RAIDERS PUT L.A. COLISEUM AT RISK

There is serious talk in Los Angeles about demolishing the Coliseum. In mid-January the Coliseum Commission voted unanimously to investigate building a new sports facility on the site.

The Coliseum may be L.A.'s most important historic structure for a number of reasons. When it was built in the late 1920s to host the 1932 Olympics it was a statement that L.A. had arrived. Its architectural quality is strong and graceful and its concrete engineering was, at the time, in the forefront of accomplishment in a still-new and unappreciated structural material.

The Coliseum has been the site of extraordinary events for 60 years, some of worldwide importance. A Kennedy speech, a Papal Mass, a Billy Graham rally, a tense SC-Notre Dame battle, a first West Coast World Series Championship for the Dodgers in 1959, everyone who has lived in L.A. has experienced special moments in the Coliseum.

At one time City Hall may have best symbolized L.A., particularly during the 1950s when Dragnet was everyone's favorite cop show. But if you want "just the facts" now, City Hall has disappeared into the downtown's highrise jungle. The Coliseum remains and can assert its just claim to be L.A.'s most recognizable structure throughout the nation and, since the 1984 Olympics, the world. Is there a single person who has not viewed downtown Los Angeles from the Goodyear blimp hovering over "today's exciting contest from the Coliseum"? Soldiers' Field in Chicago may approach the Coliseum as the most remarkable stadium in terms of architectural style; but there is nothing to match the peristyle as the world's best-known sports arena structural feature.

The Coliseum also has historic attributes which are lesser known. It was the crowning piece of a strong cultural center — Exhibition Park — and tied a suburban part of town to a growing urban complex — a major piece balanced by the the USC campus filling out with its architecturally fine and coherent set of buildings in the 1920s. More important, the Coliseum was a significant contributor to the social maturity of an emerging metropolis. It was the most visible and most neutral site for the meeting of blacks and whites for many decades, maybe the only place where different races learned they could easily accommodate each other because their interests were common and compatible. Who didn't cheer Kenny Washington or Jackie Robinson when they played football for UCLA in the late 1930s.

L.A. has a huge heart and the Coliseum is one of the most important chambers. It is where Angelenos learned to be "big city" and is the last major icon linking the transition of L.A.in the 1920s from "suburbs in search of a city" to a dominant metropolis of international importance in the 1990s. The Coliseum is far greater than Al Davis and his Raiders.

Kezar Stadium went down last year in San Francisco, and there was regret but no protest. The current threat to the Coliseum, caused by small-minded interests, deserves the strongest protest, if only because the threat originates from such a transparent motives of short term gain. Rumors are that MCA (Metromedia Corp. of America) Coliseum operators, will seek a legislative exemption from CEQA review. Opposition is forming in L.A. and we urge you to contact your County Supervisor, L.A. City Council representative, and members of the Coliseum Commission to stop this outrage now! Call the L.A. Conservancy (213/623-CITY) or CPF Vice-President Bill Delvac (213/469-2349), who is Chair of the Conservancy's Coliseum Task Force* to help save L.A.'s biggest landmark.
RAIL ISSUE GOES TO SUPREME COURT

The Friends of the Sierra Railroad and Tuolumne County Parks and Recreation District filed suit with the U.S. Supreme Court on January 2, 1990 (the first to be filed this year). The National Trust for Historic Preservation, California Preservation Foundation, the Society for California Archaeology, the Tuolumne County Historical Society, and the Society for Historical Archaeology have filed an amicus brief in the case. The case involves a decision made four years ago by the Interstate Commerce Commission to allow the owner of the Sierra Railroad to abandon a mile of track that traversed a lumber mill yard owned by Fibreboard Corporation.

The Sierra Railroad, National Register-eligible and described as "the most intact historic short-line railroad in California" by the State Historical Resources Commission, runs from Oakdale in eastern Stanislaus County to Tuolumne City, a Gold Country town. Universal Studios spent several months last year filming railroad sequences on some remaining trackage for the Michael J. Fox "Back to the Future, Part II" sequel.

Although notice of the decision appeared in the Federal Register, this publication is not readily available to the average citizen, nor is the ten-day notification for comment period adequate; the nearest Federal Register to citizens in Tuolumne County was an hour's drive away. Thus, without proper evaluation or notice, it was not surprising that rail fans first learned of the abandonment when Fibreboard began ripping up track in January, 1986.

Charles Montagne, a railroad issues attorney in Washington, D.C., is handling the appeal for "Friends" and the Recreation District. The National Trust brief, filed by Elizabeth Merritt, argues that the ICC failed to even go through motions of notifying interested parties and, given the time constraints, local preservation groups were, in reality, denied access to injunctive relief and had no means to ensure enforcement of Section 106 provisions. CPF has been working with the Friends of the Sierra Railroad for years, encouraged the Trust to take the amicus position and was pleased to support and join in the filing. We will report the outcome.

STATE REGISTER BILL REINTRODUCED

The State Historical Resources Commission, at its November 3, 1989 meeting in Riverside, determined to reintroduce the "State Register" in the 1990 legislative session, without the C.E.Q.A. provision which was the apparent cause for the Governor's veto. Both outgoing Chairman Bob Power (Nut Tree) and new Chairman Patricia Cologne (Rancho Santa Fe) felt Senator Marks should be contacted, again, to introduce the Commission's bill, but bipartisan support should be the aim - and avoiding CEQA language should achieve that goal.

Senator Marks` office is willing to carry the bill but, now, ten weeks later, there has been no movement to ensure that a bipartisan bill will emerge nor do we have indications of top level Administration support. SB 3 has clouded the picture for sure but we had hoped to be able to report a bill number by this newsletter issue. CPF continues to feel a flexible and comprehensive State Register is the central organizing point for a strong preservation program for the future and will actively support passage of the new bill.

Senator Marks introduced a State Register bill in time to meet the January 26 deadline for submission for new bills; we hope many legislators from both parties will sign up as supporters. Encourage your State Senator to contact Senator Marks to be a co-author.

This newsletter was produced by John Merritt, Dick Price and Elizabeth Morton; contributors were Anne Gray, Linda Dishman, Sharon Marovich, Vincent Marsh, Randy Pester, GeeGee Platt and Eric Stoltz. CPF welcomes your contributions; please send your stories typed and include photos (b/w glossy).
NEW TO CPF's BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Foundation is pleased to announce that we have two new Trustees on our Board; both are prominent preservationists in their own communities, have a wide range of activities and are well known outside their communities.

Jane Foster Carter (Colusa) has been instrumental in building interest in historic preservation and establishing a preservation program in the North Sacramento Valley town of Colusa. And her good work shows; Colusa is a wonderful place well documented in her fine book *If the Walls Could Talk - Colusa's Architectural Heritage.*

A Stanford and NYU graduate, Jane served as chairman of the Heritage Preservation Commission (1977-83), led the effort to save Colusa Union High School Auditorium (now restored and operated by the Colusa Theatre Foundation), was project coordinator for the SHPO-funded architectural survey of Colusa and literally — and very well — wrote the book about Colusa. She has been a member of the California State Republican Central Committee since 1977, has served on the California Historical Society Board since 1979, and was appointed by the governor to the State Reclamation Board in 1983.

Jane is a veteran preservationist with long community service as a volunteer and should be a strong Board addition; she is the first Trustee from the North Sacramento Valley.

Marion Mitchell-Wilson (Riverside) is the new Historic Preservation Program Manager for the City of Riverside, a position she took after more than ten years with the State Office of Historic Preservation in Sacramento, seven as Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer.

Marion was known to most preservationists as the Grants Coordinator and Bond Act Manager at OHP, the one with the funds. But she also proved to be a strong preservation advocate and a key player who contributed heavily to the success of the California Heritage Task Force. While in Sacramento Marion served on the Mayor's Downtown Action Committee, Executive Committee of Sacramento Heritage and chaired the Annual State Preservation Conference from 1980-84 as a member of the CPF Board.

In addition to her new duties with the Riverside Redevelopment Agency, Marion will continue as Adjunct Assistant Professor in Historic Resource Management at UCR. Marion has demonstrated her dedication to preservation in California for fifteen consecutive years and brings her solid reputation for strength and effectiveness to CPFs' Board once more. Welcome back!

Jane Carter and Marion Mitchell-Wilson were appointed to fill vacancies by President Christy McAvoy after a thorough search and with the approval of the full board. Sharon Marovich, Nominations Committee Chair, invites you to submit your ideas, now, for board candidates to be elected by the membership at the Annual Meeting held in conjunction with the State Conference this April, in San Francisco.
1990 CONFERENCE - SAN FRANCISCO

The Annual State Preservation Conference - the 15th - looms on the horizon and the prominent landmarks of San Francisco's familiar skyline beckon. See you at the Conference in April, and plan on coming early for the special "Earthquake and Disaster Preparedness Workshop" scheduled for Wednesday, April 25.

What can you expect from this year's extravaganza...will it top the 1989 offering at the Biltmore in L.A.? We think the 1990 San Francisco Conference will deliver more information, information critical to your success, and we have no doubt the splendor of venues for meetings and events will match last year. The Conference registration brochure is in preparation for a March 4 mailing but we can reveal some key elements of the program now to whet your appetite:

WEDNESDAY, April 25 - One-day "Disaster Preparedness Workshop" (Cosponsored by the California Main Street Program, State Department of Commerce, and the National Trust Western Regional Office), a workshop which will tell you what we learned about state and local earthquake response, how you can be better prepared for the next quake and take more effective action when it hits.

THURSDAY, April 26 - The State Historical Resources Commission and State Historical Building Code Board both meet. Two workshops involving the staff of the Office of Historic Preservation and National Park Service are also planned. In the morning the "Context" question on State Inventory and National Register forms will be the focus and, following lunch, the second workshop will deal with knotty interpretation questions related to the Secretary's Standards and the Tax Act Certification process; both workshops are intended to be, mainly, for city preservation staff, historic preservation consultants, architects and design review board members - the typical "users" of the forms and process - but any and every individual interested in the "rules of the game" in the Tax Act or National Register programs will benefit from these workshops.

The Conference officially begins Thursday evening with the Opening Reception at the magnificent "City Club".

FRIDAY, April 27 - Conference sessions begin with the "Issues Forum" and day-long tracks treating the architectural traditions and history of San Francisco and the Bay Area, housing, environmental protection and growth management, and, in addition, incentives and financing. The traditional, usually riotous "Three-Minute Success Stories" follows the day with an early evening presentation in the theatre of the Sheehan Hotel (designed by Julia Morgan).

SATURDAY, April 28 - A full day of workshops - more on housing, an imaginative day-long track for teachers being organized by Judith Lynch ("Our Houses") and David Weitzman (author of Your Backyard History Book), on CEQA, "getting legal help", and many more. The program will break for lunch and the presentation of the 1990 CPF Design Awards winners and the evening culminates with the exciting Auction and a grand dinner/dance at the exclusive Commercial Club (top of the Merchants Exchange Building), another site and event you won't want to miss.

SUNDAY, April 29 - Tours in and around San Francisco and through the greater Bay area will highlight a rich tradition of architecture, landscape and urbanism.

The 1990 CPF Preservation Conference is cosponsored by the State Office of Historic Preservation and National Trust (as has been the case for the previous 14 years), Society for California Archaeology, Association for Preservation Technology and the Art Deco Society of California. Local cosponsors this year are The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage, San Francisco Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, the Preservation committees of the East Bay and San Francisco Chapters of the A.I.A., and the Alameda Victorian Preservation Association.

Block out your calendar for April 25 through 29, 1990. In addition to a great program and some fabulous events in the evening, rooms booked at the Marines Memorial for conference-goers will be astonishingly reasonable, tours will delight and, if all else fails, San Francisco will surround you. See you there!

DONATIONS FOR CONFERENCE AUCTION

You can help make the auction — to be held at the closing dinner of the annual State Preservation Conference — a successful and fun event. Donations for the silent and live auctions are needed, including books, artwork, architectural elements and remnants, wine, holiday packages and other items of interest. The success of this important fund-raiser for CPF programs depends upon the quality and quantity of items on which to bid. If you have items you would like to donate, please call Auction Chair Linda Dishman at (415)255-2386.
Palo Alto's A.M.E. Zion Threatened

University African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church is the oldest Black church in Palo Alto and was the first Black church between San Mateo and San Jose during the early part of this century, serving as the social and cultural center for the Black community for many years. Organized in 1918, the small congregation assembled in various downtown locations. In 1922 the congregation felt the need for its own church building, but the Church Mission itself did not have the collateral to qualify for a loan. Mr. Christiansen, a wealthy Palo Alto resident and a personal friend of Trustee Isaac Hinson, agreed to make a loan to the seven Trustees, and not to the Mission Church. After a successful fund drive to raise $1,264.00 to begin construction, the cornerstone for the church was laid on April 25, 1925. The original church building still stands at 819 Ramona Street and is currently owned by the Palo Alto Medical Foundation. The cost of the original church was $6,000

Expansion of the medical facility would clear a full block of its remaining historic structures — some fine pre-World War I houses, a terrific 1920s laundry and the A.M.E. Zion church. "Professorville", the historic residential district immediately south of the proposed project would also be impacted.

Anne Gray, a member of the congregation, raised the demolition issue and has made the case for the church, a modest but highly-significant building. At the same time Ken Alsman and Linda Scott led "Professorville" neighbors who had real concerns about the blockbuster aspects of the project. Palo Alto Stanford Heritage (PAST) has provided linkage between preservation and planning issues and the City's Historic Resources Board (HRB) is now taking a hard look at the area — the buildings of historic and architectural interest — to be affected. On January 23 the HRB recommended that the Medical Foundation work out a mutually-acceptable preservation solution with the church.

Finally, everyone is looking at a Draft E.I.R. which fails to deal with cultural and historic issues, skirts neighborhood impacts, ignores feasible alternatives, and proposes little in the way of meaningful mitigation. The draft document, a "project-justification E.I.R.", is clearly inadequate. We hope Palo Alto can do better than approve a project which appears to have been conceived in the 1970s. We can only praise A.M.E. Zion church members for shedding new light on the complexities of good, sensitive planning.

The State Conference at a Glance

Where: The Marines Memorial Club — Sutter at Mason will serve as Conference Headquarters with the Sheehan Hotel also providing meeting and event spaces.

When: Registration opens on Wednesday, April 25 at the Marines Memorial Building, 1:00 p.m.; the Opening Reception, Thursday Evening, starts at 6:00 p.m., City Club.

NOTE: The Conference will be preceded by the "Disaster Preparedness Workshop beginning on Wednesday, April 25 at 9:00 a.m. at the Marines Memorial.

I Want More Information About:

Three Minute Success Stories - groups interested in making Friday evening presentations should contact CPF, (415)763-0972, for application forms now.

Design Awards - contact Awards Chairman, Patrick McGrew at (415)981-3060 or CPF (415)763-0972.

Auction Items - contact Auction Chairman, Linda Dishman at (415)255-2386.

Cospersonal - contact Volunteers Coordinator, Vivian Kahn at (415)644-6570 (w) or 531-3805.
CREATING A PRESS KIT FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION --- Eric Stolz, APR

This is the first in what I hope will be a series of articles designed to help you use public relations more effectively in your community. If you have subjects you'd like to see covered, please write me at Pollare/Fischer Communications, 11755 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1750, Los Angeles, CA 90025

One of the biggest mistakes that grassroots organizations make in public relations is approaching the media only when there is an event or fundraiser planned. The problem with this approach is that the group — let's call it the Mockingbird Heights Heritage Society — only provides information about that evening's entertainment, prices and so forth. What is really needed for preservation to work in your community is awareness of local preservation issues, not the next fundraiser. The role of the Heritage Society should be that of an accessible expert on local preservation issues which proactively notifies local media of preservation news.

Such availability to media can become a drain if complex information must be constantly restated. Luckily, there is a way to avoid much of that: a media (or press) kit. First, keep in mind the primary rule of the media kit: make it relevant to the information needs of the media and your community. Too often, a lot of time is spent on developing a kit full of information media don't need. Instead, concentrate on issues important to your community. Don't just blow the horn for your group. Devote a separate document to each issue, rather than including many subjects in a long, rambling document. Explain important concepts with quotes. (Example: "Mockingbird Heights has a long way to go before we have an effective preservation ordinance," said Joan Doe, president of the Mockingbird Heights Heritage Society.)

What you might want to include in a media kit (make each no more than three double-spaced pages):

* Fact Sheet. A one-page summary of important organizational facts, the who, what, when, where, why and how with a line devoted to each answer.

* Major Historic Landmarks in Mockingbird Heights. A brief list with a paragraph description of each.

* Current Status of Preservation Law in Mockingbird Heights. How your town's guidelines or laws work, and how they stack up against other cities.

* Mockingbird Heights Success Stories. Successful projects undertaken by your organization in the past few years to acquaint the reader with the group's work.

* Preservation Is Good Business. The various ways in which historic preservation has proven to be a sound, profitable business decision.

* Historic Preservation: a Growing Trend In California and Mockingbird Heights. Examples to show how the concept of historic preservation is increasingly accepted throughout the state and in your community — get examples from back issues of the CPF newsletter.

* A Brief History of Mockingbird Heights. Prove your group is the expert in community history with a brief, two-page summary of the town's history that editors can use as background material. You can find a lot of this at the library.

* A List of Endangered Landmarks. A brief description of each and note the nature of the danger.

* Photographs. Your newspaper is more likely to do a larger story if you can provide them with photographs and they can include a picture of a noted local landmark as an example of what you are trying to save, a picture of a building that was lost, a historic photograph of your city's downtown, a detail shot of ornamentation on a local landmark.

To actually write the various pieces, seek a volunteer from your local paper, a journalism teacher or someone else in your organization acquainted with newswriting. If you can't find one, carefully analyze the writing style of your local paper. Notice how each story is summarized in the opening paragraph, and make sure that your stories do the same.

Combine everything in a nice folder (remember, this now represents your organization). You may want to mail the first batch to some local newspapers (city and/or feature editors) and radio stations. By calling after they've had a chance to review them, you may be able to set meetings for background sessions. Find out who writes the editorials, and send the kit along with a letter requesting an editorial meeting.

Remember that you are selling preservation and your town's history, not just your organization; that will come naturally once people understand preservation and accept it. By making sure that your media kit is complete and has the work invested at the beginning, you will find it much easier to deal with media once they have all the facts at their fingertips.

Beware the biggest pitfall of a media kit: sitting on it like a precious treasure. It's only valuable once it's outside your office and in a media representative's hands.
Los Angeles - In our last issue we reported that the L.A. Conservancy had filed suit to prevent the L.A. Unified School District from demolishing the historic Ambassador Hotel on Wilshire. An EIR was certified with no study of reuse potential. And now, yes, Donald Trump is "the developer" and has plans for, of course, the biggest building in the world on the site. Trump was quoted in the L.A. Times to say that reuse of the old hotel is not likely, but he may create a new Coconut Grove in his project. L.A. Conservancy attorneys are not impressed; dare we ask what Ambassador Duke's role may be in this continuing saga?

San Francisco - The Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board has challenged a Redevelopment Agency threat to demolish the historic Bulkhead Building at Pier 42. The Agency wants the pierhead cleared, claiming the Bay Conservation and Development Commission has determined the site should be open space, even though the 1907 building is National Register quality. Moving the building to another site — away from the waterfront — has been proposed but that alternative, a non-historic context, makes no sense at all. Since the Army Corps of Engineers is involved as a Federal permitting agency, the SHPO has commented and supports preservation on site. An Advisory Council on Historic Preservation hearing under Section 106 is possible but the pierhead building, belongs, obviously, at the head of a pier.

The California State Office of Historic Preservation has revised the standard historic resources survey State Inventory Form (DPR-523). Changes are substantial and you should request the new form and the instructions immediately, before doing even one more of the outdated form. Direct your request to Don Napoli, Survey Coordinator, OHP, P.O. Box 942896, Sacramento, CA 94296-0001.

The current front-runner for "concept most people are unclear on" is context, which figures heavily in the revised survey form. Anyone doing survey work or National Register nominations should plan on attending the special pre-State Conference session on "Context" to be led by OHP staff. This workshop will take place at the Marines Memorial Building in San Francisco on Thursday, April 26, from 9:00 am to 12 noon. Fee for this focus workshop is $25.00.

We are pleased to report that four national preservation organizations have joined the chorus against the completion of Route 710, the 6.2 mile Long Beach Freeway section which would devastate portions of El Sereno, South Pasadena and Pasadena. In a December 20, 1989 letter to Thomas Larson of the Federal Highway Administration, Preservation Action (Nellie Longsworth), the National Parks and Conservation Association (Bruce Craig), National Alliance of Statewide Preservation Organizations (Alan Schwartz), and National Alliance of Preservation Commissions (Bernard Callan) blasted the idea of the freeway, noting many prudent and feasible alternatives exist.

The Preservation Law Reporter and PLR Advances are invaluable to those who need to stay on top of legal currents. The National Trust is now offering subscriptions at a reduced rate of $90 per year ($50 for FORUM members), and it's well worth it. Write the Trust Legal Department, or call Julia Miller, PLR Editor, at (202)673-4000. Affordable Housing in Older Neighborhoods: Multiple Strategies, an extensive notebook of resource materials, case studies, a guide to helpful organizations and bibliography looks good. Available for $15.00 from the National Trust, 1785 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20036.

Congratulations to our own Bill Sugaya, now Vice President of the San Francisco Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, with old friend, CPF member and preservation architect Alice Carey the new President.

Redlands -- The Historic and Scenic Preservation Commission has published the handy, well-designed and well-written "A Walking Tour of Historic Downtown Redlands". Full of fine drawings and interesting details, the pamphlet is a model for other cities. Available for $2.00 (which includes postage). Write City of Redlands, 30 Cajon Street (P.O. Box 2090), Redlands, CA 92373.

PROJECTS FOR CPF DESIGN AWARDS SOUGHT

The Foundation’s 8th Annual Historic Preservation Design Awards Competition will be held in conjunction with the 15th Annual Statewide Historic Preservation Conference, April 25-29 in San Francisco. Eligible projects must be located in or deal with a California subject. Reward categories include Restoration, Rehabilitation, Adaptive Re-Use, and Preservation/Stabilization. Others are Cultural Resources Studies and Reports and Craftsmanship. For additional information or to request a submission packet, please telephone Chairman Patrick McGrew 415/981-3060, or the CPF office, 415/763-0972. The deadline for submittals is 5 p.m., Friday, March 30.
HELP BUILD CALIFORNIA'S PRESERVATION ETHIC

The California Preservation Foundation began its work in 1975 and with your support we can build on our record of preservation success in the 1990s. A private, nonprofit organization, CPF looks to local organizations and individuals like yourself --- and the programs created to increase your knowledge and capabilities --- to raise the funds which allows us to continue our work. CPF board members are active in local preservation work - we know what your needs are! Help us help you as WE WORK TO IMPROVE THE CLIMATE FOR PRESERVATION IN CALIFORNIA.

IF YOU'RE NOT A MEMBER - - YOU SHOULD BE

Send the coupon below with your tax-deductible membership contribution to the California Preservation Foundation, 1615 Broadway, Suite 705, Oakland, CA 94612.

Look closely at "the brick", forced out by the earthquake and dangling, now, for 3 months near the top of the Santa Cruz Trust Building.