Treasure Island Celebrates 50th Anniversary of Golden Gate International Exposition

 Barely a generation separated the two world’s fairs held in San Francisco in this century. Comparison of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition (1915) and the Golden Gate International Exposition (1939-1940) yields some interesting facts. Both were built on land reclaimed from shallow bay waters. Each capped and celebrated an era of construction—the one completion of the Panama Canal and recovery of San Francisco from the Earthquake and Fire, the other the building of the bridges. Each opened to the public amid the gathering clouds of war. One expressed the unbounded confidence and optimism of “the city that knows how”, the other a tenuous hope for economic recovery.

The Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE) left behind one of the city’s most beloved landmarks, the Palace of Fine Arts, intended by its architect, Bernard Maybeck, to molder away into gentile and romantic ruin. The GGIE left a much more practical legacy in a time of economic con-

IN THIS ISSUE
Preservation Notes ..........page 3
Heritage Hikes ...............page 4
Booknotes ....................page 5
Spotlight on Rehab ..........page 7

Heroic figure of a Polynesian prince is one of 16 survivors of the original 20 that surrounded the Fountain of Western Waters in the Court of Pacifica.

Rossi appointed a “Bridge Celebration Founding Committee”. The Junior Chamber of Commerce, a booster for a new airport, promoted the Yerba Buena shoals site in order to get the site filled and prepared for airport use. For 18 months, the Army Corps of Engineers dredged up 30 million cubic yards of sand and mud to create a 400-acre island, 1 1/4 miles long by 2 3/4 mile wide, connected to Yerba Buena Island by a causeway.

The panel of architects named in 1935 to design the exposition included mainstays of the San Francisco architectural establishment. George Kelham, who had been the chief architect of the PPIE, headed the group. His colleagues were Arthur Brown, Jr., who succeeded Kelham as chief when Kelham died in 1937; Lewis P. Hobart, architect of Grace Cathedral and the Bohemian Club; William G. Merchant, an associate of Maybeck; Timothy Pflueger and Ernest Weihc.

With the theme “The World of Tomorrow” preempted by the New York World’s Fair (also scheduled for 1939) and with a majority of Beaux Arts traditionalists on the architectural board, the GGIE promised little in the way of innovative design. In fact, the overall design motif, called “Pacifica” and meant to express the fair’s theme of continued on page 2
Pacific Unity, was a hybrid of ’30s Moderne and purported borrowings from Mayan, Incan, Malayan, and Cambodian architecture. The fair’s official guide noted that the architectural commission’s intention was to create “a style that will herald building design of the future...” However, coming at the tail end of the Depression and near the start of World War II, the fair’s architecture left no progeny, and by the time of renewed construction after the war, the International style held the field.

Critics expressed nearly unanimous disapproval of the fair’s architecture. Time Magazine dismissed it as “stage design, fakery.” Herb Caen described Arthur Brown’s 400-foot Tower of the Sun, the fair’s landmark, as “Egyptian style of the WPA dynasty.” However, Architect and Engineer (June 1938), in profiles of the “World’s Fair Builders” admitted, “You go to World’s Fairs to have fun,” and said that Ernest Weihe’s 14-story entrance towers, topped by cubist-inspired elephants, invite visitors to do just that “with considerable zip-tarara-boom-de-ay about it.”

In the lingering atmosphere of Depression Era escapism, the general public did like what it saw. Richard Reinhardt, in a lively and engaging recollection of his boyhood visits to the fair, Treasure Island, 1939-1940, wrote, “I never knew anyone who was grossly offended by the architectural excesses of Treasure Island... We thought they were ingenious.”

The only buildings to receive critical recognition did not conform to the eclectic Pacific Basin design theme. They were William Wurster’s Yerba Buena Club and Timothy Pflueger’s Federal Building. Of the former, the WPA guide San Francisco: The Bay and Its Cities noted that it “achieved that gay and functional quality associated with the architect’s rejection of ornament and fondness for modern materials.”

Please see TREASURE ISLAND, page 6

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**HERITAGE**

THE FOUNDATION FOR SAN FRANCISCO’S ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

San Francisco Heritage is a non-profit member-supported organization dedicated to the conservation of important architectural and historical elements and diverse neighborhoods of the City through planning, education, advocacy and technical assistance.

Heritage is located at 2007 Franklin Street, San Francisco, 94109. (415) 441-3000

The HERITAGE NEWSLETTER is published quarterly by The Foundation for San Francisco’s Architectural Heritage. Unsolicited articles and other copy are welcome and will be considered for publication.

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Presidio

The proposed vacation by the U.S. Army of San Francisco’s Presidio has once again focused attention on the large number of historically significant structures which remain there.

Continuously occupied by the U.S. Army since 1846, and earlier by Spanish and Mexican authorities, the Presidio contains structures as early as wood frame houses from the Civil War period. According to the National Park Service, a total of approximately 400 structures of historic significance exist. Additional structures from WWII and other eras, although not currently considered as important, will gain greater significance with the passage of time. The historic structures were systematically identified in a complete survey of all Presidio structures performed in 1981.

This survey and other important studies already done will help to ensure appropriate recognition and sensitive treatment for these structures should San Francisco be confronted with the need to plan new future uses for the Presidio.

433 Arguello Update

A year after Heritage and the Planning Association for the Richmond requested Planning Commission review of the proposal to demolish this structure, a public hearing was held in January. Through the effective testimony of representatives of Victorian Alliance; Save our Richmond Environment; the AIA, San Francisco Chapter; the Landmarks Board; building residents and Planning Department staff; as well as Heritage, the Commission was persuaded to deny demolition. The property owners, who sought to construct a five-unit building, allowable under the current zoning, were advised to devise a new plan which would retain the existing structure. Heritage repeated its long standing offer to assist the owners in identifying an alternative scheme which could create some additional units, while retaining the structure.

U.S. Custom House

After 80 years of standing watch, statuary above the entrance to the U.S. Custom House at 555 Battery are being repaired and restored.

Considered one of the West’s finest examples of federal architecture in the late Renaissance style, the Custom House was designed by the St. Louis firm of William S. Eames and Thomas C. Young. An earlier neo-classical Custom House was demolished to make way for the present granite structure. The ground was being prepared for construction at the time of the ‘06 Earthquake and Fire, and although the cornerstone was laid in 1907, the building was not completed until 1911, because of the labor shortage resulting from heavy demand in the post-Quake reconstruction of San Francisco.

In recent years netting has surrounded these figures to prevent pieces from falling onto the street below. Iron bars used to unite different sections of the statue have rusted, causing splitting of the stone. The iron is being replaced with stainless steel to eliminate the problem, and instead of cement mortar to hold them in place, modern epoxy products are being used. The statues will be chemically cleaned and sealed to prolong their life and attractiveness. Alpha Waterproofing, who has contracted to do the work, assures us that the statues will be ready to preside over another eighty years of San Francisco history.
Heritage Hikers Learn Something New From Something Old

"We Respect Old Houses!"

Fifth graders in San Francisco’s Western Addition recently got bitten by the Victorian house bug. They visited Heritageduring a six-session field test of a statewide architectural awareness curriculum, “Our Houses,” being produced by Alberta Furnoy, Marty Gordon, and Judith Lynch. The two-year program will help teachers inspire students at all grade levels to appreciate the history around them and become passionate advocates for older homes, from adobes to stucco tract houses.

As part of the field test, devised to evaluate teaching methods and materials in an urban elementary school, students learned to recognize Victorian architectural styles and details. The class also heard true tales of Victorian San Francisco, taken from the 1880s memoirs of Nellie McGraw Hedgpeath and interpreted by storyteller Ruth Stotter, costumed in a long-busted dress. Then as a homework assignment, students interviewed older family members to elicit their own stories. Quincy Bailey discovered that his grandmother, Frances Jefferson, was born in 1912 in Mississippi, “She worked for 50 cents a day and picked corn and peas and pumpkins. Times were hard.”

The Heritage Hike, which included a tour of the Haas-Lilienthal House, was a highlight for the class. The tour was given by Furnoy, a longtime Heritage volunteer, and Gordon, a member of the board of directors since 1982 and the originator of the Hikes program. After the walk and the house visit, Michael Underwood wrote that “Victorian houses need respect and caring for.” He also found the house “big and very beautiful for a house that old.” After his visit, Joseph Wheeler wrote, “I think old houses are wonderful, and we should not tear them down.” Shar-mayne Roberts wrote, “The Haas-Lilienthal House can tell you lots of things about the past.”

Each student did a final project. Union Banouvong (named after the United States by grateful immigrant parents) devised a time capsule for his “friend in the year 2088,” to tell people in the future of things which may be extinct by then: “paper, pencils, cars, roads, skateboards, plastic, water, dirt...” Tonyia Pryor wrote a “newel post letter,” to be deposited in a mythical staircase and opened by future house owners, “I want you to know this house was loved...If you knock down this house, years of great memories will be gone.”

Marisa Brown “interviewed” a Victorian, “the most beautiful house on this continent.” When it confided, “Some-times I get lonely,” Marisa suggested the house appear on television, because “You would be a star and have lots of people to talk to.” Several students sent letters to San Francisco Mayor Art Agnos, including Frances Lopez, “It would be a big help if old houses should not be torn down....Old houses are very special to me.”

Student evaluations show that the effect of the “Our Houses” program was significant. Many now understand more about historic preservation, “I never even noticed old houses before, and now I think they should be saved.” They added a new dimension to their views of older people: “I liked interviewing my grandmother, because I learned something about her life.” They increased their visual acuity by learning to recognize specific details in a mass of millwork, and they began to perceive their own place in the context of history by pondering life in San Francisco a century ago. Their final projects also showed they strengthened other skills, including drawing, composition, and the ability to speak in public, “It helped me not to be shy as much.”

Many of the projects were displayed at the 13th Annual State Historic Preservation Conference, where Furnoy, Gordon, and Lynch presented “Awakening Delight,” a workshop on teaching young students about architecture and preservation. Several of the students from the field test and their teacher, Julia Gibson, attended, to show slides and talk about their work.

Each student received a beribboned and gold embossed certificate illustrated with the “Order of the Eye.” As Gordon said, “We really stress learning to look in ‘Our Houses.’ These students are learning to see with discrimination and creativity. You can’t value what you don’t see, and our curriculum will help California students make the previously unnoticed visible and meaningful.”

JUDITH LYNCH writes, teaches and produces video about San Francisco architecture.

Photograph by Tamara Rey Patri.
The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage

1988 ANNUAL REPORT

A Message from the President of Heritage's Board of Directors

The intention of this 1988 Annual Report is to provide Heritage members and Bay Area residents with information about the organization's scope and activities. In addition I hope this publication also illustrates our commitment to effectively serve our constituencies, beginning with the goal to increase Heritage's communication.

Our first commitment—as always—will be to maintain our vigilance in protecting San Francisco's historic architectural resources. This is the basic mission of Heritage, and the common thread of all of our programs—existing and new.

To this end we will maintain our review of all San Francisco demolition permits, as well as all plans and proposals affecting historic resources, districts and landmarks. We will continue to participate in the drafting of and lobbying for a stronger landmarks law (Article 10).

An essential element of our conservation efforts will be to expand the base data of San Francisco's architectural archives. As we continue to promote the designation of new landmarks and new historic districts, we will depend on new and expanded surveys and a detailing of the City's neighborhoods.

Heritage's surveys in the late 1970s and subsequent publication of "Splendid Survivors" had a tremendous impact on the planning and preservation of San Francisco's Financial District. Subsequent Heritage surveys have expanded this database to the South of Market and Downtown. It is now time to turn our efforts to the residential neighborhoods particularly those with a strong historic fabric which are receiving the greatest pressure for demolition and development.

In 1989 we will proceed with neighborhood surveys, beginning with the Inner Richmond. As we progress, we will develop a format for a computerized database to make this ambitious program as efficient and accessible as possible.

A new event for 1989 will be the Heritage Architectural Awards Program which will honor San Francisco's outstanding recent achievements in restoration and compatible architectural design. We are in the early phases of creating this program to acknowledge those architects, developers, craftsmen and advocates whose work has been creative, inspiring and sensitive to preservation issues. The plans include assembling a panel of noted jurors. We will be requesting applications in late spring and the awards presentation program is currently scheduled for the fall of 1989.

Our home base is the landmark Haas-Lilienthal House - which we are committed to maintain for public enjoyment, education and usage. In 1988 we made progress on major repairs to the House. In 1989 we will recommend a financial plan for the life-long repair and restoration of the Haas-Lilienthal House. We will also establish a philosophical direction for its future use as a house for Heritage, a center for architectural preservation in the City, and a living museum of its time. As a program for managing this ongoing task is developed, we will be back in communication.

I appreciate your past support and participation in Heritage's effort to maintain San Francisco's architectural legacy. Your contribution is a gift given to many; City and Bay Area residents alike share this environment, while tourists enjoy and are inspired by San Francisco's beauty. San Francisco's architectural heritage is an important contribution to many and your participation will be appreciated by generations to come.

Peter Hockaday

1988 ANNUAL REPORT
1988: The Year in Review

It is a pleasure to have this opportunity to share a review of the efforts which your membership dues and other contributions supported during 1988.

As you know, Heritage is the only organization in San Francisco outside of city government which has permanent staff to advocate for conservation of this city's extraordinary architectural character. For this reason demands upon our resources are great. This annual report outlines the most significant of our program areas and activities. But first let me touch on a few highlights from the past year.

Conservation

Throughout the year, Heritage maintained its review of all demolition permit applications filed in San Francisco. This work has enabled us to prevent the loss of valuable neighborhood buildings, such as 433 Arguello, which contribute to the character of San Francisco's residential districts. In some of those cases, like that of 1340 Vallejo, we have given the property owner a new vision of possible alternatives. In our actions to formally oppose these applications, provisions of Proposition M have been very helpful in establishing the legal basis to deny permits.

Heritage only opposes demolitions of buildings of demonstrable architectural or historical importance. As a result of our careful analysis, Heritage's evaluations have gained new respect from builders organizations who have now begun to consult us before purchasing older properties.

Through our Issues Committee, Heritage negotiated with numerous project sponsors for more respectful treatment of significant major downtown structures proposed for rehabilitation or adaptive reuse. As a result of our early and detailed review, important features of such structures as the Metropolitan Life/Cogswell College Building and the Sheraton Palace Hotel have been saved for future generations.

During 1988, we also continued to take a very active role in the ongoing meetings to develop comprehensive improvements to the landmarks ordinance; and we worked closely with City Planning to gain greater protections for larger numbers of significant buildings in plans devised for areas such as Van Ness Avenue and South of Market. Perhaps most importantly, we began to create the basis for a multi-year program of systematic neighborhood surveys, the first of which will focus on the Inner Richmond. Finally we continued our tradition of lending technical expertise to the efforts of individuals, and organizations throughout the city who—like Mission Presbyterian Church—sought our help.

Education

Throughout the year, Heritage offered a number of public informational programs in which I hope you were able to participate. In addition we also trained a new class of house tour docents and continued regularly scheduled guided architectural walks, as well as others available by special appointment. In February, we sponsored a look at the fragile architectural character of Chinatown. During the spring and summer we repeated our programs on the Haight and Richmond Neighborhoods. In late summer in cooperation with the Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association we researched the area's history and offered a well received look at its rich Victorian architecture.

In the fall we also repeated the highly popular lecture series "Building the City" tracing the growth of San Francisco and the evolution of its architectural styles. Finally, in December, members were able to see preservation at work in half a dozen important large homes now in use as Bed and Breakfast Inns.

Stewardship

During 1988, Heritage undertook several important projects on its historic Haas Lilienthal House. A natural underground stream had, over the hundred year life of the building, contributed to moisture related deterioration of a portion of the basement floor. A generous grant from the Herbst Foundation enabled us to correct the costly problem and to partially restore several historic service rooms.

This project was the first of several which we have identified as needed during the next few years to properly care for the house. In identifying long-term maintenance and improvement needs, we determined that a major fundraising effort is needed, and planning for it was begun.

Our other stewardship responsibility is represented by the over 80 facade easements we hold on buildings throughout the City, granted to us by donors with the foresight to recognize how vulnerable these structures would have been to demolition or damaging alterations over time.
Heritage is the legal guardian of the buildings’ architectural character which contributes greatly to the beauty and warmth of the neighborhoods in which they are located. Several times during the year we reviewed and guided current owners of the structures by providing major assistance with technical information and design recommendations which protect the important features of the structures while allowing for reasonable change. In addition we reviewed several new donations covering important residential properties listed on the National Register.

Organizational Development

During the year we also made important progress to strengthen the organization in order to increase and make more efficient the services we provide. Without such changes we cannot be certain that Heritage will continue to be a strong, effective advocate into the 21st century, a time when threats to the City’s fabric will be greater than they are today.

Among the most important advances of 1988 were the completion of the transfer of our membership service system to computer, further improvements to your quarterly newsletter, and the filling of important staff vacancies with well qualified and dedicated individuals. Finally, as you know, because our other income is not sufficient to maintain the services Heritage is called upon to provide, we hold additional fundraising events each year. In 1988 we staged a very successful auction of architectural artifacts “ArchiTreasures.” This enabled us to proceed with a plan to restructure the calendar for our traditional fall Soirée.

In the space of this letter it is impossible to touch upon all of the many and varied activities which Heritage carried out on your behalf during 1988, but I hope that these comments convey a sense of their breadth. The beloved urban character and the rich architectural fabric of San Francisco is so extensive that we may take it for granted. To do so, however, risks the irretrievable loss of the incomparable gift which it makes to our lives. It is not single individual landmarks as much as the cohesive whole which can be lost through our inattention. Heritage is here to remind us all, newcomer and resident, that its fragile beauty is our collective responsibility. My thanks to you, to our docents, walks guides, and other volunteers for their help in 1988.

Mark Ryser
Executive Director

Visitors discovering the rich detail of the dining room as docent Florence Fish guides a group through the Haas-Lilienthal House.

Education

Believing that a public appreciation for the built environment and an understanding of the value of preserving the city’s significant architecture is key, Heritage has established an education program sponsoring architectural walking tours, Haas-Lilienthal House tours, Heritage Hikes, lectures and special events.

By providing educational opportunities, Heritage has helped to bring about greater recognition of the importance of conserving the city’s unique architectural heritage among the community-at-large, the business sector and government leaders. We intend to have Heritage’s programs provide a means for discovering San Francisco, its history and its architecture, and we also intend these programs to serve as a catalyst for civic discussion of important issues. The Neighborhood Walking Tours in particular have served as a vehicle for expanding awareness and knowledge about specific areas and the possible threats.

Heritage provides a tremendous resource to the city through its architectural history library. We plan to gradually expand the archives and building files to include all of San Francisco and to create a complete reference library on the city’s architecture.

Jean Kortum
President, Landmarks Board

"Heritage's most significant contribution to San Francisco has been to institutionalize preservation planning and encourage the city to integrate it into the planning process. Heritage, the Victorian Alliance, and other preservation groups can take a lot of credit for this change."

Virginia Campau
Heritage Volunteer

"I felt very badly when the Fox Theater was torn down. That's why I became associated with Heritage. That was seven or eight years ago. I began volunteering even before I became a member and have been a volunteer ever since. What I get out of volunteering is well worth it. The people are wonderful, and I believe very strongly in what the organization is trying to do."

Patrick McGrew
Architect

"It's not for any one event or effort that Heritage stands out, but for the organization's consistency over time. There are a lot of people who turn out for one event or one crisis. Heritage, however, shows up all the time."

Philip Choy
Architect

"One of the most important things Heritage does is document the history of San Francisco's buildings, especially those important historic structures that might otherwise go unnoticed. If I had one wish for the organization, it would be for a larger library."

1988 ANNUAL REPORT
Heritage believes that serving as the professional spokesman for the thousands of Bay Area residents who appreciate the architecture and historic urban character of this city is an important part of its responsibility. The organization intends to play a major role in identifying and raising public awareness on new and developing preservation issues. An aspect of this responsibility includes regularly addressing city boards and commissions on complex legal issues involving design and architectural issues. Heritage also takes a major role in encouraging the development of public policies which will make architectural conservation an integral part of planning and development processes in San Francisco.

On a case-by-case approach, Heritage will continue to monitor the demolition permit requests, as well as the implementation of newly adopted policies which seek to ensure protection and conservation of significant buildings and districts.

Neighborhood Surveys

As part of Heritage’s advocacy work, we are continuing our efforts to develop architectural surveys of the city. The Downtown Survey completed in the late 70s and subsequently published as “Splendid Survivors”, made a huge impact on the preservation aspect of the Downtown Plan providing city planners with a data base of information upon which to structure the planning policies. Heritage is now looking to the city’s neighborhoods as the place where development pressures are most threatening and the least amount of information currently exists.

The planning for the neighborhood surveys includes: refining the methodology for residential districts, training a volunteer force and developing a computer database that will make the information as accessible as possible. The first district to be surveyed will be the eastern portion of the Inner Richmond.

Newsletter

The quarterly Newsletter published by Heritage is the organization’s major communications effort to expand the awareness of San Francisco’s architectural treasures. Through publishing new research on San Francisco’s built environment and informing the public of topical preservation issues, Heritage hopes to promote an awareness of the city’s architectural legacy and the importance of protecting the urban character, as it impacts the quality of life in San Francisco.

Architectural Services

Heritage offers as part of its complement of programs, specialized architectural services. By providing architectural consultant and design services for historic restoration and rehabilitation projects, technical information on preservation and restoration techniques and contractor referrals, Heritage has been a major resource for those involved in “hands-on” projects. Through City loan programs, the Architectural Services office also provides the technical services necessary to rehabilitate older buildings as housing for low and moderate income residents.

Advocacy

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Preservation Loan Program

Heritage’ commitment to support the preservation of San Francisco’s architectural fabric is again demonstrated through its oversight of the Preservation Loan Program. Established in 1978, this $300,000 revolving loan program provides funds to guarantee low-interest home improvement loans to low-to-moderate income home owners of significant or historic buildings. These loans have primarily funded exterior restoration work, but the program also addresses the need to provide for the extended life of a structure.

As these loans have been repaid, funds are recycled back into the program and capital is again made available for additional loan guarantees. Five of the nineteen loans made to date have been completely repaid.

Rehab work on this fine example of an 1890s Queen Anne rowhouse near the Panhandle at 427-29 Central Avenue was financed through the Preservation Loan Program and included replacement of the front stairs and the roof, upgrading the electrical system, and exterior painting.

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Façade Easement Program

In 1974 Heritage accepted its first preservation easement, and since that time, it has accepted donations of over 80 easements, creating the largest preservation easement program in the West.

A preservation easement is a legal instrument for ensuring the protection of architecturally or historically significant structures by limiting the future owner's right to demolish the building or make destructive alterations. An easement conveys to a second party a partial interest or right in a property which places restrictions on the owner's use of the property.

Heritage accepts easements over residential and commercial buildings. Properties listed on the National Register qualify for substantial tax benefits.


Support for Heritage continued at a high level in 1988, with over 50% of our revenue coming directly from public sources in the form of membership dues, contributions and grants. Thirty-four percent of 1988's revenues was derived from dividends, interest and income from House-related activities, while 10% was earned through the education programs and tours.

The cost of conducting Heritage's programs held the line in 1988 when compared with the prior year. Savings in salaries and benefits were achieved, while increasing costs of insurance, printing and other services slightly offset those savings.

The major difference in 1988's income picture from prior years is the absence of our fundraising event, Soirée. It was decided that it would beneficially impact Heritage's cash flow if Soirée was moved to a spring date. The addition of a new fundraising program, ArchiTreasures, to 1988's schedule made this proposed change possible. The Soirée is currently scheduled for late spring 1989, when Heritage has in prior years experienced a seasonal shortfall of revenues. We anticipate that this new date will eliminate this annual occurrence.

1989's revenue is budgeted for $427,437, while expenses are scheduled for $412,478. The surplus of income is built into this budget for the purpose of building up Heritage's cash reserves.

EXPENSE

Michael Crowe
Architectural Historian,
National Park Service and
President of the Art Deco
Society

"As a member of the Landmarks
Board I see Heritage as an
extremely important advocate for
preservation, particularly for the
neighborhoods. As a member of
the Association for Preservation
Technology, I appreciate the
technical assistance Heritage
provides to San Franciscans. But
personally, I enjoy the people I've
met through Heritage. There is a
real diversity, and I almost always
have fun at Heritage events. I only
wish there were more occasions
for getting together."

Joe O'Donohue
President, Residential Builders
Association of San Francisco

"We have found San Francisco
Heritage to be very fair and
extremely objective and efficient in
responding to any inquiries we
have made. Foundations like
Heritage are necessary in order to
maintain significant buildings
reflective of our past. You've done
an excellent job. In future, we
would like to see more involve-
ment and additional staff so that
you can provide more services."

Marsha Ramsey
Rincon Center Associates

"Since the completion of Rincon
Center's remodeling quite a few
groups have hosted fundraisers
here. Of all of them, Heritage put
on one of the most professionally
organized fundraisers we've ever
had here. The amount of commit-
ment shown by both staff and
volunteers was very high."

201 Buchanan, a masterpiece of the Eastlake style of architecture, is one of the buildings protected from incompatible alteration or demolition through a façade easement agreement.
Thank You to All of Heritage's Many Friends
The Federal Building was described as “the most imaginative of modern architectural ventures” at either the New York or the San Francisco fair. The focal point was a colonnade of 48 colossal wooden columns in 4 ranks of 12 each, creating a kind of nave and aisles down the center of a large court formed by two U-shaped buildings. Time Magazine said it was a fine example “of economy, stateliness, and rational planning.”

Three structures were built to survive the fair and to serve the planned airport as maintenance and terminal buildings. They were the exposition’s administration building, Fine Arts Building, and Hall of Aviation. Advent of the war and realization that proximity to the Bay Bridge presented a hazard to aviation put an end to airport plans on Treasure Island. After the war the Navy took permanent title to the island. The Moderne crescent structure whose arms reach out to the San Francisco shore from the southwest corner of Treasure Island was the fair’s administration building. Today is houses base headquarters and a Navy/Marine Corps/Coast Guard museum and contains some mementos of the exposition.

The exposition also offered an unusual look at Bay Area domestic architecture. The Exposition Model Homes Tour came about from a combination of Bay Area boosterism and Depression-era efforts to stimulate construction jobs and promote growth. In announcing the planned tour, the Chronicle (June 11, 1938) described it as offering “a marvelous opportunity to get exposition visitors and people from other parts of the country to live here.”

Between May 1 and September 1, 1939, 24 homes, built and fully furnished for the Exposition Tour in connection with real estate developments around the Bay Area, opened to the public. They formed a 200-mile circuit, from Marin through the East Bay to Santa Cruz and the San Francisco Peninsula. All were architect-built and ranged in price from $4680 to $45,000.

Among the architects were a number of practitioners in the Bay Area Tradition, including Clarence Mayhew, Carl Gromme, and Frederick Confer.

William Wurster designed two homes in the tour, one in Kent Woodlands, the other in Belvedere. Landscaping in the Belvedere project was by Thomas Church, noted Bay Area landscape architect, who also designed the sites of tour homes by Gardner Dailey in Woodside and Clarence Tantau at Pasatiempo in Santa Cruz.

In an early perception of what would come to national attention ten years later as the “Bay Area Tradition,” Talbot Hamlin wrote (Pencil Points, May 1939): “[T]he main impression made by the best of these houses is one of direct simplicity, straightforward planning, and exterior design pleasing in its modesty and its frank expression of the climate and the local conditions.” By November of 1939, nearly 1.2 million visitors had toured the model homes. Three-quarters of the homes had been sold, and additional sales in adjoining tracts resulted directly from the Exposition Tour.

Of the art works created specially for the exposition, those that found new homes include four colorful murals by Mexican artist Miguel Covarrubias, depicting the Pacific Basin, which reside today at the Ferry Building’s World Trade Center; Robert B. Howard’s fountain, “Whales”, now in the courtyard of the Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park; and a Diego Rivera mural, created at the fair’s “Art-in-Action” show of 1940, relocated to the lobby of the Little Theater at City College.

A major monument of the GGIE, Antonio Sotomayor’s Pacific Basin Fountain, remains on the Navy base at Treasure Island, unavailable to the public. The large, 48′x36′ elliptical piece features a glazed ceramic relief map of the Pacific Ocean, its islands and surrounding land masses. In 1942, the Navy moved the fountain, originally in the Pacific House, to an outdoor site where exposure to the elements and vandalism has taken a toll.

In addition, there are 16 reinforced concrete statues representing the diverse peoples of the Pacific which were created for the exposition by 8 Bay Area artists. They ringed the Fountain of Western Waters in the Court of Pacifica. Richard Reinhardt described them as “thick-limbed, pouty-lipped statues—Indian women hunkering over stone metates, Tehuantepec boys riding alligators, Inca girls playing flutes, Polynesians strumming ukuleles. . . . Chunky, sleek and imperturbable, these statues epitomized the style of the Exposition.”

Until the statues’ recent removal by the Navy to indoor storage, the Sotomayor fountain sat in their midst. Anne Schnoebelen reported in a recent Oakland Heritage Alliance News that the Navy wants to remove the fountain because it is in the way of planned construction. This has revived a 15-year-old proposal to move, restore, and install the fountain and the statues in the public space fronting the administration building in a landscaped setting.

None of the relics of the Golden Gate International Exposition has the high visibility of the Palace of Fine Arts. Relocation of the Sotomayor fountain and the Pacifica statues to the plaza in front of the Treasure Island Museum, the only part of the island open to the public, would restore to the thousands of Bay Area residents for whom the fair is a fond memory, a tangible reminder of the exposition.
Support the Renovation of Mission Presbyterian

Renovation of the old Trinity Presbyterian Church building (renamed "Mission Presbyterian Church") at 23rd and Capp Streets is scheduled for completion in late April or early May, 1989. Heritage played a key role during 1983 and 1984 in saving this significant building from demolition. With funds derived from sale of the old Stewart Memorial and El Buen Pastor church properties (plus gifts from organizations and individuals and a $50,000 building fund campaign within the congregation), three contracts were let and are now in progress: general renovation; restoration of stained glass windows; and organ restoration.

Work started in August of 1988 and most of the exterior has now been completed. The roof and exterior walls—including the 112-foot tower—have been completely re-shingled, and the ornamental wood trim and moldings have been repainted (and replaced, where necessary). However, gutter and downspout work is still incomplete, and protective treatment of the outside brick walls (lower part of the building) has not yet been done. The new shingle work and the outside painting work are very attractive, even breathtaking. Most of the scaffolding is still in place, except for the tower scaffolding which has been removed.

Inside, much work remains to be done. The mess visible now is due to recessing the new electrical wiring within the walls and overhead spaces. All electrical wiring will be new. Handicapped toilets are being installed. The formerly-isolated north rose window has been re-joined to the main sanctuary space by demolition of a 1943 wall, so that the sanctuary now has its original proportions and ambience. The floors there will be sanded and re-varnished, and the pews will be refinished.

Most of the 54-26"x64" stained glass windows which were dirty, bulging and sagging in many places, and with many broken or cracked panes, have been removed, re-leaded, repaired and reinstalled. The colors are now much more vivid. Work is now being completed on the 4-62"x64" stained glass windows and the few remaining smaller windows. Outside work has been completed on all three rose windows. Protective "Lexan" covers have been installed over all of the stained glass windows (or window openings), including the rose windows.

The famous San Francisco organ firm of Schoenstein & Co. is directing the renovation of the century-old Hutchings pipe organ which Schoenstein installed in 1893 and reconstructed in 1923. A new console has been built, and the renovated organ will utilize modern technology in its inner functioning, while keeping the best of the old instrument.

The project is short about $85,000 for the stained glass and organ renovations. All donations to the "Pipe Organ and Stained Glass Window Fund" are tax-deductible. If individuals or groups provide funding for the restoration of a single 26"x64" stained glass window ($850), a donor name-plate will be placed on the sill of the window.

A “grand opening” service to mark the placement of the renovated building into service will be announced in a subsequent newsletter.

Winchell Hayward is an active member of Heritage, and an Elder of Mission Presbyterian Church.

Photograph courtesy of Victor Miller, North Mission News.
CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

Golden Gate International Exposition memorabilia is currently on display in the corridor outside the San Francisco History Room, Main Library, Civic Center. The display runs through March.

The California Historical Society Library at 2099 Pacific Avenue is closed through February for the relocation of its collections to climate controlled vaults. On reopening, the Library will feature a select exhibit of Golden Gate International Exposition materials in the foyer.

"Is San Francisco Being Fair to This Generation of Architects?"
February 16, 8PM
Gatehouse, Fort Mason Center
The San Francisco Architectural Club sponsors this provocative lecture by author/historian Kevin Starr.

For information, please call 441-1098.

We need docents!
If you're interested in giving tours of the Haas-Lilienthal House call 441-3000. Docent training is scheduled to begin in April/May.

MARCH

New Member's Reception
March 6, 5:30 PM
Haas-Lilienthal House
New Heritage members are invited to meet staff and members of the Board at the New Member's Reception. Watch for your invitation in the mail!

"Official Architecture of San Francisco"
March 8, 8PM
Gatehouse, Fort Mason Center
The San Francisco Architectural Club presents an evening with architectural critic Allan Temko as part of its 1989 series of lectures.

For information, please call 441-1098.

APRIL

14th Annual California Preservation Conference
April 20-23
Biltmore Hotel, Los Angeles
Community leaders, developers, city planners, attorneys, architects and others will meet to gain insights and map out strategies to save historic structures throughout the state.

For information call 213/876-6299 or 415/763-0972.

Coming soon...

Soirée 1989
Watch for more details in the mail.

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