This spring, after languishing vacant for decades, the first few key buildings that form the historic core of the Union Iron Works Historic District at Pier 70 are finally coming back in use, reimagined and reoccupied by a new generation of forward-looking office, commercial, and light-industrial tenants.

STORY ON PAGE 6
This is my final letter to you as Heritage’s Board Chair. For the past three years I have had the signal privilege of leading the board, and in July, Vice-Chair Courtney Damkroger will take the reins. What a rich experience it has been to work with Mike Buhler, his hardworking staff, and the dedicated, passionate group of individuals who comprise our board. Their combined effort and commitment to Heritage’s mission are sure to be further enhanced with new board members Katherine Petrin and Moe Jamil. Katherine’s extensive experience as an architectural historian and preservation advocate, along with Moe’s role as founder of Middle Polk Neighborhood Association and familiarity with neighborhood and merchant groups across the city, are invaluable assets.

Recently the board met for a half-day retreat to revisit the ambitious goals set by our long-range board-level plan. It was satisfying to reflect on the progress made since its adoption in early 2016. We have reviewed numerous projects involving important historic and cultural resources and weighed in on policy issues such as “façadism” and current legislation under consideration defining how cultural districts are created/supported. With Heritage’s help, there are now more than 125 long-standing, community-serving businesses in the city’s Legacy Business Registry.

Our work continues to ensure that the constituency for historic and cultural preservation is broad and diverse. With those words, Norm Larson — known by some as the “Duke of Haight Street” — comes to mind. His death on February 20, 2018, was unexpected and came far too soon. The significance of his gift to Heritage of the Doolan-Larson Residence and Storefronts (City Landmark #253, National Register) simply cannot be overstated. Located at the storied intersection of Haight and Ashbury Streets, it represents and embodies the counter-culture movement of the 1960s. Stepping inside 557 Ashbury Street, one moves even further back in time. Over his decades of ownership, Norm’s work on the building was one of his unrelenting passions. He tore out old rooming-house partitions and stripped walls back to the 1903 plaster, “leaving ghosts of the cracks from the 1906 quake there to be celebrated.” Heritage is deeply honored to have been entrusted to preserve its diverse history for others to experience. (Thanks to the success of the five-year-long campaign to restore the House, the Haas-Lilienthal House has reopened as a celebrated and popular architectural and cultural icon.)

Finally, let me thank you for your friendship, support of Heritage, and the pleasure of working with you.

P.S. – I hope you’ll join me at Soirée 2018 to celebrate the grand reopening of Historic Pier 70; like last year’s “Summer of Love” Soirée, it will be an experience to remember!
In Memoriam — Norman Larson

“The Duke of the Haight”

Longtime San Francisco Heritage friend and benefactor Norman Tyler Larson passed away peacefully in the presence of family on February 20, 2018. A fourth-generation San Franciscan, Norm was born on September 8, 1938. He received a full academic scholarship to attend Stanford University, where he earned a degree in Economics, later followed by a Law degree from Harvard. Somewhere along this journey through law school and a tour with the California Air National Guard, Norm decided practicing law and, as he put it, “a series of career failures,” were a deductive way of developing his eventual career vision.

He was very proud to speak of his time in the Middle East during the late 1960s to 1979, where he taught English as a second language to military personnel. Norm was teaching in Iran at the time of the Islamic Republic revolution. After narrowly escaping the country as the Persian Dynasty fell to the Grand Ayatollah, he permanently returned to San Francisco in January 1979 where he established his full-time career as a property-owner and landlord.

On the decision to buy his first building in The Haight, in 1973, Norm recently reflected, “The Haight-Ashbury was at its low point, in the aftermath of the ’60s, and prices were very low. My only connection with The Haight at that point was that I liked Janis Joplin. Soon after buying that first building, I did grow a beard, and have had one ever since.” Norm’s personality would become infused into the culture of the neighborhood. If you were fortunate to walk down Haight Street with Norm you couldn’t help but feel like royalty as he was heralded with multiple hellos, good wishes, and of course many lingering eye-to-eye robust conversations. As one inspired friend stated recently, “Norm is truly the Duke of the Haight.”

Norm moved into his home, the Doolan-Larson Residence and Storefronts, at the corner of Haight and Ashbury, in 1985, five years after he had purchased the building. “I had had reservations about street noise,” he later recalled, “[but] with all the possibilities that the residence had, I finally decided I had to live there and restore it, and deal with life on Haight Street. I’m now...taken as an authentic Hippie, and I’ve given up trying to correct people’s misimpression.” His vision for what The Haight could become would be modeled by his unwavering commitment to preserve the building, which was designated San Francisco Landmark #253 in 2006 and listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2011.

In an extraordinary gift to Heritage and San Francisco, Norm donated the Doolan-Larson Building to Heritage in order to preserve the rich history for others to experience for years to come. He first became a Heritage supporter in 1985, and proudly graced the cover of Heritage News in the Spring 2017 issue celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Summer of Love. Aside from preservation and other passions, the great love of Norm’s life was music. His devotion to the San Francisco Opera, Symphony, and the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra was long standing.

He is survived by his brother, Steven Grant Larson, of Lahaina, Maui; nephew, Dennis Larson, of San Diego; niece, Christine Paysinger (Steve); great nephew, Jacob Tyler Nix, of Silverton, Oregon; niece, Amy Brunner (Ricardo); and great nieces, Lucia, Emma, and Clara, of Montevideo, Uruguay; first cousins, Ed Olsen (Linda), of San Anselmo, and Marilyn Olsen of Tiburon.

On Saturday, March 31, Heritage hosted a celebration of life remembering Norm, “the Duke of The Haight” at The Bindery on Haight Street. Donations in his memory may be made to San Francisco Heritage, 2007 Franklin Street, San Francisco, CA 94109.
New Heritage Grants Open and Illuminate History

Heritage is excited to announce the February 2018 round of Alice Ross Carey Preservation Grant Fund awardees. Both San Francisco Neon/Historic Neon Network and the Western Neighborhoods Project were awarded grants of $5,000 each.

Neon Speaks Symposium / Neon Best-Practices Guidebook

On April 21, 2018, the San Francisco Neon / Historic Neon Network will host a one-day historic neon preservation symposium at the Tenderloin Museum. It will bring together experts, stakeholders, and people who care about the past, present, and future of historic neon signs in San Francisco, as well as the legacy businesses and neighborhoods these signs represent. The grant will help fund the publication of a best-practices guide for neon restoration. The 36-page community guidebook will share the wisdom and experiences of neon-restoration experts, including the pitfalls and keys to success. The guidebook will be released at the symposium to engender a deeper understanding of the historic and artistic value of the neon signage that often serves as landmarks of day-to-day human experience within communities.

The Historic Neon Network plans to produce the Neon Speaks symposium on an annual or biennial schedule to extend the dialogue, share experiences, document best practices, and acknowledge exemplary neon restoration projects.

OpenSFHistory

Formed in 1999 with a mission to preserve and share the history and cultures of the neighborhoods of western San Francisco, the

**Alice Ross Carey Preservation Grant Fund**

Heritage is now accepting applications for the Alice Ross Carey Preservation Fund, a grant program to help document, preserve, and celebrate the diverse historic places and cultural assets that define San Francisco. Heritage awards grants of (typically) up to $5,000 for planning, outreach, capital improvements, and interpretive programs or projects.

The next application deadline is **August 1st.**

To learn more about the Alice Ross Carey Preservation Grant Fund and grant guidelines, please visit [sfheritage.org/alice-ross-carey-preservation-fund/](http://sfheritage.org/alice-ross-carey-preservation-fund/).
Western Neighborhoods Project (WNP) launched the OpenSFHistory program in 2015. OpenSFHistory features scanned images donated to WNP by a San Francisco photographer and collector active from the 1960s through the early 2000s. The collection consists of approximately 400 linear feet of mixed photographic formats, including 100,000 photographs, tintypes, nitrate- and safety-film negatives, photographic slides, glass negatives, lantern slides, copy negatives, and copy prints. These images include many views of value to planners, preservationists, and architectural historians, including streetscapes, unique photos from various city-agency infrastructure projects, and a complete set of aerial photographs of the city from 1948. To date, nearly 30,000 images have been digitized and catalogued. The $5,000 grant will help to accelerate WNP’s efforts to make the collection fully available to researchers and the wider public.

The work is not simply the scanning of images; materials are rehoused, catalogued, and digitized before staff, volunteer historians, and content experts can add contextual data (i.e., metadata) to the digital files. This contextual data ranges from the basic — whether the image is color or grayscale, the date or date range of the image, and what can be seen in the image — to specifics such as identifying street names, historical subjects, businesses, and the occasion or event. After conservation, scanning, and contextual data is added, digital files of each image are posted online at OpenSFHistory.org.

Established by Heritage in 2014, the Alice Ross Carey Preservation Grant Fund continues to be an important funding source for community-based planning, outreach, capital improvement, and interpretive programs or projects. Heritage is now accepting applications for the next round. The next application deadline is August 1.
Pier 70 has been home to San Francisco’s ship-building and repair industry for over 150 years. It is one of the oldest, largest, and most intact historic industrial complexes remaining on the West Coast. Located on the eastern waterfront and extending along Illinois Street from Mariposa Street south to 22nd Street, the sixty-nine-acre complex was a major shipbuilding center for nearly a century. Ferryboats, schooners, and river steamboats were built there, as well as warships that fought the country’s battles from the Spanish-American War to Vietnam.

This spring, after languishing vacant for decades, the first few key buildings in the historic core of the Union Iron Works Historic District at Pier 70 are finally coming back in use, reimagined and reoccupied by a new generation of forward-looking office, commercial, and light-industrial tenants. Their reinvention by Orton Development and the Port of San Francisco — overcoming daunting odds — is the most significant historic-preservation project on the city’s waterfront since the Ferry Building reopened in 2003.

Lights On! Launching Historic Pier 70

At its peak Pier 70 was home to a number of major manufacturing and utility companies that played significant roles in the expansion of the West Coast economy. During World War II, approximately 10,000 men and women worked there, many of whom succeeded in producing organized unions for the first time. The site is still home to the Port’s Drydock No. 2, the largest floating dry dock on the West Coast.

In the 1980s, Bethlehem Steel sold the shipyard to the Port of San Francisco, leaving its historic buildings to languish, mostly vacant and deteriorating, for decades. “Many of us recall the prolonged period — literally, the bulk of our adult lives — when these buildings sat idle, waiting for something to happen, whether good or bad,” recalls Mark Hulbert of Preservation Architecture, a member of Orton Development’s project team.

In 2010, the Port of San Francisco released the Pier 70 Preferred Master Plan, outlining the agency’s approach to rehabilitating historic

The Long Wait for Something to Happen

Lights On! Launching Historic Pier 70
resources within the district, creating new open space, constructing infill development, continuing historic-ship-repair operations, and conducting environmental remediation and infrastructure improvements to the site. It took over a decade of planning by the Port to prepare the Preferred Master Plan, including significant community involvement. In February 2012, following a competitive RFP process, Orton Development was selected in partnership with the Port to redevelop eight buildings in the historic core of the Union Iron Works Historic District at Pier 70.

**Historic Tax-Credit Success Story**

In 2014 the Port of San Francisco successfully nominated the Union Iron Works Historic District at Pier 70 to the National Register of Historic Places, enabling rehabilitation work within the district to qualify for the 20-percent federal historic tax credit. With over 40 contributing structures built between 1884 and 1945, the Union Iron Works Historic District at Pier 70 is made up of unreinforced-brick masonry shops, concrete shops and warehouses, and steel-frame buildings with corrugated iron or steel cladding; structures related to shipbuilding and repair such as slipways, wharves, and floating dry-docks; and Irish Hill, the site of a once vibrant neighborhood where ship-workers lived and played.

“Without that tax credit,” notes Orton Development partner James Madsen, “this transformation would not have happened.” The success of this collaborative effort extends to the California Office of Historic Preservation and the National Park Service, with whom the Port and Orton closely consulted to ensure that all work adhered to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. (The existence of this longstanding preservation incentive was thrown into doubt last fall when the House of Representatives initially voted to abolish the historic tax credit. After an intense, bipartisan lobbying effort led by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the final tax bill retained the historic credit, but instead of allowing developers to reap its full 20-percent benefit when a restored building opens, the credit must now be parcelled out over five years.)

Concurrent with state and federal review of Orton’s plans, Heritage’s Issues Committee (now Projects + Policy Committee) has repeatedly commented on various proposed projects at Pier 70 since 2011, which also include the Port’s plans for Crane Cove Park to the north and Forest City’s redevelopment of the Waterfront Site to the
south. Heritage met with Orton and the Port three times to review the rehabilitation and retrofit plans for Building 113/114.

**Rescue Operation**

After signing a 66-year ground lease with the Port of San Francisco, Orton broke ground on construction in mid-2015. When the last building is completed, in 2019, Orton’s project will adaptively reuse eight buildings, totaling nearly 300,000 square feet, for new office, commercial, and light-industrial uses. Built between 1885 and 1941, Pier 70’s historic core evokes an era when industrial buildings were constructed as near-cathedrals. Among them, the enormous Union Iron Works Machine Shop (Building 113/114), built in 1885-86, is clad in rose-colored brick with a 60-foot ceiling, building-length skylights, and row upon row of high arched windows down the entire façade. Its companion building is the UIW Office Building, a Renaissance Revival structure built in 1896, with rounded porticos, two-story arched windows, and a copper “headband” topping its façade.

The fragile condition of the 20th Street buildings lent urgency to the project: they were seismically vulnerable, lacked fire protection, were not ADA compliant, and had suffered heavy vandalism and weathering. For Building 113/114, a new structural steel frame was inserted within the 19th-century unreinforced masonry building, which had been red-tagged for years and was crumbling by the time the project team began construction. To seismically brace the brick walls, a new perimeter mezzanine level was added near the wall mid-height. The approximately 40-foot-wide mezzanines run the length of the building on the north and south sides, except within the center connector building, built in 1914, which has become a breezeway to allow pedestrians to cross the building and reach a courtyard. Describing Orton’s work on Building 113/114 as a “rescue operation,” Hulbert recalls that “even a modest earthquake would likely have put an end to the endeavor, given its seriously fragile state. Today, that building is dynamically occupied, as are two others, with the remainder in progress.”

As one important indicator of the project’s success, the 20th Street historic buildings are now fully leased to a diverse array of anchor tenants, including benefits startup Gusto, Uber ATG, Restoration Hardware, JUUL Labs, and Obscura Digital, a creative visual and film studio. In March 2018, the $118 million project was honored by the San Francisco Business Times as one of its “Real Estate Deals of the Year.”

“The intent to vibrantly rehabilitate this group of 19th- and early 20th-century San Francisco buildings is coming to fruition,” states Mark Hulbert. “The transformation has been profound.”
Obscura Digital will host the cocktail hour for Soirée 2018 in their new headquarters in Building 14, a historic warehouse with 60-foot ceilings built in 1941 as part of the war effort, to be followed by a seated dinner in the atrium of Building 113/114.

Soirée at Historic Pier 70

To be held on Saturday, May 19, at Historic Pier 70 (20th and Illinois Streets), Soirée 2018 will celebrate the opening of the Port of San Francisco and Orton Development’s Historic Pier 70 project. Listed in the National Register as the Union Iron Works Historic District, and one of the most intact industrial complexes on the West Coast, Historic Pier 70 honors the shipyard’s industrial past while creating a vibrant community of modern, innovative companies, including Restoration Hardware, Obscura Digital, Gusto, and Uber ATG.

Soirée 2018 will present a spectacular evening of discovery and will include a cocktail hour and seated dinner followed by a rousing music-and-light show and dance party on “The Piazza.” The Piazza Party will feature late-night bites by McCall’s Catering, visual wizardry by Obscura Digital, and live music by Mustache Harbor, silent disco by HUSH Concerts, special entertainment with Janky Barge, Shelly The Crab, DJ Chuck Jones, and DJ Sobb Deep, and unlimited beer, wine, and a signature cocktail. Dinner seating is limited to 350 guests, Piazza Party tickets sold separately. Come in black tie or maritime-inspired attire.

For more information on Soirée 2018, to sponsor a table, or purchase tickets, visit https://soiree2018.auction-bid.org/microsite.
Heritage wishes to thank our generous 2017 supporters

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Welcome, Deb!

Heritage is pleased to announce that Deb Grant has joined our staff as the new Vice President of Advancement. Deb holds a BA in Journalism from the University of Florida and a Master’s degree in Non-profit Administration from the University of San Francisco. She has worked in the non-profit field as an Advancement and Development officer for many years, in the Bay Area, nationally and internationally. Previously, Deb worked for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Boys and Girls Clubs of San Francisco, Jewish Family and Children’s Services, and the California Autism Foundation, among other organizations.

Deb is originally from Florida, but has lived in the Bay Area for many years and raised her three children in Marin County. She has always had a keen interest in architecture and the built environment. On her off time, she is a CASA volunteer for foster youth, a community gardener, and a volunteer at the San Francisco Botanical Gardens.

Deb is responsible for all development and fundraising activities, as well as working with the board of directors to advance Heritage into the next 50 years of success.
**CALENDAR**

**April 2018**

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17**
Crowdfunding Historic Preservation: Direct Public Offerings and Other Ways to Raise Funds
Webinar at www.californiapreservation.org

**APRIL 20-22**
Neon Speaks Festival & Symposium
San Francisco-Oakland
Tickets at www.sfneon.org

**MONDAY, APRIL 30, 6:30 PM**
SF Neighborhood Network & SF League of Women Voters Mayoral Candidate Forum
Southeast Community Facility
1800 Oakdale Avenue

**May 2018**

**SUNDAY, MAY 6, 2 PM**
Victorian Spring Afternoon Tea
Haas-Lilienthal House
2007 Franklin Street

**MONDAY, MAY 7, 6:30 PM**
SF Neighborhood Network, SF Heritage, & Friends Mayoral Candidate Forum
Broadway Studios
Broadway at Montgomery

**MAY 17-20**
California Preservation Conference
Sheraton Palo Alto
625 El Camino Real, Palo Alto, CA

**SATURDAY, MAY 19, 6 PM**
Soirée 2018
Historic Pier 70
20th Street and Illinois Street

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**May 19, 2018, 6 PM - 12 AM**

**Soirée 2018**

Save the date! Join us on Saturday, May 19, 2018, for Heritage’s annual Soirée at Historic Pier 70 in San Francisco. Tickets at https://soiree2018.auction-bid.org/microsite

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For more information about upcoming Heritage events, please visit sfheritage.org or call 415.441.3000