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Preservation Very Big in Balboa

Once preservation was the exclusive domain of yesterday's yuppies, little old ladies in tennis shoes, and students in jeans. Then the craftsmen in their overalls and amateurs in their aprons got into the act. And, of course, finally businessmen in their three-piece suits. But now - seven-foot professional basketball players? Although out of uniform, it isn't necessarily out of the ordinary. Why? Because preservation with its tax advantages, marketing angles, aesthetics and cultural appeal is so attractive and successful that, as an investment, it can be a slam dunk.

At least it looks that way to Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, who this November helped to reopen the Balboa Inn, a 1930 Spanish Colonial Revival oceanfront hotel in Newport Beach. It was recently purchased and restored by a partnership that includes several pro stars as limited partners, including Jabbar, Ralph Sampson of the Houston Rockets, Alex English of the Denver Nuggets, and others.

Obviously, the potential tax shelter value of an historic rehab appealed to the athletes with the large salaries. But there are plenty of tax shelters available. So why this one? A number of factors came together on this project. Hotels are a hot item these days. The beach front location and the dilapidated condition of the thirty-four room Inn was a contradiction that didn't make sense, but might make money. The "downtown" Balboa section of Newport Beach needed a lift, so the City was interested. Restoring a local landmark and converting a declining hostelry into a small, first-class executive hotel sounded just fine. So the investors stepped in to buy it for \$4.2 million and to restore it for another \$1.2 million.

The project has included seismic stabilization of the masonry structure and a beautiful restoration of the nearly-intact exterior. The handsome two- and three-story buildings, designed in the late Twenties by Roland Hagedohm, exhibit characteristics and design details typical of the style, period, and region. They include massive, smooth walls; red tile roof; arches; plaster brackets, run moulds and planter boxes; and several towers, including one of five stories that is still listed on navigational charts as "the tower".



The Balboa Inn Rebounds to Face A Bright Future
(photo by Rob Selway)

Ray Sanford, President of Griswold's Development Corporation, has been very enthusiastic about the historical aspects of the project. Ed Van Den Bossche, of Scheer-Braden Associates, the project architect, appreciates efforts to blend historic integrity with contemporary needs. And, a good spirit of cooperative compromise has characterized the dealings between the development team and the State Historic Preservation Office.

Balboa in 1930 was evolving into a regional entertainment center. The southern terminus of the Red Car line a block away from the Inn unloaded beachgoers and partyers to enjoy the adjacent Balboa Pier and strand, the Bathhouse, the Ritz Theatre, shopping, and especially the music and dancing at the Balboa Pavillion and the Rendezvous Ballroom, next door to the Inn. The Inn was the place to stay, to eat, and to drink as Balboa boomed as a Depression Era and Big Band Era destination resort. The Inn's clientele was a who's who in the movie and music industry of the times, including Humphrey Bogart, Gary Cooper, and Errol Flynn, as well as Glenn Miller, Stan Kenton and Gene Krupa.

Everyone is enthusiastic about the revitalization of "downtown" Balboa, where most of the pre-WWII buildings remain. Among approximately twenty such buildings are the restored Ruby's Diner at the end of the Balboa Pier, the turn of the century Pavillion at the opposite end of Main Street, and the Bank of Balboa building a block away on Balboa Blvd. being restored for use as a restaurant.

Balboa is one community where historic preservation and associated concepts such as compatible scale and historically consistent design themes are making a difference. Many can be credited with an assist as this small town/big time resort makes a comeback. But of course, when you need to rebound, it doesn't hurt to have some seven-foot superstars on your side.

11th ANNUAL STATE PRESERVATION CONFERENCE

Monterey - May 1-4, 1986

Monterey, California's first capital, has been selected as the site for the 11th Annual State Preservation Conference and work is underway to make it the best yet. Set for May 1 - 4, the conference will be cosponsored by the Monterey History and Arts Association and the Colonial Monterey Foundation, with the substantial support and cooperation of the City of Monterey. The California Preservation Foundation and state-level cosponsors, the National Trust and State Office of Historic Preservation, are especially excited by the opportunities presented by the Monterey location.

Last year's conference played on the small town atmosphere of Claremont and stressed the importance of community preservation strategies. Monterey, a capital in both the governmental and cultural sense - and a town in a coastal region greatly impacted by tourism - suggests much broader themes. The full program will be developed by March and registration material will be in the mail. But, as an incentive for you to make your reservation early, we can promise adobes, theatre and wonderful weather. (story continues on page 2)

Washington Watch

TAX CREDITS

As we predicted in our last newsletter, the House Ways and Means Committee proposed retaining tax credits for historic buildings but changing the credit to 20%, with full adjustment to basis; a 10% ITC would be available for non-historic commercial structures built before 1935. While tax credits are preserved at a lower level, they will still be very valuable - maybe even more so in comparison - but much depends on the tax rate applicable, a decision still to be made.

Nellie Longworth, President of Preservation Action, thinks enough compromises were made in the House version of "tax reform" to convince the Senate that ITCs should be retained. She is certain the Senate will act, but wonders how much they will do to raise taxes in anticipation of the impact of "Gramm-Rudman", and whether this could affect attitudes toward our tax credits.

The current, unresolved problem is "transition rules". As it stands in the House proposal, only properties placed in service by January 1, 1986 will be able to claim the 25% ITC under 1981 ERTA rules. Lobbying this year will focus on introducing a "fairness" doctrine that would cover projects "underway, with binding contracts by September 25, 1985".

Gramm-Rudman, a congressional commitment to reduce the deficit, does pose problems. Most assuredly, we can expect that the federal budget for preservation (grants through the SHPO) proposed by the Administration will be zero, again, and we can anticipate additional cuts in programs of the National Park Service.

"SECTION 106 REGS"

In October the Advisory Council published its long awaited revisions to the Section 106 regulations. Because of the importance of these regulations to the protection of historic and archaeological resources around the country, the National Trust and other organizations have been working for years to avert a total dismantling of the regs as desired by the Reagan Administration. The newly-published revisions, although preserving the 106 process, did make substantial changes.

Two issues stood out. First, although public participation is acknowledged as desirable, actual input from the public is not a requirement, but is couched in terms such as "reasonable and good faith effort", "sensitive to the views of", "encouraged to make information... readily available to the public". A second, but related matter, was the seeming reliance solely on the SHPO for all information concerning a potentially affected resource. Often the State Office is not the best source of information and therefore there is a necessity for requiring additional participation in the 106 process.

Comments were due back to the Advisory Council on 16 December. We are awaiting the outcome.

CPF's concern about these issues, particularly protecting the right of the public to participate, joined over 100 other communications sent to the Advisory Council by preservationists across the country; many argued that we should stay with current regulations -- if it ain't broke, don't fix it -- as preferable to those being proposed. The next step is a required response to comments received by the Council and we hope we don't find it's another step toward dismantling the national preservation program we all battled to create and maintain.

MONTEREY STATE CONFERENCE (continued)

RESERVATIONS - Lodging in Monterey is heavily booked in the Spring. A central Monterey Peninsula Tourist Bureau provides full information on the various options. We can make that material available to you and local sponsors are preparing a special listing of hotels and bed & breakfast facilities that may be most attractive to people with a preservation interest. For information and our special listing, contact: Donna Penwell at (408) 646-3885.

REGISTRATION - The registration packet will be ready in March but you can be sure of receiving conference materials by calling, again, Donna Penwell at the above number in Monterey. There will be an early registration "reduced rate", the registration fee will be slightly lower than last year, and Foundation members will get a fee break.

PROGRAM - Initial plans are to feature speakers who offer a national perspective on preservation issues, to lay some stress on the problems and potential of tourism and to accent the changes in state and federal programs affecting cultural resources, changes that may have gone unnoticed at local levels. If you miss this conference you will be out-of-date. Finally, there will be a heavier emphasis on having fun this year.

SPECIAL FEATURES - The CPF Annual Design Awards will again be presented at the conference. For information and application forms, contact CPF's Bruce Judd at Architectural Resources Group, Pier 9 - The Embarcadero, San Francisco, CA 94111 (415/421-1680).

Firms specializing in restoration or restoration products will be interested in the Trades Fair, the display and promotion opportunity CPF provides at the conference; for more information on securing your space, contact CPF's Rob Selway at 2414 Bonnie Brae, Santa Ana, CA 92706 (714/834-4741).

The ever-popular Three Minute Success Stories will play again in Monterey; if your local group feels you have had an experience with a preservation project in your town that others should know about, this is your chance to briefly share your joy, despair or mirth. This year's line-up is being handled by CPF's Robin Dattel, 645 "C" Street, Davis, CA 95616 (916/753-5959), and you should contact her quickly to make sure you can get a spot on the program to testify about the joys of being a preservationist...and remember, it's always amateur hour.

Monterey is a delightful place and its many, many attractions will be woven into the program. Plan on being there with us May 1 through May 4, 1986 and get there for the opening reception Thursday evening, May 1.

Preservation Week --- May 11-17

The National Trust for Historic Preservation has designated May 11-17, 1986, as National Historic Preservation Week with the theme CELEBRATE OUR HISTORIC PLACES, OUR PAST FOR OUR FUTURE.

"In every city and town and most rural areas across the country there are historic places to celebrate," said J. Jackson Walter, president of the National Trust. "We want to attract the broadest possible public attention by building events around these historic places, and to draw attention to the 20th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, which created the National Register of Historic Places as we know it today."

We hope you will attend the Monterey Conference on May 1-4 and return home to your own "Preservation Week" activities May 11 - 17.



CALIFORNIA PRESERVATION FOUNDATION

EASEMENTS - The Skin Trade

Easements are a partial interest in a property granted to another party by the actual property owner. In preservation, this usually means a preservation group holds an easement on the significant architectural features -- exterior and, possibly, interior -- that distinguish a structure and, if the setting is important, the surrounding site as well. The easement holder can then control any changes proposed because they must approve the changes.

Easements are donated to preservation groups because the property owner, by giving up control of a portion of the property (perhaps only the skin of a building), can realize certain tax benefits. The value of the property is diminished and this fact may affect property tax appraisals; the actual "interest in the property" (the easement) can also be valued and can be written off as a donation for income tax purposes.

Traditionally, preservation groups sought easements -- even purchased them -- because they needed some tool that enabled them to prevent damage to the historic, architectural or cultural integrity of a building or site. Since significant tax benefits for developers came into effect in 1976, the write-off aspect of easements has become very popular. With clarification in federal statutes in 1981 that easements on historic properties were acceptable by IRS -- with similar certification established in California through SB 2280 (Marks) passed in 1984 -- and the growth of interest in and use of Investment Tax Credits since ERTA 1981, easement donations have often proved to be the mechanism that pushed a development proposal over the margin into feasibility.

Preservationists have been slow to realize this fact, and, in many cases, make no discrimination between taking an easement on an endangered property and doing the same for one undergoing very profitable development. Many California preservation groups hold easements and some, like Heritage in San Francisco, hold a substantial number. While most of the state's major cities have easement-holding groups, the California Preservation Foundation realized, last year, that most of the state was bereft of qualified organizations (and IRS has definite requirements) to receive easement donations. After a nationwide survey, CPF constructed an easement program to cover only those areas of California which no other preservation group serviced.

Unlike many existing easement-holding groups, CPF charges a fee for accepting an easement and requires an endowment for the future work involved in "policing" the property (ensuring that the terms of the easement contract are being observed). We can waive some fees or adjust the endowment amount when it's a clear case of preserving an endangered property, but in purely investment/development instances, we will follow the guidelines we drew up after conferring with easement-holding organizations across the country.

Accepting an easement takes time and effort; there are costs associated with the legal work and the architectural review of the property. And, the responsibility is in perpetuity. It makes good sense -- and developers don't seem surprised -- to ask that your costs in accepting the easement be covered.

Descriptive material about the California Preservation Easement program, our fee schedule, the application form and our sample easement contract are available for your study; if you want to establish an easement program, or rethink one you now operate, we will be happy to send you our program material.

Please remember, if someone in your area is interested in donating an easement and they can't find a qualified organization to accept the easement, CPF has created this program to meet this need and fill the gap in areas of California not covered.



The Wells Fargo Bank ("Chamber of Commerce Building") in Berkeley, protected by an easement donated to CPF by the Westcap Financial Group - Heritage Fund of San Francisco. (photos by Pattianne Parker)

CPF Board Nominations

Seven new members of the Foundation Board of Trustees will be formally elected at the Annual Meeting in Monterey this May; but the process starts now. Members can, and should, nominate candidates for the upcoming vacancies now and can do so by sending suggestions to Nominations Committee Chairman Jim Stickels (2160 La Sierra Way, Claremont, CA 91711).

Candidates should demonstrate a thorough understanding of and demonstrate strong, previous participation in preservation efforts. They should also clearly understand that CPF has a state level focus. Terms are for three years and attendance at quarterly board meetings is a commitment we ask. Send your recommendations and supporting material to Jim by February 21, 1986.

A CPF Special Event

The Foundation is making plans for an Open House at Bradbury and Bradbury, the Benicia wallpaper firm that has gained fame for its recreations of Victorian period prints. More details will appear in the next newsletter but at this time we expect to offer demonstrations of Bruce Bradbury's hand-printing techniques, lectures on period interior design, products display, food, and a good time. The Open House, a benefit for the Foundation, will both educate and entertain you; watch for details.

Next Newsletter Deadline - March 15

This newsletter was produced by John Merritt and Dick Price; contributors were Claire Bogaard, Sandy Elder, Rob Selway, Ephraim Smith, John Snyder, Mitch Stone, David Shelton, Bill Sugaya and Dave Valeska. Your contributions are always welcome.

Monterey - Our Conference City

Each era of California history is visible in Monterey, which was the capital and largest town under Spanish and Mexican administrations. Monterey also preserves Victorian and early 20th Century resources. The proximity of representatives of such eras to each other makes Monterey an ideal city for a visitor who is interested in history.

The Royal Presidio Chapel, site of prominent weddings and other important social events, dates from 1793. Nearby in the downtown area are 45 adobe brick houses from the period 1820 - 1865. The Custom House at Fisherman's Wharf is the oldest public building on the Pacific Coast. There are 17 adobes preserved by the State Historic Park system and by the City of Monterey for public viewing of displays and museum collections.

The Spanish and Mexican eras were colorful, with a pirate invasion, small revolutions, visiting foreign ships, lively parties and cascaron balls. A gradual settlement by New England families blended with the existing Mexican town very comfortably. By 1846, when the American Navy raised the U.S. flag peacefully over the Custom House, many of the prominent residents were Spanish-speaking former Bostonians and former New Yorkers. This comfortable blend of Mexican and New England lifestyles resulted in the "Monterey style" of the 1840s with exterior porches and wood railings around adobe walls, with shingles rather than tile roofs. The style was dignified yet simple.

Preservation of the adobes began in the 1920s after two-thirds of the original adobes had been demolished for "progress". Ironically, it was the 1960s Urban Renewal program which resulted in protection of many of the remaining adobes. No early 19th Century home has been demolished in 20 years, thanks to the preservation efforts.



Colton Hall (above) was built in the late 1840s by the first American Alcalde (Mayor), Rev. Walter Colton. This two-story stone building was the site of the State Constitutional Convention, noted for the bilingual document which resulted. In 1854, a stone jail was added. Today this complex houses three offices of City Hall and a museum of the Convention.

The capital ultimately moved to Sacramento and the County seat moved to Salinas. Monterey became a quiet small town in which fine Victorian homes were built uphill to the west of the downtown adobe district. Dozens of 1860s to 1890s homes remain today, with distinctive lines reminiscent of a refined lifestyle. The neighborhood is noted for its Italian heritage.

A Chinese fishing village, established in Cannery Row in the mid-1800s burned early in the 20th Century. It was replaced by a major concentration of fish canneries based on technology established by Pietro Ferrante and Knut Hovden. By the 1940s, John Steinbeck could write about a place recognizable by its buildings, its varied people, and its distinctive aroma. Today, the fish and the aroma are gone, replaced by thousands of tourists who come to see the remaining Steinbeck-era buildings like Doc's Lab, Flora's, and the Wing Chong Market. The former Hovden Cannery site now contains the Monterey Bay Aquarium, one of the world's finest such facilities. The Aquarium was designed to remind visitors of the original cannery; machinery and artifacts of the fishing industry were preserved.

Monterey is only now becoming aware of the value of 1910s, 1920s and 1930s houses of shingle, Spanish Colonial, period and bungalow styles. These are mixed with structures of earlier and subsequent eras, in a rich tapestry of neighborhood heritage.

Historic preservation is a high priority of the Monterey City Council. The General Plan contains an Historic Preservation Element. All of the Spanish and Mexican era buildings are protected by the "H" - historic overlay zone; Victorian homes may soon be similarly protected. A two-year-old, 12-member Historic Preservation Commission meets monthly to develop historic preservation efforts. Four historic districts are being developed by the Commission in addition to the existing downtown National Register district. Archaeological resources are inventoried and protected by the ongoing Environmental Review process.

Monterey's growth has been restrained, with only a 1% average annual increase in population since 1970. However, a dramatic increase in visitor accommodations, including two new 300-room hotels and a 200-room hotel, have changed the landscape of Monterey. The major community issue has been to balance this economic growth with the residents' desires for neighborhood preservation, including historic preservation. The remaining years of the 20th Century will see Monterey citizens being very active in the historic preservation process.

Neighboring cities of Pacific Grove, Carmel, and the County Seat of Salinas also have historic resources from the 1770s to the 20th Century. Pacific Grove is famous for its turn-of-the-century wooden homes in the pleasant downtown district. Across the bay, Santa Cruz has many historic structures.

Monterey and its neighboring cities welcome visitors to the California Preservation Foundation Conference, May 1 - 4, 1986. Attendees will want to reserve rooms early to fully enjoy the Monterey Peninsula's many natural, historic, sporting, and culinary attractions.

SANTA BARBARA - An Old Preservation Tradition in Transition

Although Santa Barbara is persuasively Hispanic today, its boom time appearance during the second half of the nineteenth century echoed that of many other American seacoast towns of that period. Lumber yards lined the beach adjacent to Stearns Wharf. State Street, the main street of town, boasted tall masonry commercial blocks capped with bold Italianate cornices. Industrial buildings such as lemon packing plants and an ice house clustered near the railroad. Old adobes were razed to make way for new commercial buildings, and wood and brick houses began filling in the gridwork of downtown streets.

more on Santa Barbara...

Transplanted Easterners who came to Santa Barbara in the early twentieth century deplored the loss of the city's earliest Hispanic buildings and set about designing a new downtown area in the rural Hispanic/Mediterranean mode to surround and enhance what was left of the old adobes, beginning with the Casa de la Guerra. Forming the Community Arts Association, they redesigned the de la Guerra Plaza, building the El Paseo shops and studios, the News Press building, and City Hall in the Hispanic style to complement the Casa.

The earthquake of 1925 gave the planners a tremendous boost. Within minutes, the temblor obliterated fifty years of Santa Barbara's identity. Amidst the tumbled facades and fallen buildings, the newly-established Architectural Board of Review began reconstruction, processing in less than a year some 2000 permits for new projects, all in the Hispanic style. Out of the Victorian rubble rose a Spanish Colonial Revival city. The ubiquitous arch began dominating the streetscape that once boasted cast-iron and wood storefronts, and red tile roofs began delineating the skyline that was once framed by projecting cornices. Architects so thoroughly embraced this theme that even those facades that survived the quake were often remodeled in the Hispanic style.

Preservation of this Hispanic image has been accomplished over the last 60 years by a variety of civic organizations such as the Plans and Planting Committee of the Community Arts Association in the 1920s and 30s, and, in the 1960s and 1970s, by ordinances establishing the El Pueblo Viejo Landmark District, and the Landmarks Committee which has design control over all construction within the District. As a result of this long-term, careful city planning, the pervasive vocabulary of the Spanish Colonial Revival continues to dominate the streetscape to this day.

But now more than 60 years away from those Revival beginnings, we are confronting not only the issue of preserving the 1920s buildings (the urge to replace those originals with contemporary versions is not easily resisted), but we are discovering as well vestiges of the pre-earthquake, pre-Spanish Colonial Revival Santa Barbara that in the 1980s seem to stand as beacons to our more distant past, deserving of a second look. Traditionally these Victorian buildings, the wood and brick houses, commercial and industrial buildings, the turn-of-the-century Renaissance Revival and Neo-Classical buildings, as well as the Craftsman bungalows have been ignored or torn down in favor of new structures which foster the Hispanic image of the city.

The demolition of several noteworthy structures in recent years coupled with a growing national interest in old and historic buildings have been catalysts to broaden local preservation interests. The establishment of the Brinkerhoff Avenue Landmark District, a street lined with wood-frame Victorian residences, is indicative of this movement. And while entrepreneurs are renovating large Victorian residences for bed and breakfast establishments, small businesses are finding the Victorian and the Bungalow cottages that border the commercial blocks ideal for office space.

During this resurgence of energy and growth in the downtown, the two-edged sword of decision making is particularly sharp. Today Santa Barbara is challenged with a double responsibility -- that of maintaining the distinctive Hispanic character of the City while preserving its historic past.

Editor's note -- this article was written by David Shelton, Preservation Planning Associates, as a preview of issues the California Preservation Foundation faces in our January 23 workshop in Santa Barbara.

State Office News

The State Historical Resources Commission at its November 1, 1985 meeting in Coronado recommended 13 properties to the State Historic Preservation Officer for nomination to the Keeper for placement on the National Register. The Commission also recommended registration of the site of the China Clipper Flight Departure, Alameda Naval Air Station, Alameda County, as a California Registered Historical Landmark.

Also at the November meeting, the 1986 schedule of meetings was established. The Commission always holds its public meetings on the first Friday of February, May, August and November. The February 7 meeting will be in Santa Cruz, May 9 in Wilmington, August 1 in Northern California and November 7 in Southern California with December 4 as a special meeting in Sacramento if needed. The May meeting was shifted back one week so it wouldn't conflict with the State Conference in Monterey; a major part of the Conference will be dealing with State programs that promote preservation efforts.

The State Office of Historic Preservation increasingly finds itself dealing with exciting new opportunities, and we reported on some of the new directions in our last newsletter. More recently, OHP has contracted with the University of California - Davis to provide professional expertise in preservation to the northernmost and least populated counties in the state; consultants will travel through the region providing information on State programs, presenting workshops and surveying communities for strong project potentials.

SHPO Kathryn Gualtieri will be presenting the case for historic preservation at the Third Annual Governor's Conference on Tourism, planned for March 4-6, 1986, in Sacramento. What we know well from research done during the work of the California Heritage Task Force is that cultural resources are a major attraction and contribute heavily to tourism revenues. The State Office of Tourism and those in attendance should benefit greatly from the SHPO's remarks and we hope this "first" breakthrough in directly addressing representatives of a major industry and the well-funded State Office of Tourism will pay off: preservation should be featured in all tourism promotions supported by the State.

OPH has also been working with the Department of Commerce on initial steps to set up the California Main Street Program, made possible by passage of AB 2483 (Peace) last Fall; at this point the State Office is helping develop selection criteria for the program Coordinator and the mechanisms by which the Main Street cities selected will be provided the essential expertise they need in historic preservation.

We will continue to provide updates on these OHP program developments in future newsletters and hope to have a feature article on the California Main Street Program next issue; for now we congratulate our new SHPO, Kathryn Gualtieri, on the energy she is giving to new preservation initiatives within State government.

TAX TRACKS

Demolishing tax shelters looms as a task
That's bound to create some sparks,
For some of these structures have stood so long
They're designated as national landmarks.

--Edward F. Dempsey
in Wall Street Journal, August 30, 1985

Preservation in Ventura County

Ventura County, for all of its growing urban character, has never been known as a hotbed of historic preservation activity. Yet, as the County grows, preservation issues have moved to the forefront in some of the County's communities.

Last year, the City of Ventura's Historic Preservation Commission quietly celebrated a dozen years of institutionalized preservation. The Commission was founded in 1973, and although never fully staffed, its continued existence is representative of the City's long-term preservation commitment.

Always pragmatic in its approach, the Ventura City Council allowed the redevelopment of the west end of the downtown for a modern shopping center, resulting in the loss of historic buildings. In turn, the City insisted on a thematic tie-in with the mission-flavored area. While the result has not been entirely satisfactory from a preservation or cityscape point of view, it has provided a genuinely needed economic boost to the area.

More troublesome is the potential loss of some of the City's east-end ranching homes. The value and historic significance of these resources, scattered as they are, is sorely misunderstood. These issues will continue to arise as the city pushes inexorably eastward.

Despite its regional location, in the midst of a burgeoning urban area, Santa Paula remains remarkably untouched by change. That the city should become California's testing ground for the National Trust's Main Street Program may come as some surprise. That the program began at the behest of the downtown's merchants is telling of the degree to which they were frustrated with downtown's physical and economic decline. The Santa Paula Main Street program is entering into its second year, now as a part of the new California Main Street Center.

Santa Paula has adopted an historic district ordinance, and is working toward certification. No districts have yet been designated, and such action is not likely to occur without concerted public interest. It remains for Santa Paulans to develop the kind of active preservation coalition necessary to promote the establishment of protective districts.



The 1890 building in Santa Paula where Union Oil was born

The Ventura County Cultural Heritage Board has acted as landmarks commission for most of the County's cities for nearly twenty years, although recent years have seen many of the individual cities substitute their own Boards and Commissions. The Cultural Heritage Board, to its great credit, has been the ringleader in guiding historic resources surveys within the cities of Oxnard, Santa Paula, Fillmore and the unincorporated portions of the Ojai Valley. Future surveys will concentrate on agricultural areas and unincorporated communities.

Rapid urban growth, a few short years ago seen as the harbinger of creeping "orangecountyism", is now being welcomed with an almost unqualified enthusiasm in Ventura County. Whether Ventura County has learned the lessons of its southern neighbor county remains to be seen. But clearly, preservationists must be continually aware of the changing face of Ventura County, and the pressure growth puts upon its historic resources.

The Liberty Bell - A Great American Diner

Looking not unlike (a) a cross between a railroad car and a grounded Boeing 747, (b) a derailed Japanese bullet train, or (c) a beached whale with windows, the Liberty Bell Cafe is in dire need of a good preservationist friend. The roadside diner was built in the 1930s from a former railroad car, to which was appended a streamlined nose of stucco. The diner served motorists travelling Highway 194 near Perris in Riverside County, and its last operator was reputed to serve the best ribs in Riverside County. While California probably had dozens of such roadside diners at one time, few remain. By 1983, the Liberty Bell was in the path of a Caltrans freeway project. Overlooked during the initial environmental process, the structure was identified and determined eligible for the National Register just ahead of the construction crews. Last-minute negotiations between Caltrans, the Federal Highway Administration, the Office of Historic Preservation, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation saved it, for the moment.



Caltrans moved the structure from the path of the freeway to a temporary storage yard, where it currently rests on timber supports. At the same time, the highway agency developed a marketing package in an attempt to find a new owner willing to undertake rehabilitation and preservation. An ad in the "Historic Properties" classifieds in the August 1985 issue of *Historic Preservation* brought more than 30 responses, some from as far away as Florida and Texas. Buoyed by hope, in October Caltrans' planners sent a request for detailed proposal to each of the respondents. And at that point in the process, the rays of hope began to dim, as none of the initial respondents displayed any further interest.

Which brings us to the present: Caltrans has obtained a 6-month extension from the house movers upon whose timbers the Liberty Bell rests. The department will continue to consider serious expressions of interest in the structure, which is offered at no cost, and with partial moving costs paid, but with preservation covenants. As a National Register eligible property, commercially usable, developers/restorers would be able to take advantage of preservation tax credits. Interested parties should contact: Caltrans, P.O. Box 231, San Bernardino CA 92402, Attn: S.R. Hammond, (714) 383-4108. But don't delay: if no one comes forward by the time the extension lapses, Caltrans will record the Liberty Bell for the Historic American Buildings Survey, and will then demolish it. And California will have lost one more unique piece of its historic built environment.

Calendar

Campbell Center for Historic Preservation Studies in Mount Carroll, Illinois, has scheduled a series of conservation training workshops February 3-14, 1986 in Tucson, Arizona. Nine workshops, two to five days long, will be offered on the Museum Objects, Furniture and Fine Arts and Architectural Conservation areas and will feature nationally-known experts.

The Campbell Center is highly regarded and the courses look very strong. For more information, contact: Margery Douglass, Registrar, Campbell Center, P.O. 66, Mount Carroll, IL 61053. (815) 244-1173.

For last minute information on CPF's workshops in Southern California listed immediately below, call the Foundation office at (415)527-7808.

January 23 CPF Workshop - Santa Barbara

January 24 CPF Workshop - Ventura

January 27 State Historic Building Code Orientation (Fresno); for more information, contact Clarence Cullimore (916/445-7627).

February 3 - 14 Campbell Center for Historic Preservation "Tucson Winter Series" (see story).

February 7 State Historic Resources Commission (Santa Cruz)

February 14 - 15 Conference of California Historical Societies convention (Hanford); for more information contact Barbara Burkhart (408/335-9365).

February 24 State Historic Building Code Orientation and SHBCB Meeting (Sacramento)

March 4 - 6 Third Annual Governor's Conference on Tourism (Sacramento); for more information contact Sandy Elder (916/445-8006).

March 15 Deadline for annual National Trust Awards nominations; for more information contact Susan Angevin at the Western Regional Office (415/974-8420).

March 27 - 29 Society for California Archaeology Annual Meeting (Santa Rosa); for more information contact Kristina Roper (707/664-2381).

May 1 - 4 STATE PRESERVATION CONFERENCE (Monterey)

May 9 State Historical Resources Commission (Wilmington).

May 29 - 31 Society of California Archivists Annual Meeting (Claremont); for more information contact Paul Sigman (818/840-5424).

May 18 CPF Benefit Open House at Bradbury and Bradbury (Benicia) (Date tentative).

Historic Building Code Orientations

The State Historic Building Codes Board put on a very successful and well-attended "Orientation" in San Francisco on November 20 (see previous newsletter) and more such sessions are planned.

Fresno will host an Orientation at the State Building on January 27 (beginning at 10:30 am) and will present the same program in conjunction with a meeting of the Board in Sacramento on Monday, February 24 (tentatively). The Foundation is cosponsoring this series and strongly urges you to get your local building officials, fire marshalls and code enforcement staff to these meetings:

this is the best way to encourage the local use of the Historic Building Code (now mandated) in your town. For more information on the Fresno and Sacramento Orientations, contact Clarence Cullimore, Executive Director of the State Historic Building Codes Board at (916) 445-7627.

Mr. Cullimore is also travelling with Foundation members to make presentations at our workshops in Santa Barbara and Ventura later this month. His post as staff to the Board was won by last year's budget fight, led by Board Chairman Ray Girvigian. "Culli" is proving to be the key to getting adequate information out to those in the state who administer codes and need to know more about the alternatives provided for historic buildings.

Pasadena Faces Another Crisis

The Pasadena community was shocked to learn in mid-October of plans to close the historic Huntington Hotel. The Sheraton Corp., managers of the hotel, recommended closure to the Japanese owners, Keikyu, USA., because of seismic safety questions. Upon learning of the pending closure, Pasadena Heritage contacted John Kariotis, structural engineer and renowned seismic expert, who assured them that restoration of the building was definitely possible.

Mr. Kariotis was then hired by the City of Pasadena to review the preliminary study which had led to the decision to close the main hotel building.

After reviewing the study, earthquake projections by Jet Propulsion Labs and Cal Tech, and original drawings prepared by architect Myron Hunt when he designed the expanded hotel in 1912-13, Mr. Kariotis indicated that the Huntington can certainly be saved. It appears that Hunt's plans included substantial reinforcement of the concrete, and, even where hollow-core tile was used, structural support exists. The building could benefit from some reinforcement, but there are viable alternatives which may prove to be much less costly and more architecturally pleasing than those reported earlier.

Pasadena Heritage continues to question the hasty decision by the Sheraton Corporation. It is hoped some agreement can be reached between the hotel owners and managers that would cause needed reinforcement work to commence so the hotel can be reopened. A number of people have suggested that the seismic issue is not the real issue but, rather, the managers of the hotel would prefer a newer, modern hotel on the site.

Special Honors for Hanford

The Central Valley City of Hanford, often praised in this newsletter, was awarded the first California League of Cities' "Helen Putnam Award" for its preservation efforts this Fall. Named after the mayor who spear-headed Petaluma's precedent-setting slow growth ordinance, the award praised Hanford for its coordinated public/private approach to preserving and enhancing its historic character.

We congratulate Hanford - again - and the League of Cities for initiating the award. When the Conference of California Historical Societies meets this February in Hanford they will be treated to movies at former CPF Trustee Dan Humason's theatre and to milkshakes from the Superior Creamery. Hanford has always been special; go see it.

A Brief Tribute to John

In late November we lost John Beach. John was a brilliant architectural critic, a visionary in so many ways, a great teacher...and a good friend. We will miss him a lot.



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The California Preservation Foundation exists to help you improve preservation awareness and activity in your town. If you think we can help, don't hesitate to call your nearest Board member or call 415/527-7808

The Foundation has been fortunate to receive very substantial aid from the SHPO these past few years - and we are grateful. The other main source of our support comes from members who contribute through donations and dues - and we wouldn't survive without you. While we have had great success in diversifying our revenue sources in the past year, new members and membership renewals are critical to operations - and a good sign that people in California have confidence in the work we are doing. PLEASE HELP US CONTINUE - THE WORK HAS ONLY JUST BEGUN. Join or renew now.

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