan may mean for its bottom line is insufficient to support a finding of infeasibility.**" In the future, developers will have to present clear and tangible evidence that alternatives are infeasible.

To resolve this long-running dispute, we are now hoping to obtain a judicial settlement conference. We believe, as we have always believed, that there is a great solution here for both Lowe's and the City, by accommodating both a Lowe's and IBM Building 25 on the site. We would like to see Lowe's sit down with neighboring property owners Hitachi, with the City and with us, to resolve a dispute that has already gone on too long.

ALEX MARTHEWS
EXEC. DIRECTOR.



PAC*SJ'S SERVICE LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

In May, the City of San Jose passed a Conservation Area Ordinance, setting out for the first time a clear process for neighborhoods to follow if they wanted to create a "conservation area". Conservation areas are areas that have a unified architectural theme, and are usually dominated by buildings over 50 years old. San Jose has 3 conservation areas: Hanchett & Hester Park, Naglee Park and Palm Haven. Conservation area status helps a neighborhood preserve its distinctive feel, which in turn helps to safeguard property values. A neighborhood can become a conservation area if property owners representing over 50% of the parcels in the potential area agree.

Three neighborhoods in San Jose are currently pursuing conservation area status: Market-Almaden, the Northside and College Park. The first stage is to develop a "context statement" that describes the architectural style of the neighborhood. The second is to make sure that each property in the proposed area has a "primary record", which is the basic description of the architecture of a property.

Surveying every property is a lot of work, but PAC*SJ can help. We have created a new program with Evergreen Valley College and San Jose City College, called the "**Service Learning Partnership**", which recruits students as volunteers to help create primary records. The students receive an orientation from a qualified historic consultant, and work with the neighborhood to create "primary records" for every property in the proposed conservation area.

The eventual aim of the Service Learning Partnership will be to create conservation areas in many different parts of San Jose, fostering a sense of shared responsibility for our heritage. At a low cost, it will help to update the City's inadequate historic inventory, and prevent the demolition of historic structures.

Systematic Update of the Inventory Still Needed

San Jose got its first officially designated Historic Inventory in 1986. It focuses largely on historic downtown San Jose, and contains relatively few properties in outlying areas. This is partly because only properties over 50 years old need to be reviewed for historic significance.

Now it's 2004, which means that properties built between 1936 and 1954 should be reviewed to see whether they are historically significant. In San Jose, that means a lot of historic resources that remain unlisted. That creates problems for developers, who are blindsided by structures they didn't know were historic, and for preservationists, because significant structures might be demolished without anyone realizing. Once this present fiscal crisis has passed, **the City should solve this deep problem by funding a systematic update of the historic inventory.**

Hayes Mansion Resources Sought

For revised version of
The Gem of Edenvale,
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Looking for historical information about
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DR. EU BUILDING TO BE REHABILITATED

The Redevelopment Agency has come to an agreement with Isis Properties to rehabilitate the Dr. Eu Building located at 35-49 E. Santa Clara Street. RDA will provide \$2.9 million, through \$1.55 million in HUD Section 108 loan funds and \$1.35 million in Agency funds. \$200,000 in EDI grant money is also available.

The property actually consists of two buildings: the Bassler & Haynes Building (35-39 E. Santa Clara Street) and the Beach Building (43-49 E. Santa Clara Street). Constructed in 1876, the Bassler & Haynes Building is thought to be one of the Bay Area's oldest three-story brick buildings of its type. In 1936, it was remodeled in the Art Moderne style. Likewise, the Beach Building has undergone some changes from its original style. It was built with Victorian architectural design characteristics in 1887, but the façade was remodeled in the mid-1920s by contractor Herbert Jorgensen. Even with these changes, both structures have been identified as Structures of Merit, as Contributing Structures to a proposed Local Historic District, and as being eligible for the California Register of Historic Places.

Both PAC*SJ and the Historic Landmarks Commission reviewed the proposed façade modifications and approve the exterior improvements. Since the upper



South view of Dr. Eu's building located at 35-49 E. Santa Clara Street.

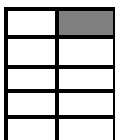
levels of the building retain the historic fabric of the original building, efforts are being made to preserve and repair these areas. The non-original storefronts will be replaced to conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

Currently, the Regional Water Quality Control Board is looking at the issue of possible contamination of the soil and groundwater on the site, because of a dry cleaner business that operated there. When the rehabilitation is complete, the Dr. Eu Building will support new offices and retail centers while retaining the building's original historical character. We at PAC*SJ could not be happier that this building will be brought back into use as an active part of downtown.

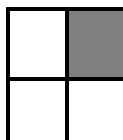
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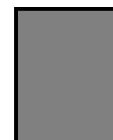
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ON THE RADAR



City Hall update (Downtown)

As has been reported in detail in the Mercury News and in the Metro, the City of San Jose has become embroiled in a scandal over the contract for voiceover IP communications technology for the new City Hall. This controversy is expected to delay the completion date for the Civic Plaza project for "several months".

City sues County over concert hall plan (Downtown)

The political tug-of-war regarding whether the City of San Jose or Santa Clara County will build a new South Bay music venue has culminated in lawsuits filed by the City and the Downtown Association against the County.

The recourse to legal action will delay the County's plans to build a new concert hall at the fairgrounds. In the lawsuit, the City claims that the county broke a long-standing mutual agreement by pursuing the construction of the music site without the approval of the City, particularly in regards to land-use elements of the agreement that call for both government entities to work together on construction plans within the city's urban core. The suit also states that unincorporated

land intended for development should first be annexed to the city, since the concert hall is not a traditional governmental use.

The site proposed for the City's concert hall is directly opposite City Hall to the north, bounded by Santa Clara Street, North Fourth Street and North Fifth Street. This adds an extra reason for the City to relocate the Fox Building.

27-37 Fountain Alley and 28-40 East Santa Clara Street (Downtown)

Five of the oldest historic structures in downtown will be rehabilitated using money from the Downtown Business Improvement Pool, a 2003 program that combined various business assistance programs to allow the Redevelopment Agency to provide flexible assistance and expedite loans and grants.

Several of the buildings in this project were built in the 1880s; 27-29 Fountain Alley, built in about 1899, is a City Landmark. The owners are Barber Trusts and Kotansky Properties.

The buildings' historic architectural features will be restored, and the five buildings will be combined into

one, in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. It is still unclear whether the project will involve a third-floor addition, which would run the risk of being historically insensitive. However, PAC*SJ is glad to see these buildings reused!

Del Monte Plant #3 (Market-Almaden)

Developers KB Homes are planning a new, 40 units per acre housing development for the site of the Del Monte cannery on Auzerais, provisionally called "Monte Vista". They will save the old water tower from the cannery. PAC*SJ is working with KB Homes to explore ways of incorporating the main cannery building into the project.

GE Plant (Curtner Ave.)

The old GE plant at 175 Curtner Ave. is due to undergo some changes. Current plans involve converting the site for large-scale commercial use, including a grocery store and a Target.

The historical report for this project identifies the Motor Plant building (Building E) as being historically significant. Only the office portion of the Motor Plant is of significant historical or architectural interest. We look forward to working with the developers of the site to explore the preservation of this beautiful Art Deco building.

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PAC*SJ CALENDAR

Contact Franklin Maggi at (408) 369-5683 to donate items for salvage!

September 12 Palm Haven Neighborhood & Homes Tour

Palm Haven's annual tour is always a delight. Six homes will be open for touring. There will be a first-rate antique auto display in the plaza along with vendor booths, art displays, and the Port City Jazz Band. Go to www.palmhaven.info for further details.

September 18 10th Annual Designer Sample Sale at West Valley College

8am - 4pm, 14000 Fruitvale Avenue, Saratoga, CA 95070. Free.

This is a unique opportunity to pick up luxury items for your home & garden for a fraction of their retail price. Bay Area interior designers will be selling samples, overstock items and extra inventory. PAC*SJ will also be there, showcasing some juicy examples of salvage items.

September 23 Lecture on "Historic Home Restoration"

*7:00pm, Le Petit Trianon Theatre, 72 N 5th St., San Jose, CA 95112. Free to PAC*SJ members.*

Come and listen to the real experts discuss how to restore your home without destroying its historic integrity. Courtney Damkroger, the City's historic preservation officer, Norm Koepernik and Norman Finnance will discuss the ins and outs of restoration work.

October 29 Halloween tour of Hacienda Cemetery in New Almaden

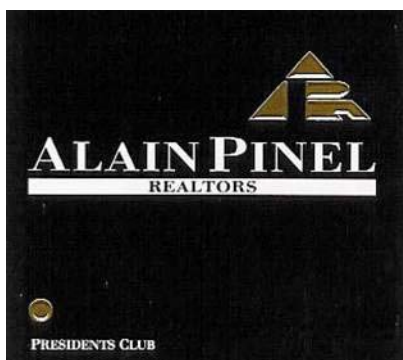
*11am-3pm, October 29, Hacienda Cemetery, New Almaden. Free to PAC*SJ and Pioneers members.*

Hacienda Cemetery contains the graves of many Santa Clara County pioneers. Mr. Richard Hill will lead a tour of the cemetery, followed by a picnic in the grounds of the Casa Grande.

November 12 Founder's Day Event: Honoring the Preservers of Japantown

6:30pm—9:30pm, November 12, 12 S. First St., San Jose, CA 95113.

This year, we will be honoring Japantown neighborhood activists for reviving one of only three remaining Japantowns in the US. As we do every year, we will also mark Founder's Day, when San Jose was founded as the oldest civilian settlement in California. Silent and Live auctions, complimentary beer and wine. Tickets \$50 for members, \$60 for non-members, \$65 after 10/31.



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MEMBERS USING EMPLOYER MATCHING PROGRAM: Ron & Judy Borcharding, Judi Henderson, Curtis A. Jones & Lucille Boone, Barbara Klein, and Bob & Joan Shomler.

LIFETIME PAC*SJ MEMBERS: Keith Watt, Susan Brandt-Hawley, Greg Casella and Tom Simon.

Donations to our legal defense fund are confidential, so we do not include donors to it here.

However, we deeply appreciate the generosity of so many of our members towards those efforts.

If you have not renewed for 2004, or if you would like to join the list above, please turn to page 19!

PAC*SJ EVENTS

Montgomery Hotel Tour, July 30th



*PAC*SJ members on a guided tour of the Montgomery Hotel.
Photo by Jack Douglas.*

On Friday, July 30th, PAC*SJ members were treated to an exclusive tour of the newly renovated Montgomery Hotel by Page & Turnbull's Frederic Knapp, the principal architect on the restoration. About fifty members took advantage of this wonderful opportunity, which unfortunately was held early on a business day, making it difficult for many to attend. The tour started in the plaza adjacent to the hotel and moved into the lobby. Participants got a great look at the lobby, a couple of rooms, and the new Paragon Restaurant and Bar.

Over the years, PAC*SJ has worked hard to keep this architectural gem alive in downtown San Jose. When it was threatened by the expansion of the Fairmont Hotel, PAC*SJ sued to prevent its demolition, and the City Council voted in June 1999 to relocate it. In January 2000, the Montgomery Hotel made the monumental move 186 feet south from its original site. Now completely restored and functioning as a hotel and restaurant, the Montgomery Hotel stands as a testament to PAC*SJ's work and the benefits of preservation.



Patt Curia, Bev Blockie, and Ellen Garboske celebrating at the opening of the Montgomery Hotel.

On August 11, the Montgomery Hotel and the Paragon Restaurant held a "Secret Garden" opening event that showcased the interesting new design of the ground floor. The evening included performances of arias and ballet.

Recipe from the Valley of Heart's Delight

Apricot Preserve Thumbprint Cookies

1/2 cup butter or margarine
1/3 cup brown sugar
1 egg, separated
1/2 teaspoon vanilla
1 cup all purpose flour
1/4 tsp salt
3/4 cup finely chopped almonds
(optional)
apricot preserves



Cream butter, sugar, egg yolk, vanilla. Sift dry ingredients. Stir into wet ingredients. Chill dough 1/2 hour. Roll dough into 1-tsp balls. *Optional: Beat egg white slightly with fork.* Dip balls in egg whites. Roll balls in almonds. Place one inch apart on ungreased sheet pan. Press thumb gently in center of each. Bake 350°F 10-12 minutes. Cool and fill thumbprint with preserves.

Makes 3 dozen. Recipe prepared by Debbie Ferrante for our Valley of Heart's Delight event on May 27, 2004.

PAC*SJ EVENTS

Peralta Adobe Dinner, June 17

At last year's Preservation Celebration, André and Lani Luthard were high bidders on a dinner for six hosted by Gil Sanchez, the distinguished local architect, at the Peralta Adobe in downtown San José. The dinner took place on the evening of June 17, and was a great success.



L: Julie Pifer, who gave a Living History presentation as pioneer Martha Hester. R: Aminah Ramezany, History San José's dedicated Education Assistant, who gave the group a special tour of the Fallon House and helped organize the whole event.



*PAC*SJ President Jim Zetterquist entertains the diners*

The participants were treated to a tour of the Peralta Adobe by Gil Sanchez, who helped to restore it in the 1970s. They ate excellent Mexican food, provided by Mary Lou Mendoza and ably cooked onsite by Reuben Zarate. Our thanks go to André and Lani for their generous donation!

PAC*SJ is looking for auction donations (silent and live) for this year's Celebration, sponsorship, donations of salvage items, new members, volunteers and board members. If you are interested in any of the above, please contact the office at (408) 998-8105.

Proud Supporter of the Preservation Action Council of San José



BOARD NEWS



April Halberstadt

We are sad to say goodbye this issue to two of our most dedicated board members. **April Halberstadt** is our longest-serving board member, having been on the board since 1991. April was instrumental in the efforts to save the Scheller House on San Jose State University campus, one of PAC's first preservation projects. She also worked extremely hard to create the River Street Historic Business District, and has taken a particular interest ever since in the Guadalupe River and its environs. She is an urban geographer, historian and preservationist, and has written several books, including *Bungalow Style*, *Farm Tractors*, *Vintage Tractors* and *The Willow Glen Neighborhood: Then and Now*. The board will miss April, but she will continue to support PAC*SJ's efforts to preserve the architectural history of San Jose.

We also say goodbye to **Brian Chapman**, who has been a board member since 2001. He has worked hard to provide a voice for the neighborhoods in City planning decisions. He has moved to Butte County, but promises to return to San Jose regularly to attend PAC*SJ events. His presence will be sorely missed.

PAC*SJ is constantly looking out for new board members. If you appreciate our work, and have ten hours a month to spare, please call the office at (408) 998-8105 for a Board Application.



After: 755 Julian Street

IN THE ARTS

Paint-A-Thon by 13th Street SNI



*Before:
755 Julian
Street*

On April 24th, a community volunteer Paint-A-Thon painted two historic bungalows for low-income families living in the 13th Street area. The project was managed by Jaime Angulo, the Event Coordinator at Neighborhood Housing Services Silicon Valley, and supported by the San Jose Redevelopment Agency, San Jose State University, the City of San Jose Housing Department, and the 13th Street Strong Neighborhoods Initiative Neighborhood Advisory Committee. The preparation for the project began on Saturday, April 24th and was finished during the week by property owners. By the following Saturday, all painting was complete. The two historic bungalows that were painted are located at 755 Julian Street and 430 North 14th Street. Being sensitive to the era of the homes, historically correct color palettes were used in the painting. The house at 149 North 7th Street was also painted during this project.



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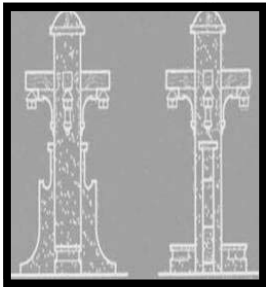
COMMUNITY EVENTS

Palm Haven pillars

Marking the entrance to the Palm Haven historic district of Willow Glen are seven 89-year-old, Mission Revival-style pillars. These pillars were refurbished by the efforts of Michael Borbely and the Palm Haven Restoration Committee. PAC*sj Board Member Norman Finnance advised on the project. They held an official



Historic photo of pillar with urn.



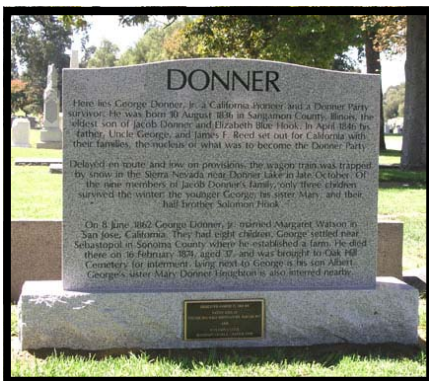
Blueprints for the pillars.

relighting ceremony on August 8th.

Residents hope also to refurbish and restore the gateway pillars that mark the entrance ways at Coe and at Bird, and add four more matching pillars surrounding the neighborhood.

Donner Memorial Dedication

On Sunday August 15th, a large polished granite memorial was placed in Oak Hill Memorial Park to mark the grave site of George Donner, Jr.. At 10 years old, he was one of the 46 survivors of the Donner Party, famous for having eaten some of their dead to



Memorial to George Donner, Jr. in Oak Hill Memorial Park

survive after being caught in a deadly blizzard in the Sierras in 1846. In the interest of preserving California's pioneer history, E Clampus Vitus

and the Native Sons of the Golden West worked together to erect the Donner memorial, which also honors other overland pioneers who came to California from 1844 to 1846 and are buried at Oak Hill. Several surviving members of the Donner Party lived in San José, including Eliza Donner, whose residence PAC*sj fought to preserve in 2001-2002.

GALAA donates to the California Room

PAC*sj administers the Glory Anne Laffey Architectural Archive, which made a donation of \$1,167 this month to the California Room. This was one-third of the money needed to make sure that the Sanborn Maps, which show the sequence of development in San Jose going back to the 19th century, continue to be available to California Room visitors. The remainder of the funds have now been donated.

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FOX CALIFORNIA THEATRE REOPENS SEPTEMBER 19!



*Early photo of the
Fox California Theatre.
Photo courtesy of RDA.*

Originally designed by Weeks & Day and built in 1927 by Fox-West Coast Theatres, the theatre is currently being renovated by ELS Architects of Berkeley. The cost of historically sensitive rehabilitation is being shared by the Redevelopment Agency and the Packard Humanities Institute. While it will serve as the home of Opera San

Jose, Symphony San Jose and other local performing arts groups will also use the site.

The Fox California was considered one of the finest theatres in California when it first opened. Great care has been taken to restore the building's First Street façade to its former 1927 grandeur. To accommodate today's larger productions, the old stage was demolished to allow the addition of 10 feet to the stage. Two extra buildings, a 3-story building along Market St. and a 2-story building along First St., are being built to house performer support facilities, mechanical and service facilities, an extension of the lobby, a new café,



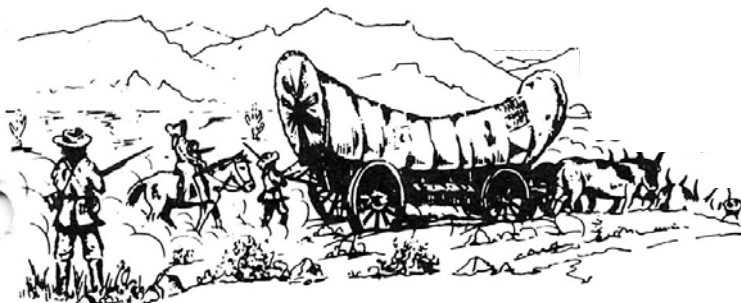
*RDA
drawings
for the
renovated
theatre's
South First
Street
Frontage.*

restrooms and an outdoor courtyard. The total cost of the project with renovations and new construction is approximately \$70 million.

PAC*SJ members John Bondi and Gary Parks were deeply involved in saving this wonderful structure - advocating its restoration, presenting possible plans for reuse and defending it against proposed demolition of important interior elements. Their knowledge and tireless work have been invaluable to ensuring that this theater retains its importance.

The Inaugural Gala Celebrations are September 18, 2004, the opening night of the season. Opera San José offers three dining opportunities prior to the performance and a champagne reception following (see their website at www.operasanjose.org). The season opens with *The Marriage of Figaro*, which will run through October 3rd.

The California Pioneers of Santa Clara County



Founded in 1875, the Pioneers are the County's oldest-established 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 contact Ed Allegretti at (408) 534-2890.

THEY LEFT THEIR MARK:

Alexander Aimwell Cantin, Last of the Moderne Theater Designers



On the right is Alexander A. Cantin and on the left is his son A. McKenzie Cantin.

For over a period of sixty years the office of Alexander A.

Cantin provided plans for structures throughout the Bay Area. In Santa Clara

County the emerging towns of Mountain View, Sunny-

vale, Los Gatos and Saratoga were locations where Cantin received commissions for homes, stores, schools, public buildings and movie houses. Some of these included the Sunnyvale City Hall (1929), the Mountain View Theater (1926), the Mountain View School and the Mountain View American Legion Hall. Cantin and Cantin (his son A. McKenzie Cantin joined the firm in 1935) will be most remembered for their theaters, one of which, the Studio Theater in San Jose, is one of their crowning achievements.

Alexander Cantin was born March 4, 1874 in the East Bay. He attended Oakland schools and followed the usual path for budding architects: apprenticeship under veteran professionals. His first mentor was San Jose architect J. Fairly Weiland, who, in 1895, had just taken on William Binder as a junior partner. Cantin later worked as a draftsman in the prestigious San Francisco firm of Samuel Newsom.

In 1910, feeling, perhaps, that he needed a broader knowledge of classical architecture, the young man took a break from his practice to spend three years in Europe. Upon his return, he published several articles on what he described as "American-style architecture." He also patented his ideas on the creation of decorative columns and arches that would meld the new with the old.

Young Cantin's professional career started as a designer of buildings for the rapidly expanding Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company, some of which survived the earthquake and fire of 1906. His experience with PT&T resulted in his being selected, along with the firm of J.R. Miller and

Timothy Pflueger, to do the designs of the company's new headquarters at 140 New Montgomery Street. Opened in 1925, the Telephone Company Building is perhaps the most distinguished skyscraper west of the Mississippi. Its Art Deco ornamental exterior and interiors make it the equivalent of New York's Chrysler Building of the same era.

Theater Buildings

The 1920s was the golden age of the movie palace. Maybe the glamour of these theaters was necessary to make up for the fact that the films were silent. The great architects of the era, G. Albert Lansburgh, Marcus Priteca, the Reid brothers, Timothy Pflueger and Weeks and Day, created some outstanding examples. Several, like our own Fox California, have been restored and reused for live performances.

Theater construction dropped off to almost nothing during the depression, but it began to revive just prior to, and after, World War II. It was during this period that Cantin and Cantin became the leaders in theater design. By this time there was a demand for more modest theaters in the new suburbs and outlying cities.

The Cantins chose to design their theaters in the sweeping streamlined Moderne style, which, since the early 1930's, had replaced the busier Art Deco style of the 20's. Two of the best examples are the Orinda Theater and the Rheem Theater in Moraga. Our Burbank Theater on Bascom Avenue, another postwar Cantin creation (1951) is a rather ordinary affair, except for its towering tricornered Burbank sign which served to identify this unincorporated neighborhood.



Cantin's Burbank Theater on Bascom Avenue built in 1951.

CANTIN: Last of the Moderne Theater Designers



The Studio Theater's ticket booth.

The Studio Theater

The Studio Theater must stand as the jewel in the crown of the Cantins' Moderne theater designs. Alan Hess, in an article in the January 14, 1996 *San Jose Mercury*, described the ticket booth:

The real star on the street is the Studio's box office, a brilliant and joyful concoction of shiny metals, frosted glass and colored tile. It is, simply put, one of the very best pieces of design in San Jose. (Unfortunately, the

current owners have remodeled much of the interior for a night club, so we have to rely on Hess to describe the original decor): *Cove lighting sweeps around the edges of the ceiling. Indirect lighting bathes the lobby in a rosy glow. A mirror flanking the entry is etched with a quilted design that is a pristine example of the delicate, slightly effete Hollywood Regency style. Even the powder rooms, theatrically located down a few steps behind the popcorn counter, are fitted out with colorful tile and a faceted rose tinted vanity mirror out of Radio City Music Hall ... the deep red auditorium is dreamlike ... sweeping across the two side walls of the auditorium is a mural as panoramic, as dramatic, as tenderly detailed as any movie that ever appeared on the Studio's silver screen.*



The Studio Theatre is located at 396 South First Street.

It currently operates as the Club Glo Lounge/Bar and Nightclub, complete with new Euro-chic finishings.

The Studio's boxy exterior is crowned by a pyramidal tower that incorporates the neon lit blade sign that spells out the theater's name. The Cantins were specialists in the latest neon signage. They were kept busy during the late 1940's and 1950's replacing the old fashioned signs and marquees with streamlined neon productions. Locally, these included the Jose Theater (1954), the Liberty Theater (1955). In San Francisco they modernized Pflueger's Castro and Alhambra Theater marquees.

Though at present not a city landmark, the Studio deserves such a designation, as it is one of the best survivors of an era when architects created theaters that could delight the eye and provide an entertainment experience in and of themselves. It was the vision of architects like Alexander and McKenzie Cantin that could make this happen.

Article by JACK DOUGLAS



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*As a 2004 member, you will receive our quarterly newsletter Continuity, invitations and discounts to our events. Higher levels of membership (Contributor and above) receive invitations to exclusive events and free tickets to PAC*SJ events.*

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

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