With its commitment to preservation, and as the owner of the only other historic house open regularly to the public in San Francisco, the National Society of Colonial Dames of America in California provided a suitable, and gracious, setting for Heritage’s docent graduation and annual volunteer recognition party, on June 13. The party site was the Society’s California headquarters and museum, Octagon House.

The Society of Colonial Dames, founded in 1891, is an association of 44 local societies across the nation with more than 15,000 members. In 2000, the National Trust for Historic Preservation recognized the group’s work of acquiring, restoring and interpreting the more than 70 historic properties it owns or manages through the local societies.

Holding the place of honor among the fifty or so guests in attendance at Octagon House were members of the fall 2005 and the spring 2006 docent graduating classes (several appear above with Docent Coordinator Natasha Glushkoff), as well as veteran docents and guides. Heritage staff and board members were also present, including Alice Coneybeer, newly installed board president, who welcomed the graduates and acknowledged the value of their commitment and that of all volunteers to the organization.

Collectively, Heritage volunteers donate well over 3,000 hours per year. The financial benefit of their assistance in a variety of tasks is incalculable, and their place on the frontlines in carrying out our educational mission is particularly vital.

For many of those in attendance, this occasion offered their first opportunity to visit Octagon House—San Francisco Landmark #17 and listed in the National Register of Historic Places—and a rare opportunity to play tourist in their own city. Ms. King Sands, head of the Society of Colonial Dames Resident in California, welcomed the group as partners in the effort of preserving and interpreting the past, and Ms. Lee Miller, historian of the local Society, provided a concise history of Octagon House. Docents were on hand to interpret the house and its collection.

When William Haas and his family moved into their new home—now our home—on Franklin Street, Octagon House had already stood for 25 years. The two-story structure’s unique form resulted from a building fad in many regions of the country, boosted by the publication in the 1840s of a book by New Yorker Orson Fowler. It was built in 1861 for a miller, William McElroy, on a low bluff on the east side of Gough Street, overlooking Washerwoman’s Lagoon, whose shore lay just down the hill, a block away, at Filbert.

Early residents called the neighborhood Spring Valley, because of its many ground water sources (the Spring Valley Primary School stood in the same block as Octagon, on Union Street). It took on the colorful name Cow Hollow after dairy farming came to dominate the district’s landscape.

Octagon House survived the 1906 earthquake with some damage and stood safely outside the fire zone. In 1924, Pacific Gas & Electric Company acquired the property, and several adjoining lots, with the intention...
Comments from the Executive Director

As you will read in this issue, there is a great deal happening here at Heritage. The phrase “change is inevitable” comes to mind at this time of year as Heritage says thank you to retiring board members and welcomes new ones to the fold.

Thank you is just not enough to say to J. Gordon Turnbull, FAIA, outgoing president, for his service to Heritage. We are extremely grateful for his leadership, foresight, knowledge, kind demeanor and professionalism during his tenure as president. He has championed long range planning and development, seeking to improve our ability to educate and advocate into the future. We look forward to Jay’s continued service as a member of the board.

It is also a pleasure to welcome Alice Coneybeer as our incoming president. Heritage is extremely fortunate to have Alice, a professionally trained historic preservationist, who is passionate about expanding the role of historic preservation in San Francisco. Alice will share her vision and plan for action in upcoming issues of the newsletter.

Due to term limits, we will also experience the loss of long time board members. It is only fitting to take this opportunity to thank Mrs. G. Bland Platt, Bruce Judd, FAIA, and Geoffrey Dohrmann, retiring members of Heritage’s board, for their commitment and dedication to Heritage and to the preservation of San Francisco’s historic architecture.

Long time activist and preservation consultant, Gee Gee Platt has been the backbone of the preservation movement not only in San Francisco, but throughout California, for just about as long as the phrase “historic preservation” has been in our lexicon. We are deeply indebted to Gee Gee for her continuing efforts to champion historic preservation in all corners of our city and the state. While she will be missed at the board table, Gee Gee will continue to be a close, dear friend and resource of inestimable value.

Bruce Judd, FAIA, has been an active member of Heritage for decades, offering his time, talent, and resources from early work in saving and relocating buildings in the Western Addition, assistance with the documentation of the Haas-Lilienthal House, participation on Heritage’s Issues Committee, and as president from 1998-2000. Bruce’s creative thinking, sincere interest in the improvement of our organization, and good humor cannot be fully recognized or appreciated in a few words. It would take volumes.

Geoffrey Dohrmann, real estate publisher and native San Franciscan, brought to the board an innate interest in the preservation of his native city, and keen knowledge of the real estate and publishing professions. He helped expand our vision in membership and community outreach.

As we look forward, we can certainly count on change as being inevitable. And change brings opportunity. We welcome and look forward to the opportunity to work with our new board members Arnie Lerner, AIA, and Ben Ladomirak, contractor, as they bring to Heritage their professional experience and dedication to historic preservation. Each is introduced to you in this issue.

Finally, I direct your notice to the availability of grant funding for preservation projects from the Mayor’s Office of Economic and Workforce Development. The announcement for application to Mayor’s Preservation Fund is noted in this newsletter. Specific details may be found on the city’s website at http://www.sfgov.org/site/hpfc_index.asp.

Charles Edwin Chase, AIA
Executive Director

San Francisco Architectural Heritage
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Two City Properties Designated Landmarks

Two buildings owned by public agencies have been designated San Francisco landmarks: the historic Juvenile Court and Detention Home, at 150 Otis Street, and Mission High School.

Architect Louis Christian Mullgardt (1866-1942) designed the Juvenile Court building for the City and County of San Francisco (1916). His body of work reveals an eclecticism—reflected in this building—that drew on Mediterranean and Mission Revival, Craftsman and Asian styles. One of Mullgardt’s last commissions, the Infant Shelter at Ortega and 19th Avenue, was designated a landmark just two years ago.

An expression of progressive ideals of social reform when constructed, the juvenile facility outgrew its usefulness over time. By the 1930s, in spite of improvements, the theory and practice of child welfare had bypassed it. Yet only in 1950 did a new juvenile facility replace it. Thereafter, the Otis Street building served as offices for a variety of City Departments, most recently, the Department of Social Services.

Through years of changing uses, the interior has undergone many alterations. The exterior, however, retains good integrity of massing, design and materials. The only major exterior alterations have been the replacement of original windows and the in-fill of some windows on the south elevation.

The future use of 150 Otis Street at this time is uncertain. Reports indicate that the City may declare it surplus property and sell it to a developer. While no definite plans exist at this time, exploratory proposals have included providing affordable housing or offices for non-profits.

With strong community support, the alumni of Mission High School proposed designation of the historic campus on 18th Street between Dolores and Church. Like 150 Otis, it holds a marked visual prominence in its neighborhood.

The landmark case report states that Mission, founded in 1890, is the second oldest high school in San Francisco (after Lowell) and the first comprehensive high school—one that offered both college preparatory and vocational programs—west of the Rocky Mountains. After occupying temporary quarters for several years, classes convened in a new building at 18th and Dolores, in 1898.

The three-story brick structure survived the 1906 earthquake and fire, offering shelter and aid to many displaced residents, but it succumbed to a fire in 1922. John Reid, Jr. (1882-1967), city architect, designed a new campus, which was built in two stages—the west wing in 1925, the main building in 1927. Completion of the athletic field occurred in 1939.

Reid often employed the Spanish Colonial Revival style in some variant form, but nowhere with the richness and exuberance of Mission High School, clear gestures to the district’s history and the school’s proximity to Mission Dolores, the birthplace of San Francisco under Spanish rule. Its 127-foot tower capped by colorful imported glazed tile, rises above a red tile roof and stucco walls with Spanish Baroque-inspired terra cotta ornamentation expressed in a form known as Churriguere-esque.

A state-mandated seismic upgrade in the mid-1970s at first threatened to alter the school’s historic appearance radically. But in the end, the seismic solution preserved virtually all the characteristic historic features and decorative detail.

The landmark designation spells out the requirement for preservation of the historic exterior, but also calls out many interior features that have survived intact. These are the entry foyer and the auditorium, with all their fixtures and finishes, including glazed tiles, cast plaster ceiling, historic light fixtures, terrazzo floor, arched passageways and proscenium arch. Two surviving 1938 WPA murals by artist Edith Anna Hamlin also receive specific mention.

The Juvenile Court and Detention Home becomes landmark #248, Mission High, landmark #255.

CLG Survey Grant

The State Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) has awarded the Planning Department a Certified Local Government (CLG) Grant in the amount of $15,000. San Francisco is one of just five communities to receive this assistance for 2006-2007.

The funds will go toward augmenting the department’s 2005 CLG grant-funded reconnaissance-level survey, through the completion of a context-based, intensive-level survey on at least 175, and up to 225 properties within the Inner Mission North,
Historic District Signs Appear

If, like a good fan of architecture and a preservation booster, you walk the city’s streets with your head up, looking at buildings and taking in the streetscape, you have begun to notice them. Signs announcing your presence in a designated San Francisco historic district have appeared on light standards and Muni power poles. Prominently placed, the signs identify each of the eleven districts, for residents and visitors alike, for the first time.

They are the result of a concerted effort that began in 2003. The initiative came from four women who call themselves “The Plaque Ladies”: Alice Carey, preservation architect, former member of the Landmarks Board and currently a member of the Heritage board; and veteran neighborhood activists and preservationists Courtney Clarkson, Macy McCallister and Daniela Kirschenbaum (who now resides out of state).

To carry the proposal they turned to Aaron Peskin, generally regarded as the most preservation-friendly member of the Board of Supervisors, whose district, incidentally, includes three historic districts. He introduced the necessary legislation two years ago, and it passed unanimously. But that was not the end of it. Peskin had to keep after the City to get the signs made and out onto the streets. At the time of this printing, only Dogpatch—the most recently designated district—had not been posted, but the signs were being made.

The long-range plan is to provide informational plaques in each district that will highlight its history and architectural significance, and then to have markers on individual contributory resources in each district. The signs have great educational value. They increase public awareness, which in turn leads to greater sensibility to San Francisco’s architectural resources and the need for their preservation.

City Seeking Proposals for Preservation Grant Funding

The Mayor’s Office of Economic and Workforce Development (MOEWD) has issued a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) to provide small preservation grants to non-profit organizations with compelling, immediate historic preservation needs that cannot be met by other resources within or available to that organization.

Funding comes from the $2.5 million the City received under the terms of the Emporium Settlement Agreement, to be dedicated solely to historic preservation purposes within the City and County of San Francisco. These include:

- architectural, structural, economic and planning feasibility studies
- research and documentation including review of historic preservation determinations contained in CEQA evaluations
- nominations of properties to local, state and federal historic registers
- context statements, such as those related to potential historic districts and architectural surveys
- historic preservation education programs.

The City will review grant proposals on a continuing basis, without a specified deadline, until further notice. Individual grant requests should be less than $25,000. The seven-member Historic Preservation Fund Committee will advise MOEWD on awarding of the grants.

At this time, funding for architectural surveys will not be considered but will be the subject of a future NOFA.

Send proposals via certified U.S. Mail, return receipt, or hand-deliver to:

MOEWD, Attn: Rich Hillis
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
Room 448
San Francisco, CA 94102.

No electronic or fax submissions will be accepted. For more information, contact Rich Hillis, 415-554-4082.
H-L HOUSE OPENS WINDOW ON 1906

The Haas-Lilienthal House has some new attractions that will appeal to first-time visitors and attract old friends, as well. Our observance of the anniversary of the 1906 earthquake and fire takes the form of a temporary exhibition that focuses less on the disaster than on opening a window to life at that time.

You will learn what some of the popular tunes of the day were, as well as the cost of a restaurant meal and the prices of common grocery items. The kitchen displays some additions to our regular collection of house wares. Kitchen tools and gadgets commonly used in 1906—some donated, some on loan—come to us from the George W. Patterson House, Ardenwood Regional Park in Fremont, courtesy of Randy Hees.

Displays in the second floor rooms include a vintage lady’s walking suit with shoes, hat and parasol (illustrated here), on loan from docent Amy Denebeim-Dean, who owns La Place du Soleil, an antique shop on Polk Street. A reproduction Edwardian era costume also is on view.

Of particular interest is a small selection of photographs generously shared with us by Richard Torney. Mr. Torney’s great-grandfather, U.S. Army Surgeon Lt. Col. George Henry Torney, was given charge of sanitation throughout the entire city, in the wake of the 1906 disaster. His son (Richard’s grandfather), Edward (Ned) Johnson Torney, 26 at the time, went around the stricken city with his camera taking snapshots of the devastation, the raging fire and displaced residents. The photos on temporary exhibition at the House were printed from negatives recently discovered among the belongings of Richard Torney’s grandparents.

Mr. Torney has been able to identify virtually all the buildings and locations in his grandfather’s snapshots. One mystery remains: the building that appears on this page. Contact Heritage if you think you can identify it.

Of course, the Haas-Lilienthal House still bears its one scar of the 1906 temblor: a slight buckling of the plaster wall in the main staircase. The house also escaped the fire. Even so, Mrs. Haas and the three children moved temporarily to the Berkeley hills for a few months, until life in the city began to return to normal. Meanwhile, Mr. Haas, his business burned out of its offices downtown, conducted affairs from the breakfast room, which is included in the regular house tour.

Also on view are two large photographs of “San Francisco in Ruins”, taken from the Lawrence Captive Airship. These are now a permanent part of the house’s collection, thanks to the generosity of Dr. and Mrs. Frank Hinman, Jr., who donated them to Heritage this past spring.

This special observance will continue most of this year. Be sure to plan to visit the Haas-Lilienthal House during regular tour hours: Wednesdays and Saturdays, noon to 3:00 p.m., and Sunday, 11:00 a.m. until 4:00.

Thanks for their many contributions to making this special exhibition possible to Kaleene Kenning, volunteer Heritage walks research coordinator; volunteer Laudan Siahpolo; docent Adrienne Hickman; volunteer program coordinator, Natasha Glushkoff and house manager, Heather Kraft.
2006 Heritage Ballroom Lectures Offer Variety

ew publications were the focus of the first two presentations in this year’s series of Heritage Ballroom Lectures. On July 20, Amy Meyer led off with the subject of her new book, *New Guardians for the Golden Gate: How America Got a Great National Park*, and, in August, Dave Weinstein introduced our audience to his new book, *Signature Architects of the San Francisco Bay Area* (See Booknotes, page 9).

The three remaining lectures in the series offer some interesting variations. On September 12, Jeffrey Tilman will lecture on Arthur Brown, Jr., the subject of his book published last year, *Arthur Brown, Jr: Progressive Classicist*, the first full-length study of this significant San Francisco architect. Tilman is an associate professor at the University of Cincinnati School of Architecture and Interior Design, where he teaches architectural history, design and historic preservation.

October 19 brings Robert Bailey and Genevieve Baird to the Ballroom for a lecture titled, *A Whole Lotta Buddha: Monument Conservation*. Bailey, a civil engineer, and Baird, an art conservator, will describe conservation treatments of two important San Francisco monuments: Lotta’s Fountain and the Japanese Tea Garden’s Buddha. Their work reversed the effects of years of neglect and inappropriate past repairs to ensure preservation of these monuments for many years to come.

Christopher Pollock reappears in this year’s series, on November 16, with the subject, *Facing Disaster: Golden Gate Park after the 1906 Earthquake*. He explains the earthquake’s impact on park structures and describes how the city and the military organized camps as a refuge for thousands rendered homeless by the disaster. Author of two books on Golden Gate Park, he contributed to a third, *Facing Disaster*, which forms the basis for his lecture. A designer, Mr. Pollock recently completed a project for the adaptive use of a historic Presidio warehouse.

Mr. Tilman and Mr. Pollock will be available to sign copies of their new books, on sale at the lectures.

Lectures take place in the Ballroom of the Haas-Lilienthal House, 2007 Franklin Street. Doors open at 5:30 p.m.; the program begins at 6:00. Tickets are $5 for Heritage members, $10 for nonmembers. Call 415-441-3000 for reservations.

IN MEMORIAM JOE DIGNAN

Joe Dignan died suddenly on June 29, at age forty-nine. As a founding member of the Committee to Save St. Brigid Church, Joe was unstinting in the effort, initially, to reopen the historic church closed by the San Francisco Roman Catholic Archdiocese in 1994. Although former parishioners never lost that hope, focus of the struggle shifted to preservation of the structure, lobbying the Archdiocese persistently to prevent sale of the property to any developer who would demolish it for new construction.

State legislation enacted in 1994 prohibited designation of church-owned property used for religious purposes from being designated a landmark without the owner’s consent. Sale of St. Brigid last year to the Academy of Art University re-opened the door to designation. At first, the new owner, committed to preservation and reuse of the building, seemed amenable, but the wish of the Committee to Save St. Brigid to include the interior spaces and fixtures in the landmark ordinance has met with owner resistance. At the time of Joe’s death, meetings with Supervisor Alioto-Pier, who represents the district that includes the church, were ongoing to resolve the differences.

Heritage has supported the cause of the Committee to Save St. Brigid. Charles Chase, executive director, who often worked with Joe Dignan, said of him, “He was a tenacious advocate for the preservation of St. Brigid and the retention of the church’s presence in the lives of its parishioners. Joe will be remembered for utilizing his skills and personality in seeking out the best for his community.”

Victorian Alliance Fall House Tour

The Haas-Lilienthal House will be one of the Pacific Heights houses featured this year’s Victorian Alliance House Tour, *Grand Survivors of Pacific Heights East*. The houses on the route, built between 1875 and 1895, will be open for self-guided tours on Sunday, October 15, 2006, from 1:00 until 5:00 p.m.

In addition to being a subject of the tour, the Haas-Lilienthal House will be a rest stop for light refreshments and browsing the Heritage Bookstore.

Tickets, ordered by October 1, are $20 each/$25 thereafter. For more information and to download an order form, go to www.victorianalliance.org/victorian-home-tour.html.
New Members Come on Board

This quarter, two new members have joined the board of directors of San Francisco Architectural Heritage. They are Arnie Lerner and Benjamin Ladomirak.

A one-time staff member, Arnie Lerner, AIA, returns to Heritage as a board member. A graduate of the University of Kansas School of Architecture and Urban Design (1969), Arnie began work in San Francisco as an architectural designer and draftsman with Whisler-Patri, 1977-1979. After pursuing short-term positions with other firms, he became director of architectural services and staff architect for Heritage, in 1983. He continued in that position until 1988, when he left to start his own firm. He has been principal of Lerner + Associates Architects since 1995.

This small firm offers full architectural design and planning services, with special interests in preservation and disabled access design. Projects have included design for the accessible main entrance to the historic Alameda County Courthouse and restoration of the fire-damaged McMullen House in San Francisco, a National Register Victorian-era residence that provided housing for mentally disabled persons.

Lerner has received four design awards from California Preservation Foundation, including one, in 2003, for the rehabilitation and restoration of the 1930s Del Mar Theater in Santa Cruz. That project also received a design award from the Art Deco Society of California and the Governor’s Award for Historic Preservation.

Arnie Lerner has been a frequent speaker and seminar participant on a variety of subjects, notably accommodating historic structures to ADA access requirements. He was on the board of the AIA San Francisco Chapter, which he served as secretary, in 1990. He is currently a member of the National Trust, the California Preservation Foundation, the Association of Preservation Technology and the International Council on Monuments & Sites.

Benjamin F. Ladomirak hails from Forty Fort, Pennsylvania, a small town southwest of Scranton, on the Susquehanna River. He credits his interest in building and architecture to the stories his grandfather used to tell him about working on the Empire State Building.

Ben received a B.A. from Yale University, in 1995, where courses in art history and architectural history particularly appealed to him. Four years later, he moved to the Bay Area with his future wife, Jesse, when she entered law school at UC Berkeley. Soon after, he met Jim Teevan. Jim, a Heritage board member, offered Ben a “temporary” job with his company, Teevan Restoration, until he could figure out his career plans.

“Over the next three years,” he tells us, “I had the opportunity to work on some of the most magnificent homes and buildings in San Francisco.” He got to know Teevan employees well and met clients, architects and other people who shared a devotion to architectural preservation. He was hooked. “It soon became obvious to me that I had found a home at Teevan Restoration.” Today, Ben heads up the company.

Ben comes to the board after serving as a member of the House Committee for the past three years. That will continue to be a particular interest of his at Heritage, as he becomes involved, also, in the larger operations of the organization.

Among many other interests and activities, Ben, who coached track and field at Bucknell University before coming west, still occasionally works as a personal trainer on the side. He has also acted in some local theater and film projects, and for diversion enjoys reading, cooking, charcoal drawing and sculpting. At present, he serves as treasurer and a director of the Yale Club in San Francisco.

We are pleased to welcome Arnie Lerner and Ben Ladomirak to the Heritage board and anticipate their many contributions to the organization.

Three veterans have left the board this summer: Geoffrey Dohrmann, Bruce Judd and Mrs. Bland Platt. We are grateful to them for their many years of devoted service.

Architectural Club Redux

A small group of individuals is pulling together the threads of the historic San Francisco Architectural Club and weaving them with a national organization based in New York, The Institute of Classical Architecture & Classical America (ICA&CA). As the Northern California Chapter of ICA&CA, the local group has begun to plan programs for its membership and the public.

On September 30, the chapter will sponsor a tour of the Berkeley City Club and East Bay houses by Julia Morgan. Capacity is limited to 20 people. October 5 brings a lecture by Peter Pennoyer, The Architecture of Warren and Wetmore. Projects of this early 20th century firm included Grand Central Terminal.

The chapter plans a fund raising event for November 2, at the historic Carolands, the 98-room Hillsborough mansion built in 1917 for the heiress of the Pullman fortune. French architect Ernest Sanson designed the building; Willis Polk was supervising architect.

For information on the ICA&CA Northern California and the above events, call 415-445-6700, and leave a message to receive a prompt callback. Or e-mail icancc@aol.com.

A future issue of Heritage News will carry a feature on the San Francisco Architectural Club.
Bracing for Disaster: Earthquake-Resistant Architecture and Engineering in San Francisco, 1838–1933

The recently observed centennial of the 1906 earthquake and fire has generated the expected wave of books, articles and exhibitions centered on that great disaster and its consequences. Unique among those that have come to our attention is a publication by Stephen Tobriner, Bracing for Disaster: Earthquake-Resistant Architecture and Engineering in San Francisco, 1838-1933.

The book’s central thesis comes down to the contention that there was no “denial of disaster” following San Francisco’s most destructive earthquakes. In arriving at that conclusion, Stephen Tobriner, a professor of architectural history at UC Berkeley, contradicts claims by some authorities that, in his words, “nothing was done to improve building construction or to promote earthquake safety after the earthquakes of 1868 and 1906; that in both cases there was a conspiracy to deny the reality of earthquake damage in the city, in order to promote investment and to speed recovery.”

The author does not deny that a certain amount of boosterism and greed, in the interest of recovery and investment, led to avoidance of the subject of earthquakes. Reference to earthquake as a component of the 1906 disaster quickly disappeared from the local press. For decades after, newspapers referred to “the fire” of 1906.

However, Tobriner states we should not judge what people said but what they did. And he demonstrates that many concerned architects and engineers, as well as property owners, explored ways to make buildings safer in a great earthquake, even before 1906. He cites responses to the 1868 temblor and examples of post-1868 construction, including the Mint on 5th Street and the Palace Hotel, designed to be earthquake resistant. Both performed extremely well in 1906.

Even the ill-fated City Hall that came to so ignominious an end in 1906, was planned to incorporate earthquake-resistant features. Tobriner’s analysis of why it failed is particularly worthy of attention.

The book illustrates that steel-frame buildings constructed from the 1880s up to 1906, including the city’s first skyscrapers, show a higher level of structural bracing than would be ordinarily expected, or used in similar construction elsewhere in the country at that time. Among these are the Call, Whittell, U.S. Court of Appeals and Mills buildings. All, also, performed well in 1906.

Tobriner makes an interesting approach to the problem of separating out seismic from fire damage in 1906. He quotes observations made by seven eyewitnesses during the interval before the fires began to spread. He proceeds to a virtual tour through the city, using photographs taken before the fire, in order to determine how widespread were the partial failure or complete collapse of buildings.

Images are clearly marked and labeled so we know exactly we are seeing. The author does not accept the claims by some writers that alteration of photographs taken before the fire, in order to determine how widespread were the partial failure or complete collapse of buildings. Images are clearly marked and labeled so we know exactly we are seeing. The author does not accept the claims by some writers that alteration of photographs taken before the fire, in order to determine how widespread were the partial failure or complete collapse of buildings.

With publication of this most interesting book, Stephen Tobriner has set the stage for debate with those who may differ with his methodology or his conclusions. He has clearly laid out his sources by providing comprehensive notes and bibliography, if they decide to take up the challenge.
Signature Architects of the San Francisco Bay Area
Dave Weinstein. Gibbs Smith, Publisher
Layton, Utah, 2006

“Hi, I’m Dave Weinstein, and I’m writing about the architect who designed your house.” With this simple and disarming approach, knocking on doors and introducing himself, the journalist began preparing the studies that first appeared in an occasional Chronicle series on less familiar residential architects of this region. That series of profiles has now led to the publication of a noteworthy book, Signature Architects of the San Francisco Bay Area.

At Heritage, we often enough hear from members of the public, sure that they have a Maybeck- or a Morgan-designed house, to corroborate Weinstein’s observation that inquiry—or interest—seldom goes beyond those exalted names in the local pantheon. The Chronicle pieces and the consequent book provide a much-needed corrective in establishing that what we think of as Bay Area design owes a great deal to others besides the iconic figures.

Of the book’s fifteen featured practitioners, perhaps only half a dozen are likely to be widely known outside the circles of architects and historians, or the communities where they worked. Yet taken all together, their output illustrates Bay Area residential architecture from the late Victorian up through the varied expressions of modernism in the Bay Area. And the book really does embrace the Bay Area, with examples from Marin and Napa around to the South Bay and Peninsula.

Weinstein’s technique usually gained him entrance to the homes he wanted to write about, and he tells us he found that people readily opened up to speak of their houses with pride and affection, pointing out the features they especially loved, even if they did not know who the architect was. As he explains, “[T]his book isn’t about architecture so much as about houses and their people—the people who live in them, love them, take them for granted occasionally, abuse them, heal them. It’s about how houses have fared over time, and how they may fare in the future.”

The book is, of course, also about the people who created these houses, the architects—their backgrounds and personalities, how they worked, the people they worked for and the factors that shaped their individual modes of expression. Interviews with still active practitioners are an added bonus. Sidebars, besides describing local architectural styles, lead the reader to further examples of the featured architects’ work, briefly characterize the styles they worked in, with identifying trademarks, and name other practitioners who employed similar styles.

Even if you have been collecting Dave Weinstein’s feature pieces as they appeared in the daily press, you will not want to be without Signature Architects of the San Francisco Bay Area. Outstanding color photographs by Linda Svendsen, beautifully reproduced, greatly enhance the value of these essays and stand technically well above what illustrations on newsprint can convey. They render details, texture of materials and variations of color tones with great clarity.

Preservationists will particularly value this book because, as Weinstein observed, “[B]efore people realize a building is worth preserving, they need to understand what the building is all about.” Preservation proceeds from knowledge. It is the reason Heritage has consistently advocated for survey. This book may help to alter the “tear-down” mentality that has marred so many historic residential neighborhoods in the Bay Area.

Candidates for Upcoming Booknotes

Several recently published books have stacked up on the editor’s desk. We hope in future issues to get through this backlog. Meanwhile, the following titles will stir your curiosity.

Richard Reinhardt, former Heritage board member and a trustee of the Mechanics’ Institute of San Francisco, has authored a history of that august institution titled Four Books 300 Dollars and a Dream. He previewed a small segment of this material in our 2004 Ballroom Lectures.

Paul Duchscherer, another alumnus of our Ballroom Lectures, returns to the subject of bungalows with a new book published in June, Along Bungalow Lines: Creating an Arts & Crafts Home. The photography is by Linda Svendsen.


With publication last year of George Washington Smith: Architect of the Spanish Colonial Revival, Patricia Gebhard brings to completion a project begun by her late husband, architectural historian David Gebhard.

On a related topic, Bill Yenne authored The Missions of California, and is also responsible for the color photographs that enrich the text.

Time and space permitting, Heritage News will attempt to give fuller notice to these publications for our readers’ information, in upcoming issues.
Heritage Tours

HAAS-LILIENTHAL HOUSE TOURS
Wednesdays 12 noon to 3:00 p.m.
Saturdays 12 noon to 3:00 p.m.
Sundays 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

WALKING TOURS
• Pacific Heights, Sundays, 12:30 p.m.
• 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 and 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.

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

CYPRUS LAWN CEMETERY
Colma, 650-550-8810 or 8811

DUNSMUIR HISTORIC ESTATE
Oakland (Apr-Sep) 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

MCGONAGHY HOUSE
Hayward, 510-276-3010

Meyers House & Garden
Alameda, 510-522-8897

Oakland Tours Program
510-238-3234

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

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

September

September 8
Exhibition: Shake, Bake & Spin! S.F. and the Media in the Aftermath of the 1906 Earthquake and Fire. 415-957-1849; www.californiapioneers.org

September 30
Exhibition: Earthquake: The Chinatown Story. 415-391-1188
www.chsa.org

October

October 10, 8:00 PM
ADAF Lecture: Preserved and Properly Covered: 250 Years of Historic Upholstery. Legion of Honor
www.adafa.org

October 28 - March 25, 2007
Exhibition: California as Muse: The Art of Arthur & Lucia Mathews
Oakland Museum of California
510-238-2200; www.museumca.org

October 14 - January 14, 2007

October 15, 1:00 - 5:00 PM
Victorian Alliance House Tour (See page 6)

October 19, 6:00 PM
Heritage Lecture (See page 6)

October 20 - 21
Humanities West: Rembrandt in the Golden Age of the Netherlands. 415-391-9700. www.humanitieswest.org

November

November 5
Tour: Hanna House, Stanford
415-982-DECO
www.artdecosociety.org

November 14, 8:00 PM
ADAF Lecture: Building Newport Furniture Today: Carving and Construction by a Modern Master
Legion of Honor. www.adafa.org

November 16, 6:00 PM
Heritage Lecture (See page 6)

November 28, 7:30 PM
Lecture: This Date in San Francisco
S.F. History Association
www.sanfranciscohistory.org
415-750-9986
### Architectural Fragments

In February, a team of five volunteers from California, organized by director of the Western Office of the National Trust, **Anthea Hartig**, went to New Orleans to offer their skills to the task of hurricane recovery. Among the activities members of the group participated in were resurveying red-tagged buildings, conducting walk-through home inspections with residents and developing forms for gathering inspection information. **Charles Chase**, executive director of Heritage, was part of the team.

Eight historic houses will be open for the **Alameda Legacy Home Tour**, Sunday, September 17, from 11:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. Artisans and vendors will be on hand to answer your restoration questions. Tickets are $20 in advance and $25 on the day of the tour. Proceeds benefit the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society and the Alameda Museum. For information and reservations call 510-523-5907, or visit www.alameda-home-tour.org.

In partnership with the **National Trust**, the World Monuments Fund will oversee distribution of $10 million under **Partners in Preservation**, a five-year program funded by American Express. They will be responsible for directing funds to threatened heritage sites in the United States and around the world. The partnership seeks to revive cultural resources and support economic development through travel and tourism wherever these sites exist.

Pittsburgh hosts this fall’s **National Preservation Conference**, October 31-November 5. A new feature of this year’s gathering, whose theme is “Making Preservation Work,” will be a national summit on the greening of historical properties, which takes place the day preceding the formal opening of the conference. A panel of experts will participate in a day-long meeting to address common goals of green building and historic preservation advocacy. For program and registration information, go to www.nthpconference.org

In May, founding principals of **Architectural Resources Group** (ARG), Bruce D. Judd, FAIA, and Stephen J. Farneth, FAIA, hosted a celebration at their Pier 9 offices. The occasion was to acknowledge receipt of the American Institute of Architects, California Council (AIACC), 2006 Firm Award. This is the highest honor the AIACC bestows, and it recognizes firms “who have consistently produced distinguished architecture, contributing to the advancement of the profession in areas of design, research, planning, technology, preservation and innovation.” Founded in 1980, ARG has received many awards for individual projects, including the Mark Hopkins Hotel and the Conservatory of Flowers.

The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) has appointed **Henry Urbach** as its new Helen Hilton Raiser Curator of Architecture and Design. Urbach, who holds a master’s degree in architecture from Columbia University and a master’s in the history and theory of architecture from Princeton, has broad experience as a curator, teacher, lecturer and published writer. Most recently, he owned and directed his own gallery of contemporary art and architecture in New York City. He begins at SFMOMA in September, succeeding Joseph Rosa, who has served as curator since 2002.

Three local organizations hold fundraising events in September. On the 9th, **Western Neighborhoods Project** stages “West Side Stories,” a gala event with live entertainment, food and drink, a silent and a live auction, and more. For details, visit www.outsidelands.org/gala. On September 16, **S. F. City Guides** offers “The ‘06 Quake & Fire Adventure,” a kind of treasure hunt that takes you to historic, interesting and unusual places. For details, visit www.sfcityguides.org. **S. F. Museum & Historical Society** holds an evening awards reception on September 27, and a daytime downtown walking tour of ‘06 survivors, on the 30th. Visit www.sfhistory.org.

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**Architectural Fragments**

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❑ $1,500 Landmark
❑ $2,500 Monument
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