Heritage Endorses City Preservation Bond Measure

The board of directors of San Francisco Architectural Heritage has voted to endorse Proposition B, the Neighborhood Historic Resources Preservation Bond that will appear on the November ballot. The measure would establish a $60 million fund for the preservation, rehabilitation, renovation or improvement of historic facilities owned by the City of San Francisco or the Unified School District.

Neighborhood advocates across the city have worked—in some cases for many years—to ensure preservation and rehabilitation of these historic resources. They have worked with City departments and private consultants to develop detailed plans and cost estimates. However, with state and local government recently operating under severe financial constraints, it has been difficult for these projects to move forward, and private donors have been reluctant to contribute to undertakings whose fulfillment may appear uncertain.

The Board of Supervisors initiated Proposition B to overcome these limitations and “jump start” these various projects. The measure itself does not identify specific proposals or funding amounts, apart from requiring the allocation of no more than 20 percent of the bond monies to any one project. Proceeds from the bond sale would be spent only after the Board of Supervisors passed an enabling ordinance that would list the priority projects.

Some that may qualify under Proposition B are Coit Tower, the Geneva Office Building, McLaren Lodge, Palace of Fine Arts, Tocadero Building in Stern Grove, Sunnyside Conservatory, Moscone Field House, Bayview Opera House, Old Mint and the School for the Arts Nourse Auditorium (in the former Commerce High School). Under the ordinance, these would be eligible for Prop B funds primarily for seismic upgrades and ADA compliance. Also on the list is a new construction proposal that would provide a structure on the waterfront for the huge historic pipe organ originally built for Festival Hall at the 1915 exposition and later installed in Civic Auditorium.

According to rough estimates, the proceeds from the bond sale would finance just about one-third of the total costs for these projects. The enabling ordinance would require preparation of a complete improvement program for each project that identifies other funding sources in order to ensure the work can be completed. Finally, the Capital Improvement Advisory Committee, the various City commissions that manage the properties concerned and the Board of Supervisors would review all proposals before the City allocated funds.

Heritage is especially enthusiastic in its endorsement of this measure to make a long overdue investment in City-owned historic resources because it will benefit many diverse neighborhoods across San Francisco. We ask you to vote “YES” on Proposition B at the November 2nd general election.
Two historic resources have been in the news recently, and they are both worth serious concern: The Emporium Building and Sacred Heart Church.

The shocking news of the removal of the office tower on the Emporium site has seen a call from Supervisor Aaron Peskin and the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board to determine how the demolition was permitted. As Heritage has participated in meetings and hearings on this subject, it is abundantly clear the Westfield/Forest City Development team, the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency and the Planning Department have failed in their stewardship duties and responsibilities to preserve and protect one of San Francisco’s significant historic resources.

The loss of the Emporium Building could have been prevented if the parties involved had communicated in an open and honest manner and worked together to meet the goals and objectives of the City’s redevelopment area plan, development agreements, and planning regulations.

The dramatic failure to retain the Emporium’s office tower illustrates on a colossal scale that our regulations, contracts and other forms of city agreements require specific and detailed information on the scope of the preservation work to be accomplished, clarity of language and greater transparency of the process. And, most importantly, city government at all levels must consciously embrace the retention of historic resources as good for San Francisco, its residents and our economy, over individual project interests.

The closing of Sacred Heart is another illustration where it is not too late to take stewardship responsibility to assure the retention of this neighborhood historic resource. Recent news articles have reported the closure of the parish church and the sale of the property.

Worthy of local and national recognition, Sacred Heart can continue to play an important role in the community through either another religious institution or sensitive rehabilitation of the building for a compatible new use. While the Roman Catholic Archdiocese may not wish to retain a spiritual community at this location, it should take the responsibility to market the site with a goal of continuing to retain the church building on the current site.

Citing seismic upgrade requirements and the looming deadline for filing permits for the work, many churches are faced with the same dilemma. St. Marks Lutheran Church and the First Church of Christ, Scientist are just two of many which you have read about in pages of Heritage News. What will determine the outcome for these parishes and congregations will be a willingness to work together creatively, and to persevere.
Emporium Demolition: How Did This Happen?

When preservation gadfly Michael Levin reported learning from a worker on the Emporium construction site, last November, that only the Market Street façade of the historic department store would remain in the finished project, Heritage sought clarification from the developer. At that time, we received assurances that the project would move forward as approved. That is, the front 65 feet of the building (referred to as the “office tower”), with the top three floors of offices, would remain and undergo preservation, restoration/rehabilitation (including a seismic upgrade) and incorporation into the overall project.

Photos of the project site that appeared in the daily press as late as May 19, 2004, clearly show that portion of the building remained standing. In a photo appearing on August 10, only the façade remains, held in place from behind by steel bracing (as shown above in the photo by Heritage staff). That image shocked the preservation community. Demolition of the building occurred without public notice and without public hearing.

Our advocacy network sprang into action. We urged the more than 500 members on our e-mail list to ask the Board of Supervisors and the mayor to look into the matter. The following day, at the board’s regular weekly meeting, Supervisor Aaron Peskin issued a request for information from the appropriate City departments. The Landmarks Board took public comment on the issue at its meeting of September 1, and resumed its hearing at a special meeting, September 21.

At that time, the project sponsor stated that as construction proceeded, it became clear that existing structural conditions in the remaining historic portions of the Emporium were inadequate and non-code-compliant. This information led to the decision to demolish the entire structure behind the façade and reconstruct the office portion. The developer interpreted certain changes to the Development Agreement, sought by the project sponsor and approved by the Redevelopment Agency in June 2003, as allowing that demolition.

The Agency’s general counsel challenged this interpretation and noted that to seek demolition, the project sponsor would have had to amend the Redevelopment Plan, the project’s governing document, which “clearly and unambiguously” calls for retention of the office portion of the building with specified “historically significant features.” The Plan, the Agency noted, does provide for relief from this requirement, if public safety makes it impossible to comply, under procedures contained in Article 11 of the Planning Code entailing review by the Zoning Administrator and referral to the Landmarks Board and the Planning Commission. The developer did not pursue this course.

In the year 2000, in order to unify and simplify approval processes, Redevelopment entered into a Delegation Agreement with the Planning Department by which Planning staff would review and approve plans for the Emporium project. The first arrangement of its kind involving such a huge project, it has proven to include insufficient checks and balances.

The Department of Building Inspection seems to have been inadequately informed of the Development Agreement’s existence, misdirecting permits to Redevelopment that should have gone to Planning. Agency staff, equally uninformed about the agreement, signed off on permits that Planners should have reviewed. In the Planning Department, apparently only the director and a planner, now retired, knew about the agreement. In the end, it is little wonder that, in error, a planner approved permits, in September of 2003, that included demolition of the office tower.

Although investigation continues, what is clear at this time is that the enormous complexity of the Emporium project is a central factor. The approval process generated thousands of pages of documentation, and implementation required much closer oversight than it has received. Lack of communication also contributed substantially to the difficulties. Communication within city agencies as well as between agencies, and the developer’s communication with the community, all were woefully inadequate, even nonexistent.

For our part, we feel there has been a breach of faith with the preservation community. Heritage staff and board devoted many hours over a three-year period in negotiations with the developer to reach agreement on a plan that included limited preservation objectives. No one sought our views on any changes that would result in failure to achieve those objectives.
A San Francisco Superior Court ruling in June affirmed the application of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to architecturally significant privately owned interiors. The case involved 1032 Broadway, known as the Atkinson House. Built in 1853 for Joseph H. Atkinson, it is a City Landmark (#97) and a contributor to the Russian Hill-Vallejo Crest National Register Historic District.

In 1893, the house was the subject of an extensive interior remodel designed by Willis Polk. This included installation of paneled walls, coffered ceilings, built-in carved cabinets, a beautifully decorated staircase and two fireplaces. Both the landmark case report and the National Register Historic District nomination specifically call out these significant interior features.

In 2001, the owner of 1032 Broadway submitted a proposal to the Planning Department for alterations to the interior and exterior of the house. The plans called for, among other changes, removal of the wood paneling, ceiling beams, ornamentation, stairs, cabinetry, molding and trim, that are part of the 1893 Willis Polk-designed main floor.

Under preliminary review, the Planning Department’s Major Environmental Analysis Unit judged that the proposed alterations did not appear eligible for exemption under CEQA. The project would have to undergo CEQA review to determine if it would cause a “substantial adverse change” to this significant historical resource. In November 2002, the Department informed the owner he would have to submit an environmental evaluation application for the project.

In February of 2003, instead of responding to the Planning Department’s request, the project sponsor sued the City. He requested a determination from the San Francisco Superior Court that 1) a permit to alter the interior of a private residence is not subject to the City’s discretionary review process; 2) CEQA review cannot be conducted on the interior of a private residence; and, in the alternative, that 3) his proposed alterations to the interior of 1032 Broadway were not subject to CEQA.

On June 18, 2004, Superior Court Judge Peter J. Busch ruled for the City, holding that a permit to alter the interior of a private residence was subject to the Planning Commission’s discretion, and that there was no basis before the Court to find the project was not subject to CEQA.

With regard to CEQA review of interiors, Judge Busch ruled, “CEQA does not state that a residential interior can never be an ‘object of historical significance’ or an ‘historical resource’ within the meaning of CEQA” and that “[i]t would be improper for the Court to add that restriction to CEQA in the absence of legislative direction.” The Court held that whether or not the proposed project qualifies for an exemption from CEQA is “a decision to be made in the first instance by the ‘lead agency,’ in this case the City.”

Preservation Grants Available

The Holiday Season Is Upon Us!

As staff endure one of San Francisco’s post-fog-season September heat waves, it is difficult to project ahead three months and evoke images of the holiday season. But do so we must, if we are to get advance notice of Heritage’s annual Holiday Open House out among our members.

The Haas-Lilienthal House first opened to public tours on November 14, 1973. While it does not appear that there was a Holiday Open House, that year, there was a reception at the House for Heritage volunteers on December 19. So, it appears, the tradition of a holiday observance for the public began in 1974, making this year’s event the 30th reprise.

Sure enough, this year, Santa will bound down, not the chimney, but the grand staircase of the historic Haas-Lilienthal House to greet delighted children—and not a few relieved parents. A real, richly decorated 13-foot tree will stand in the bay of the front parlor, where a pianist will offer traditional holiday tunes as revelers gather to admire holiday decorations festooned throughout the House. There will be light refreshments, wine and hot cider (yes, we will probably be happy for that, in December!).

Although there will be no guided tours of the House that day, docents will be on hand to answer any questions you may have about the House and its history. And what would Christmas be without trains? The train room, with its working display of antique electric trains, will be open to charm children of every age and gender.

You will also want to reserve some time for early holiday shopping. The Haas-Lilienthal House bookstore will offer a diverse selection of special holiday items and bargains on books, cards, giftwrap, stocking stuffers and ornaments. Heritage members, of course, enjoy a 20 percent discount on all purchases.

Members will receive Holiday Open House invitations in the mail, but just to be sure you don’t miss out, better put the date on your calendar now: Sunday, December 5, from noon until 3:00 p.m. Santa will appear around 2:00. The event is free to Heritage members and their guests. The charge for non-members is $10 and $5 for non-member seniors and children 12 years of age and under.

See you in December!

The End of an Era at the House

For the first time in 21 years, the Haas-Lilienthal House has a new resident house manager. Early in September, Chris Van Raalte turned over the day-to-day stewardship of the property to Heather Kraft.

Chris came to Heritage in 1983, recently arrived from Massachusetts and offering an interesting background. He held a master’s degree in marine biology and was a professional dancer.

When Chris took it on, the resident manager’s job included coordinating party rentals and managing social functions at the House. In recent years he confined his work to the still considerable task of general maintenance and upkeep on this 1886 residence-turned-house-museum and offices. To neighbors and visitors, his hand was most evident in the garden, which he tended with loving care, and the striking flower arrangements that graced the museum spaces.

Chris married just last year, and after sharing his home with literally thousands of tourists and party-goers, not to mention scores of Heritage staff over the years, he and his wife Stacey have moved on to a home of their own in San Francisco. Chris takes with him institutional memory that encompasses nearly two-thirds of the history of Heritage. He has our gratitude and best wishes. We will all miss him.

Heather Kraft has taken over at the House in a seamless transition. She often house-sat when Chris, her long-time friend, went on vacation, and therefore takes on the position as house manager with more than a little familiarity with the magnitude of the responsibility.

A Wisconsin native, Heather moved to San Francisco in 1991, after receiving a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Northern Illinois University. Her work experience includes digital art, photography and catering. She counts gardening among her pastimes, and so we know the grounds, as well as the House, are in good hands.

We welcome Heather and look forward to a long association with her.
Near & Farr: The San Francisco Architecture of Albert Farr Part I

As spring dawned in 1907, authors Jack and Charmian London visited Emma and Willard Growall; the women were distant relations. The Growalls’ year-old country house on the San Francisco Peninsula offered an ideal California garden villa in the oak landscape of Atherton. An arcaded court and pool drew this landscape into the center of the house. Wisteria-draped pergolas, a fountain, steps, arcades, balconies, and garden walls dissolved the line between house and setting.

The visit inspired Mrs. London to comment in the house guestbook, “Dearest place in California next to our ranch.” Jack wrote in concurrence with these sentiments. Four years later, the Londons engaged the architect of the Growall house to design their own ranch retreat, Wolf House, in Sonoma County. His name was Albert Farr.

Common perception has most identified Bay Area architect Albert Farr with his shingled houses in Pacific Heights and Belvedere. Yet, in fact, his work shows an amazing variety and evolution of architectural styles. The record $18 million price recently paid for one of Farr’s single-family Pacific Heights residences has drawn increasing attention to his French town houses and chateaux of the 1920s and ’30s. The 2003 Decorator Showcase house introduced Farr’s French-inspired mode to thousands more.

Farr was regarded as a major figure in his own time. He emerged during the first years of the 20th century within what historians came to call the First Bay Area Tradition. Coxhead, Polk, and Maybeck were constructing their Presidio-wall Pacific Avenue rustic townhouses as icons in the adjacent blocks at virtually the same time that Farr demonstrated his own approach to the rustic Bay movement. His work in Belvedere became well known. Piedmont, Claremont and Oakland hold scores of additional examples of his work, and he is well represented on the Peninsula. Knowledgeable clients have always recognized the quality of his work. Spain, England, France, and Switzerland chose Farr-designed residences to serve as consulates.

Yet Albert Farr’s importance in Bay Area architecture has been overlooked historically. Immediately after World War II, when Modernism eclipsed the historicist modes—and with Farr retired since the onset of the war—he began to fade from prominence. When historians explored the Bay Area Tradition during the late 1950s and early 1960s, they noted Farr but did not convey his true role and real stature. The time for reappraisal is long overdue, and it is the intention of this review to prompt a serious re-evaluation.

Born in Omaha (1871), Farr was raised in Japan, where his father assisted in establishing the postal system. He came to the San Francisco Bay Area in 1890 at the age of nineteen. In 1925, Farr acknowledged that he had received training from one F. Barker of the Royal Institute of British Architects. This was, no doubt, the Frederick Richard
Barker that appears in the 1892 Oakland City Directory as an architect with offices at 8th and Broadway, a few blocks from the Farr residence.

Albert Farr joined up with Oakland architect Herbert L. Smith around 1892, and the firm of Smith and Farr designed the Bay District School on San Pablo at 61st in Oakland in 1892 (not extant). Farr worked as a draftsman for Clinton Day from 1893 to 1895 and was in the employ of the Reid Brothers around 1896.

In 1897, Farr became a designer for the antiques, furniture and upholstery firm of Harrold, Belcher, & Allen, located in the city at 600 Sutter. His first San Francisco listing as an architect, in 1896, was at this address.

Farr’s first major San Francisco residence was for Dr. Henry L. Wagner (1897, destroyed 1906), on the crest of Nob Hill at 1407 Jones near Washington. It was an auspicious start to his own independent practice, and it quickly established him as a major player on the leading edge of architectural fashion in the city.

The Wagner residence displayed numerous gables in an overhanging medieval half-timbered design of great authority. The design showed the influence of Ernest Coxhead’s medieval work and Willis Polk’s redesigned Victorian for Dr. Boericke on Washington just west of Van Ness. But with a more lavish budget, Farr was able to expand Polk’s single bay essay into an urban manor. The house helped establish the medieval shingle vogue in the city that continued as a variant of the Bay Area Tradition for decades. Farr’s reputation as a medievalist and anglophile also led to numerous commissions for Tudor remodels of vertical Victorians in the 1900s and 1910s.

Many will recognize Farr’s hand in two early Georgian houses (1902), at 3333 and 3343 Pacific Avenue, that incorporate medieval elements. In 1903, Farr built a less-familiar but unique “Georgian” residence. The Dr. Frank P. & Mary Wilson Residence at 2245 Sacramento represents Farr’s experiment with the more formal side of the First Bay Tradition. He renders a compact design on this restricted urban site, creating a structure that, by its complexity, would normally require a more generous setting.

Implied early Georgian qualities remain in the shingled wall surfaces, classical elements and symmetrical composition, an approach similar to Ernest Coxhead’s two houses at 3232 and 3238 Pacific Avenue. Coxhead’s Spooner residence at 2800 Pacific clearly influenced Farr with its crisp polygonal bays, its entry on the bay and its extending wings. Farr developed here a fresh and distinctive interpretation of the Georgian that is anything but textbook.

He uses a square window over the entry in an unorthodox manner. He differentiates the windows of the first and second floors with round-headed surrounds and delicate moldings below, set off from the more robustly framed windows above them.

The elaborate entry cornice over the front door, with its broken pediment and cartouche, rests on unadorned sidewalls. These have proportions that intimate shingled pilasters. A stringcourse serves as window-sills for the three windows of the bay above and forms imaginatively the top of an implied parapet.

This device sets off the richness of the entry cornice. The roof cornice contains a smaller parapet with balusters at the three dormer windows. Normally, such a building entablature would be larger than one for an entry door. Here, the more emphatic entry entablature, in contrast to the full building entablature, allows the structure to appear higher and grander,
Unbuilt Nob Hill hotel and apartment project designed by Farr, with George McCrea (1903), for Herbert Law

Photo: San Francisco History Center San Francisco Public Library

arising from an assumed perspective.

Most exceptional is the extension of the main entry cornice along diagonal bay walls. From the front these extend the line of the cornice back to the main plane of the building façade, but as one reaches the bottom of the stairs at the edge of the sidewalk, these cornices visually extend the raking cornice of the entry pediment as they recede in perspective on the diagonal walls. The uniform horizontal line of the windows of the second floor resolves the tension of the varied heights of the first level entry bay and the round-headed windows.

In 1901, Farr explored Edwardian Mannerist qualities in a grand house with decorative detail that nearly overwhelmed the residence of Harry Babcock at 2660 Scott Street. Huge keystones, heavy cornice, and string-courses and rustication combine with emphatic dormers to form a forceful and weighty statement. Farr employed consistently the same-sized massive keystone to cap variously sized windows, with the result that a few windows are actually smaller than their keystones.

In a 1903 hotel and apartment proposal for Herbert Law that appeared in the *Merchants Association Review* (December 1903), Farr, together with George E. McCrea, designed a half-block brick hill town within the city. Intimating the early Tuscan renaissance on a proposed Nob Hill site, its towers (some as high as twelve stories) encircle numerous courts. It was never constructed.

The 1906 earthquake and fire constituted a watershed event for Albert Farr, as for all San Francisco architects. The second part of this feature, in a future issue, will illustrate his contribution to the reconstruction of the city and his work in new outlying residential districts, such as Sea Cliff, St. Francis Wood and Presidio Heights.

—Bradley Wiedmaier studied with Esther McCoy, and David Gebhard at UC Santa Barbara. He is preparing a book for Acanthus Press on the great residences of San Francisco from 1890-1941, to be published in 2006-7.

—Except where otherwise credited, all photos accompanying this article are by Richard Brandi.

**Holiday Events**

Our friends at Octagon House will also observe the holiday season. This historic San Francisco landmark will be open to the public from noon to 3:30 p.m., on Sunday, December 5, Thursday, December 9, and Sunday, December 12. Festive decorations will greet visitors, and docents will offer cookies and hot cider.

There is no charge, but contributions are welcome. Visitors are encouraged to bring an unwrapped toy to place under the Christmas tree for the firefighters’ annual toy drive.

Octagon House, a museum of Early American decorative arts and historic documents, is located at Gough and Union Streets. For information, call 415-441-7512.

Other historic house museums in the Bay Area offer a variety of holiday observances. For a listing, send one dollar and a self-addressed stamped envelope to BAHHM, 1650 Vining Drive, San Leandro, CA 94579, or call 510-351-7784.

**In Memoriam**

We note with great sadness the recent death of Rima Elkin McKinsey. Rima was a docent at the Haas-Lilienthal House, where she and her husband Kim were wed 25 years ago. Even after a long struggle with cancer kept her from leading tours, she appeared occasionally at Heritage events. Her unfailing good cheer and her determination to get on with life won the hearts of us all. Engaged in lively conversation with her, why were we never surprised to learn she had a degree in linguistics?

A lover of history, Rima often participated in the Dickens Faire and the Renaissance Faire, in appropriate costume, and was known occasionally to lead tours at the Haas-Lilienthal House in proper Victorian attire, as well. Born in Brooklyn, New York, she lived most of the last 38 years in the Bay Area, and she relished all that San Francisco had to offer. She also loved to travel and did so, with her husband, throughout the country and across the world. We extend our deepest sympathies to Rima’s friends and family.
Heritage Offering New Walks

Heritage is pleased to note the inauguration of four new architectural walking tours in September. Heritage-trained guides will lead the tours on a rotating basis Saturdays at 1:30, throughout the year. The first Saturday of each month features City Beautiful & the Civic Center, a comprehensive exploration of the Civic Center Historic District, which contains one of the finest ensembles of Beaux Arts architecture in the United States. The walk also takes in much public art.

A Walk Along Broadway, on the second Saturday every month, explores the area of Pacific Heights north and west of the Haas-Lilienthal House. It takes in many houses illustrating a variety of Victorian era styles on Broadway, including the “Mrs. Doubtfire” house, as well as several stunning Classical Revival buildings, among which are two former mansions of “Silver King,” James Flood.

The third Saturday offers Beyond Union Street: A Walk Through Cow Hollow. The distinctive architecture of this neighborhood at the foot of Pacific Heights provides a roadmap through its history, from the converted barns and stables of early dairy farms to roadway inns, Victorian residences and Art Deco apartment houses.

Walk the Fire Line: Van Ness Avenue, the fourth Saturday of every month, offers a stroll along the broad thoroughfare where valiant firefighters finally stopped the three-day conflagration that followed the 1906 earthquake. Viewing fine examples of post-fire architecture along the east flank of Van Ness, as well as a few noteworthy pre-quake survivors on the western side, guides tell the story of the great disaster’s impact on the area, transformed from grand residential boulevard to high-style “Auto Row.”

Call for the meeting place of the Civic Center tour. The others all begin at the Haas-Lilienthal House.

Guides will also continue to lead our popular Pacific Heights walk, every Sunday, from the House, beginning at 12:30. Starting time for the Saturday tours is 1:30. All the tours are free of charge to members of San Francisco Architectural Heritage, $8 to the general public and $5 for seniors and children 12 years of age and under. Each lasts about two hours.

At least for the first few months, until the four new Saturday tours have become established and widely publicized, we are asking you to make reservations in advance for those tours only. Contact Natasha at 415-441-3000 x11, or Natasha@sfheritage.org.

Amenities Appeal Draws Generous Response

We have received a heartening response to our Amenities Sponsorship Program. Our recent appeal to the members and friends of Heritage for donations to fund the purchase of a variety of amenities that will make the Haas-Lilienthal House an even more attractive venue for parties, weddings and corporate events fulfilled nearly all of our wish list.

If you are interested in putting us over the top in this drive, we would like to purchase 18 more Chiavari chairs, at $60 each; three two-color outside light pole banners, at $140 each; and three silk trees and containers, $360 each for the trees, $60 each for the containers. Please contact Barbara Roldan at 415-441-3000 x14, or brolidan@sfheritage.org.

Our thanks to the following for their generous contributions to the Amenities Sponsorship Program:

Shirley James Alvey
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Doris E. Bassett
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Bay Area Tours

Allied Arts Guild
Menlo Park, 650-322-2405

Camron-Stanford House
Oakland, 510-836-1976

City Guides Walks
San Francisco, 415-557-4266

Cohen-Bray House
Oakland, 510-532-0704

Cypress Lawn Cemetery
Colma, 650-550-8810 or 8811

Dunsmuir Historic Estate
Oakland (April–September)
510-615-5555

Falkirk Cultural Center
San Rafael, 415-485-3328

Lathrop House
Redwood City, 650-365-5564

Luther Burbank Home & Gardens
Santa Rosa, 707-524-5445

McConaghy House
Hayward, 510-276-3010

Meyers House & Garden
Alameda, 510-522-8897

Octagon House
San Francisco, 415-441-7512

Palo Alto-Stanford Heritage
650-299-8878 or 324-3121

Pardee Home
Oakland, 510-444-2187

San Francisco City Hall
415-554-5780

Strobing Arboretum
Golden Gate Park, San Francisco
415-661-1316, ext. 312

Heritage Tours

Haas-Lilienthal House Tours
Wednesdays 12 noon to 3:00 pm
Saturdays 12 noon to 3:00 pm
Sundays 11:00 am to 4:00 pm

Walking Tours
* Pacific Heights, Sundays 12:30 pm
* City Beautiful & the Civic Center
  First Saturday each month, 1:30
* A Walk Along Broadway
  Second Saturday each month, 1:30
* Beyond Union Street: A Walk
  Through Cow Hollow
  Third Saturday each month, 1:30
* Walk the Fire Line: Van Ness Avenue
  Fourth Saturday each month, 1:30

Heritage tours are free to members and
their guests, $8 for the general public/$5
for seniors & children 12 and under.

TO ARRANGE GROUP TOURS
Call Natasha Glushkoff, 415-441-3000

TOUR/EVENT INFORMATION
Call 415-441-3004 or go to:
www.sfheritage.org/events+tours.html

Heritage programs supported in part by
City of San Francisco Grants for the Arts.

November

November 3, 4, 5
CHS Walkabouts: Fruitvale (Oakland)
www.californiahistoricalsociety.org
415-357-1848

December

December 3, 4 & 5
(See page 11)

December 5, 9, 12
Octagon House Holiday Open House
(See page 8)

December 14, 8:00 PM
www.adafca.org

December 17, 18, 19
CHS Walkabouts: Golden Gate Park
www.californiahistoricalsociety.org
415-357-1848

Calendrier

Heritage Tours

November 9, 8:00 PM
ADAF Lecture: The Polite Lady, or a Course of Female Education
Legion of Honor. www.adafca.org

November 13, 11:00 AM
Art Deco Society Berkeley Tour
www.art.deco.org

November 16, 6:00 PM
Haas-Lilienthal House. 415-441-3000

November 18, 7:30 PM
Lecture: Update on the Barbary Coast Trail. San Francisco History Association. 415-750-9986
www.sanfranciscohistory.org

November 21, 11:00 AM
Art Deco Society Downtown
Oakland Tour. www.art.deco.org
Sacred Heart

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in 1997 the archdiocese had a plan to retrofit and adapt the church to new uses. However, they have never seen this plan. In 2001, according to parish sources, the archdiocese informed them that the only way to keep the parish from being disbanded was to accept demolition of the historic church and construction of housing on the site with a much smaller new church. By the end of that year, the archdiocese decided to keep the parish in existence. There was no word of the ultimate fate of the church building itself, which, however, remained open.

In the recent decision finally to disband the parish and close the church, the archdiocese cited the shortage of priests, the small number of Sacred Heart’s congregants and the high estimated cost of seismic improvements ($8 million). Parish sources say the archdiocese never permitted them to explore a fundraising plan to finance the seismic costs.

Ten years ago, St. Brigid’s parishioners informed the archdiocese that if their church were allowed to remain open, the congregation would raise the money to retrofit both St. Brigid and the church of a parish that had fewer financial resources. Sacred Heart, among others, certainly fit that description. The archdiocese did not take up this offer.

While parishioners have organized to try to save Sacred Heart, the archdiocese has given no indication of the fate of the historic Italianate yellow brick structure beyond its shuttering. Sitting on a prominent site that dominates much of the Western Addition, it is a building that is so deeply identified with place—and gives so strong an identity to place—that its demolition would be profoundly felt by all San Franciscans.

Heritage joins the Victorian Alliance, The Alamo Square Neighborhood Association and the Friends of 1800 in supporting preservation of Sacred Heart Church. For more information, visit www.friendsof1800.org/SACREDHEART/sacredheart.html.

ARCHITECTURAL FRAGMENTS

A new periodical has appeared. Future Anterior is to be a twice-yearly “journal of historic preservation history, theory and criticism,” produced and published by the students of the Columbia University Historic Preservation Program. An academic journal, it will seek to approach historic preservation from a position of critical inquiry, bringing together the interests of scholars and professionals in a variety of disciplines, including architecture, art, history, philosophy, law, planning, materials science and conservation. The inaugural May 2004 issue includes a design proposal for the Union Iron Works. To learn more, and to subscribe, visit www.arch.columbia.edu/futureanterior/.

Tickets are on sale now for the 2004 Santa Clara Historic Home Tour, Friday and Saturday, December 3rd and 4th. Sponsored by the Harris-Lass House Museum, the tour includes the historic Berryessa Adobe, a variety of Craftsman and Victorian era homes, and the Carmelite Monastery church and gardens (Saturday tour only). To order tickets, call 408-249-7905, or e-mail tickets@sc-hometour.com. Proceeds benefit historic preservation projects and nonprofits in Santa Clara. See http://sc-hometour.com.

On August 17, at the end of “a routine day of work,” Charles E. Peterson, FAIA, died six days shy of his 98th birthday. Educator, architectural historian, planner, Peterson may be best known as the founder of the Historic American Building Survey (HABS). While working for the National Park Service, in 1933, he submitted a proposal to employ 1000 out-of-work architects for ten weeks documenting the nation’s historic buildings. HABS quickly became a permanent program of the Park Service and for seventy years has built up an invaluable repository of information about historic American structures, while also providing a training ground for generations of architects, engineers and historians who, as students, carried out the surveys.

The Mechanics’ Institute marks its 150th anniversary with a series of programs and events throughout 2005. The celebration begins December 3 and 4, 2004, with the opening of an exhibition entitled After the Gold Rush: A 150-Year Photographic History of San Francisco’s Mechanics’ Institute. Featuring 70 photographs, the show illustrates the history of the institute and its contributions to the development of San Francisco. For more details and a schedule of programs, call 415-393-0100, or visit www.milibrary.org.

Now through November 30, the California College of the Arts (CCA) is offering its Fall 2004 Public Lecture Series. Sponsored by CCA Graduate Studies and the CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, the lectures are free and open to the public. They take place at the college’s San Francisco campus, 1111 Eighth Street (at 16th and Wisconsin). Call 415-551-9251, or visit www.cca.edu for a full schedule, with times and dates.


A recently launched web site, World War II in the San Francisco Bay Area, provides a travel itinerary highlighting 31 places that guarded the Bay Area, built warships and tanks, manufactured munitions and provided worker housing and child day care for the men and women who carried out the war effort on the home front. A partnership of the National Trust’s Western Office, the National Register of Historic Places and the GGNRA produced the on-line tour. See www.cr.nps.gov/rt/travel/wwllbayarea.
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The historic Haas-Lilienthal house, a property of San Francisco Architectural Heritage, is a great venue for your wedding or your next corporate or personal event. The house can accommodate up to 150 guests. For more information, call 415-441-3011.

Join us for San Francisco Architectural Heritage’s annual Holiday Open House Sunday, December 5, 2004 12 Noon until 3:00 p.m. at the Haas-Lilienthal House See page 5 of this issue for more details.

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