The Heritage Spring Lecture Series is set for April and May and is titled "The Pacific Slope."

Heritage's previous six groups of slide lectures have concentrated on the architecture of the Bay Area, present and past, and to some extent that of California. This spring, however, we are casting a wider net. The term "Pacific Slope" was the common nineteenth century term for the West Coast of the continent, and as language often does, threw essential light on the matter: to anyone east of the Continental Divide, the West was so remote and different, it even tilted another way!

What does remoteness do to one? To some, it certainly creates a sense that nobody is watching, that old rules can be cast out. Perhaps it generates a feeling of indolence and wandering... that nothing matters; but people who feel this way probably do not build. To others, there seems to be a need to clutch at the available traditions, as when the mission fathers stretched Spain's umbilical yet another 2,000 miles, from Mexico to Sonoma, or San Francisco drew its preachers from Braintree and its building forms from Europe.

The industrial devices which enable a fast food outlet to look, feel and taste the same from Maine to Baja have blended the culture. A series of only six lectures cannot be comprehensive, but in them we hope to address the questions which should be asked about the entire Pacific Slope. What is different about the West? Do we look for a uniqueness which is not there?

Our desire is to present the first lecture as an overview of the region; then to look at specific locales. See Coming Events on p. 6. Lecture Series flyers will be mailed in mid-March.

FITZHUGH ON NATIONAL REGISTER!

The Fitzhugh Building at 384 Post was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on January 20, 1976, in spite of efforts by Saks Fifth Avenue to prevent the listing. The National Register recognition of the Fitzhugh's architectural significance is important, but provides no special protection. Heritage initiated the National Register nomination on April 10, 1975.

The SF Landmarks Board held hearings in Dec. 1975 on the question of designating the Fitzhugh as a City Landmark. The designation was turned down 4-3, based on the feeling that Saks' development plans were too far along to designate, in spite of the fact that a majority of Board members felt that the building merited Landmark status.

Saks' efforts toward demolition of the Fitzhugh and replacement with a new store continue as they prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The EIR includes Heritage's retention proposal.
BOOK REVIEW

Above San Francisco Vol. II

It is said that no American cityscape is as well documented as San Francisco's. From the 1840's on, there has been an obsession at least once done bird's-eye-view for every few years until about the turn-of-the-century. After that, photography dominated and photographic panoramas of the picturesque city have popped up regularly since then.

Robert Cameron's Above San Francisco, Vol. II: A new collection of nostalgic and contemporary aerial photographs of the Bay Area, is far more ambitious, interesting and successful than Volume I. In Volume II, Cameron has gone beyond conventional pretty color pictures and made a more rounded catalog of what is here. The scope, temporal depth and variety of Cameron's vision have all matured.

Mr. Cameron opens the book with an astonishingly clean photograph of Marin and the SF peninsula taken from a U-2 on infrared film. It is a revelatory opening to a revelatory book.

There are two other U-2 sequences (four plates) further on. One pair shows the late afternoon fog entering the Golden Gate -- looking straight down from 65,000 feet! The other U-2 shots are oblique views of the Bay-Delta region looking all the way to the snow-capped Sierras. Truly, the space/defense budget has wrought wonders in contemporary photography.

The bulk of the 149 plates are aerial photos by Cameron, artfully arranged in six sections: San Francisco, SF Bay, High Above SF, South Bay, Alameda-Contra Costa and Napa-Marin-Sonoma.

The San Francisco section opens with a side-by-side comparison of views from the top of Nob Hill made in 1877 by Eadweard Muybridge with pictures taken from similar vantage points 98 years later. Next, are two archetypal SF photos: a panorama of the burned-out city in 1906 and a panorama of the substantially rebuilt city three years later. The historical photos close with a colored-in photo of the 1915 Exposition by Gabriel Moulin.

Most of the pictures were taken from a helicopter, from about 60 to 10,000 feet at oblique angles. Many of the most beautiful were taken during the "golden light" before sunset.

There is no night photography. There is no picture of the Bay Area's most ominous new reality: air pollution. There are few pictures of the fog and its unearthly effects.

The particular altitude and angle from which Mr. Cameron photographed San Francisco reveals certain features while obscuring others. The sections on San Francisco such as Polk, Union, Mission, Castro and Clement -- which we are accustomed to be vastly different places -- all tend to look the same. On the other hand, the particular altitude and angle Cameron favors tends to highlight an essential feature of much of San Francisco: the greenery tucked away in the heart of so many residences. The plate on p. 45 of Cow Hollow, with each of the densely walled-in blocks over-flowing with greenery, should be used as a standard against which to judge any other proposed density and arrangement of urban housing. This one picture reveals the best San Francisco has achieved in human accommodation.

The second section, on the Bay, has a picture of the mighty Coral Sea returning rusty and imperial from eight months in the South Pacific. Mr. Cameron has a sharp eye for military hardware: aircraft carriers, the incredible structures at Moffet Field, and the structure housing Howard Hughes' secret barge.

The third section, High Above San Francisco, has a real aerial treat: a balloon race of multi-colored, silky balloons. It is a whimsical sequence with the beautiful balloons floating away like seeds before the wind. The viewer feels himself floating up and away.

The High Above section contains the best single picture in the book, a Skylab satellite photo of the entire Bay-Delta region from 4,270 miles up! This stunning vista of blue, green and white lays before us a region with densely built-up areas held in by a "natural" greenbelt of parks and watersheds on the high ground. (The tools available for man's understanding and husbanding of his planet have reached incredible levels of beauty and comprehension.)

The many views of new development are among the most important photos in the book, though one is unlikely to think them beautiful. These pictures, however, testify to the seriousness and value of the book. Mr. Cameron attempts to show what is really here. Another revealing picture, on p. 122, shows sleek BART trains gliding over a devastated Victorian neighborhood in West Oakland. Progress and poverty is an old California theme. Mr. Cameron's eye for human activity in the competing development and existing development of the cultivated fields along Half Moon Bay reminds us that we are still paving over agricultural land while we simultaneously ravage already built-up areas.

The Alameda-Contra Costa section stresses industry and transportation. The massive impact of the car on an area is shown in two pictures of Oakland. The plate on p. 119 shows Oakland as one imagines architects' renderings prefer to present it: the green band of park land around Lake Merritt with a grid of freeways, enormous parking lots and many low buildings all spread out. Here is the quintessence of the post-automotive city form. Anyone who has had the off-beat notion of walking extensively in "downtown Walnut Creek," as it is called, knows what the deadening results are.

Not only does the content of the pictures show a sharp eye, their sometimes piquant pairing makes statements too. Towards the end, a gravel quarry and Sears' Point Raceway are coupled! That is followed by the concluding group of pictures, the Napa wine country. These lovely views of well-tended vineyards and their distinctive clusters of buildings save the best visual wine for last.

The book design tends to get carried away with its "clean" look at the cost of vital material: no technical information, notes or index are provided for the color printing, done in Japan, is superb. The price ($20) is a very fair one. It is carried in the Heritage bookshop, where members get a 20% discount.

Randolph Delehanty

THANKS

Special thanks to Honorary Members for their long-term service to Heritage. Thanks, too, to Paul Bashara, Michael Buck, Harold Clay-David Corsi, Tricia Coxhead, Lynn Davis, V. Demartini, Paulette Friedman, Giuamara Classic Wines, Alice Gosak, Debbie Hamilton, Sally Hornstein, Suesan Hornstein, Judy Johnson, Linda Liebelt, Joan Meehan, Mel Meyer, Catherine Myers, Jane Piereth, Richard Rothman, Gilda Schine and the Chartered Bank of London.
WEBSTER STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT CONSIDERED

Composite of the east side of the 2200 block of Webster Street

Creation of San Francisco's first residential historic district is underway. The San Francisco Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board has declared its intent to designate the Webster Street Historic District. Were it not for the tremendous amount of research and organizing done by Mrs. Arthur Bloomfield, a Webster Street owner/resident, the Webster Street District would yet be an idea. The Landmarks Board's 1½ staff persons simply could not have documented the 25 Webster Street structures along with their regular work. During the past eight years, 80 landmarks and one commercial historic district, Jackson Square, have been documented and designated.

HISTORIC DISTRICTS MAXIMIZE PROTECTION

Historic districts and individual landmarks are designated under Article 10 of the City Planning Code, which requires documentation of individual structures and description of the features that give districts cohesiveness. To protect landmarks, demolition can be prevented up to one year and the Landmarks Board can control proposed exterior changes which require building permits. For historic districts, the controls are broader. The Board can also review signs, landscaping, and color as specified in that district's ordinance. Additionally, new construction within the district must be compatible. Thus, historic district designation provides much more protection to the structures within it than does building-by-building designation.

WEBSTER STREET HISTORIC DISTRICT FEATURES

The district currently includes the west side of the 2200 and 2300 blocks and a portion of the east side of the 2200 block of Webster Street and 2389, 2400 and 2405 Washington Street. The district's characteristics include:

OVERALL FORM AND CONTINUITY - nearly uniform height with similar cornices and similar set backs

SCALE AND PROPORTION - primarily narrow, two-story wood frame dwelling; each strongly vertical facade has a two-story high bay, a doorway and single upper window, all tall, narrow, and rectangular

PENETRATION - narrow, vertical, double-hung wood frame windows similarly placed

MATERIALS - mostly wood, with some masonry and wrought iron

DETAIL - in general, the following exist:

- Cornices - projected and bracketed
- Doors - wooden, paneled, of the period
- Main entrances - above the sidewalk and recessed, creating alcoves decorated with moldings and containing transoms

DECORATIVE FEATURES -

- Street numbers - in transom or relatively small
- Garages - under the bays and protruding no farther than front main house wall

The typical features listed above will become the standards which will be used by the Landmarks Board to control proposals for changes and/or new construction in the Webster Street Historic District. In addition, the Board is considering control over signs, awnings, street furniture and paint color. The Webster Street neighbors have been in general agreement about the need for the district, particularly because of their concerns about westward expansion of the Presbyterian Medical Center. They have been able to agree on all the ideas about controls except color.

Proposed paint review is accepted by the majority of the owners. Criteria include the following statements:

a) Innovative as well as traditional color schemes are acceptable.
b) Schemes may employ a single color or multiple colors.
c) There are no color hues which are considered categorically inappropriate. A determination will be based on quantity and relationship to other colors in the scheme and environment.

A few owners fear that these criteria allow the Landmarks Board too much power when determining the appropriateness of paint schemes on individual buildings and in relation to surrounding buildings. The Board strongly favors paint review as the only way to prevent bizarre paint colors which could damage the district's cohesiveness.

The Landmarks Board staff is currently drafting the Webster Street Historic District case report including the controls and standards discussed above. Once the documents are prepared, public hearings will be held sequentially by the Landmarks Board, the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. A majority of each body must recommend designation. Interested citizens are encouraged to attend the hearings to support the creation of San Francisco's first residential historic district.
The Sunnyside Conservatory is a usable greenhouse which could be used for family purposes or for the growing of plants that might be sold elsewhere. It stands as a reminder of the past, and which could be used for family purposes or for the appearance of two stories.

Visible from the inside, the framing system of the walls and roof is carried out in an uncomplicated manner. This simplicity is made possible by a unique pair of arched, bentwood parallel trusses which rise from the floor and appear to protected by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board from incompatible alterations. It is a one-story, frame and glass octagonal structure with added height in the center giving the appearance of a garden room' with permanent plantings enclosed "garden room" with permanent plantings in its dirt floor. It was built around the turn-of-the-century, apparently by the owners of the dwelling at 258 Monterey, formerly named Sunnyside Avenue. This early house and the Conservatory occupied seven 25-foot lots and were landscaped as a single parcel until 1953 when the house at 234 Monterey was built.

The Conservatory and the 1953 house now occupy a lot measuring 100' X 115'. As of mid-February, 1976, the parcel is for sale through the owner. The property is zoned R-3 with a 40-foot height limit.

The Conservatory is the only part of the property with Landmark designation; and as such, it is protected by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board from incompatible alterations. It is a one-story, frame and glass octagonal structure with added height in the center giving the appearance of two stories.

Visible from the inside, the framing system of the walls and roof is carried out in an uncomplicated manner. This simplicity is made possible by a unique pair of arched, bentwood parallel trusses which rise from the floor and appear to provide lateral bracing. A one-story annex abuts the Conservatory along the north wall.

The Sunnyside Conservatory is a usable greenhouse which could be used for family purposes or for the growing of plants that might be sold elsewhere. It stands as a reminder of the past, and is a unique resource for the present.

WRIGHT'S V.C. MORRIS BUILDING

Frank Lloyd Wright scattered a curious handful of buildings across the Bay Area: a few houses on the Peninsula, the Marin Civic Center (which includes a small post office, FLW's only government commission) and the jewel-like former V.C. Morris store at 140 Maiden Lane. The last was made an official City Landmark in 1975.

A curious fact that few know is that this very Wrightian space was created within the shell of a reinforced concrete structure built in 1911.

The building was born out of the happy coincidence of the client's need to display round shapes with the architect's preoccupation with the circle. The last phase of Wright's work can be seen as a period of homage to the circle. Over his long lifetime, Wright moved from the restful horizontal lines of his earliest work, then to polygons, then to the perfection of the circle. Of all his circle-inspired designs, the V.C. Morris building is probably the finest.

Today, the original impact of the store is lost since other shapes (easel paintings, then clothing) replaced the china and crystal. The building opened in 1949. It was designed to be a showcase for china and crystal wares. Wright created a festive room to suitably display a dazzling array of round, translucent, precious shapes. Passing through the low archway one entered a light, frothy world of spirals, circles, globes and reflected light. Walking up the gentle spiral ramp gave the feeling of floating in a room full of bubbles.

The facade uses a traditional material (long, flat Roman brick) and a remembered shape (the Richardsonian/Sullivanesque semi-circular doorway) in a wholly new composition. The hand of a master is evident in the smallest details. Over his long lifetime, Wright moved from the restful horizontal lines of his earliest work, then to polygons, then to the perfection of the circle. Of all his circle-inspired designs, the V.C. Morris building is probably the finest.

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UPDATES

A-2 WESTERN ADDITION: Four houses are currently available. A walk around Beideman Place near Scott and Bills reveals work in progress. Go past the Webster and feast your eyes. (Not for sale!) Combined purchase and complete rehabilitation cost of each remaining house ranges between $75,000 (2 unit) and $135,000 (4 unit).

Call Heritage.

Parapets
On Dec. 22, 1975, the Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution declaring that it is in the public interest to retain the parapets and embellishments which represent a valuable resource to the city’s architectural heritage. The resolution also directs the Bureau of Building Inspection to adopt a policy favoring retention over removal, and recommended state legislative action to place a constitutional amendment on the June ballot under which local governments might offer tax incentives to retain decorative building features. The resolution was initiated by the Parapet Task Force, in which Heritage has actively participated. Unfortunately, it appears that the chances of obtaining state legislation permitting local tax relief to encourage parapet rehabilitation are remote. Heritage continues to seek ways to mitigate the effects of the ordinance on the cityscape.

Orpheum
The Orpheum Theatre on Market at Hyde is being renovated by an LA theater management company. A report in Heritage 1974 recommends restoration to vitalize this dormant community resource. Orpheum management told Heritage that the removal work will yield a maximum of $300,000, half for a new grid system to replace the original vaudeville era counterweight system. Work also includes the removal of three concrete cinerama booths and their replacement with seating, bringing the total capacity of the Orpheum to over 2,300. The auditorium will also enjoy new carpeting and paint. More backstage space will be provided and the outdoor ticket booth will be removed. Orpheum management is quite hopeful that the theater will become the home of the S.F. Civic Light Opera beginning with their 1977 season.

ZEN SOTO — CORRECTION
The SF Redevelopment Agency informs us that the Zen Soto Mission (Nov. 1975 Newsletter) at 1881 Bush was awarded $100,000 FOR HERITAGE’S URBAN CONSERVATION FUND

HERITAGE LOAN PROGRAM

$100,000 FOR HERITAGE’S URBAN CONSERVATION FUND

APPROVED BY THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION.

APPROVAL NEEDED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS.

The funds are for a Preservation Loan Program which would enable Heritage to make or guarantee loans for the restoration and rehabilitation of structures of architectural merit and community significance where other loans are not available to the program. The design is to assist primarily low and moderate income owners, with emphasis on exterior restoration.

The proposed Preservation Loan Program would be capitalized with funds from the Federal Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (HCDA) under which preservation activities are eligible for funding. After a series of public meetings, $200,000 of San Francisco’s HCDA allotment for 1975 was set aside for the preservation of resources of special architectural, historic and cultural value, but no specific projects were identified at that time. Later meetings resulted in the consensus that the City Planning Department work in conjunction with Heritage to develop a preservation loan program.

On January 7, 1976, the Planning Commission adopted a resolution authorizing the Director of Planning to enter into a contract with Heritage to administer a Preservation Loan Program to be capitalized with $100,000 from the HCDA funds.

Details of the loan program will be available when funds are allocated by the Supervisors.

NEW MEMBERSHIPS

(Til 1-31-76)


Mrs. F. J. Hallman Mrs. & Mr. Peter S. Hockaday M. Johnston Mrs. Charles B. Kuhn Mr. & Mrs. Harvey L. Lohnstein Peter J. McCrean Herbert McLaughlin Lynn S. Melzer Stewart Morton Mr. Louis J. Newman Mrs. Walter Newman Mr. & Mrs. Charles Page Mr. & Mrs. Laurence C. Stein Robinson & Mills Madeleine Haas Russell Mr. & Mrs. Philip Schaefer Jr. Dr. Richard Schaefer (Mr. & Mrs. & Mrs. W. E. Schaefer) M. E. Thibaud Ray Thibarger M. C. Ury

HONORARY MEMBERSHIPS

(Til 1-31-76)

Netta Baker Mrs. Richard B. Small Mrs. Dan Throp Smith Jackie Sennet Cooperative Mr. & Mrs. Charles L. Snowdon Jerome J. Sutcliffe Mary-Lee Swan Ilane & Tom Szewalski Mr. & Mrs. Dwight D. Taylor M. E. Thibaud Dale Thompson Mr. & Mrs. Dan Throp Smith N. Therese Tracy Stephanie Wittington Mr. & Mrs. J. G. Turnbull E. Shaw Watson Linda W. Williams

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Netta Baker Mrs. F. J. Hallman Mrs. & Mr. Peter S. Hockaday M. Johnston Mrs. Charles B. Kuhn Mr. & Mrs. Harvey L. Lohnstein Peter J. McCrean Herbert McLaughlin Lynn S. Melzer Stewart Morton Mr. Louis J. Newman Mrs. Walter Newman Mr. & Mrs. Charles Page Mr. & Mrs. Laurence C. Stein Robinson & Mills Madeleine Haas Russell Mr. & Mrs. Philip Schaefer Jr. Mr. & Mrs. W. E. Schaefer M. E. Thibaud Ray Thibarger M. C. Ury

HONORARY MEMBERSHIPS

(Til 1-31-76)

Netta Baker Mary Cole Ken Hansen William Hunter Bruce Hard Tom Kenyon Gur Neumann Stephanie McGowan Christina Mullen Judith Patt Katie Russell Anna Schmidt Karen Schrock Helen Satterfield John Woodford

America, where have you been?

National Historic Preservation Week, May 9-15
SUPPORT TAX AMENDMENTS

Tax policy has long been pointed to as a major cause for the loss of landmark structures. Rapidly rising real estate values and home improvements, including restoration, invariably result in higher assessments and taxes. The owner of an historic structure who wants to maintain and preserve it is treated the same as any investor, and is penalized for restorations.

The Mills Bill, SB 357, passed in 1972, was the first attempt in California to provide tax incentives for the preservation of historic properties. Unfortunately, the State Board of Equalization determined that the requirement for uniform taxation effectively vetoed SB 357.

Two constitutional amendments have been proposed to address this problem. One of these, Assembly Constitutional Amendment 111, is slated to go before California voters in the June 8 general election. Titled "Tax Relief for Historic Properties," ACA 111 would exempt qualified historic properties from the requirement that they be taxed at the uniform rate:

"To promote the preservation of property of historical significance, the Legislature may define such property and shall provide that when it is enforceably restricted, in a manner specified by the Legislature, it shall be valued for property tax purposes only on a basis that is consistent with its restrictions and uses."

The second provision -- Senate Constitutional Amendment 22 -- is currently in limbo in committee. SCA 22 would authorize the legislature to provide a tax exemption over a five-year period equal to the value of improvements made up to $12,000 for owner-occupied historic buildings.

You can help. Vote for ACA 111 in the June 8 election. Talk to your friends about supporting tax relief for historic structures. To help SCA 22, which proposes tax exemption for restoration costs, write Hon. David E. Boatwright, Chairman, Assembly Revenue & Taxation Committee, State Capitol, Sacramento 95814, or your local Assembly committee member.

THE FOUNDATION FOR SAN FRANCISCO'S ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE
2007 FRANKLIN STREET • SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94109 • (415) 441-3000

COMING EVENTS

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wed.</td>
<td>Haas-Lilienthal House, Guided Tours.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1-5:30</td>
<td>1:30-4:30 Sat. &amp; Sun. $1, 50¢ Student/Sr. Citizen, Members free.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun.</td>
<td>2007 Franklin Street.</td>
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<td>Julia Morgan: Architectural Drawings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues.</td>
<td>Monthly Program: Ernest Coxhead and the Formulation of the Bay Area Tradition, by John Beach,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 16</td>
<td>instructor at UC, author**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed.</td>
<td>Lecture Series: Pacific Slope: 200 Years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr. 7</td>
<td>by Sally Woodbridge**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed.</td>
<td>Lecture Series: Climate as the Conditioner-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr. 14</td>
<td>A Canadian Interpretation by Arthur Erickson**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues.</td>
<td>Monthly Program: Earthquake Followed by Many Fires, by Father McGloin of USF**</td>
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Wed. Lecture Series: The Heavy Hand of Law and Apr. 21 Light Living, by Sym Van der Ryn**

Wed. Lecture Series: Ego in Arcadia, by Apr. 28 Charles Moore**

Wed. Lecture Series: Main Street Preservation May 5 In Small Towns, by Robertson Collins**


May 9 Historic Preservation Week (Flyer coming) 9-16 Haas-Lilienthal Open Eves; Display.

May 10 Preservation Conference. Call 989-6428.

Wed. Lecture Series: Ranch Vernacular on the Central Coast, by Jay Turnbull**

*Monthly Programs, 7:45 pm, Haas-Lilienthal ballroom, 2007 Franklin, $1, members free. See flyer.

**Heritage Lecture Series, 8 pm at 3333 Calif. (Fireman's Fund) $20 series, $15 members. Flyer coming.