

Volume 22, No. 2

Dedicated to Preserving San José's Architectural Heritage

Summer, 2011

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Our Former City Hall

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#### **Our Former City Hall**

On March 27th, 1958, the modern, impressive new San Jose City Hall building (our former City Hall) at 801 North First Street was dedicated. Proud officials and citizens gathered to celebrate the event and hear Mayor Robert Doerr inform them that the building was "a modern symbol embodying San Jose in its accelerating post-World War II growth period."

Two years earlier, then Mayor George Starbird stated at the groundbreaking, "San Jose only stands on the threshold of enormous expansion and dynamic growth....our area is on the

march. This building we are beginning today will be the symbol of our ambitions, a wonderful, imagination-inspiring structure whose corner stone we are figuratively laying today." ...."It is not only a monument to the ingenuity and ambition of the people of San



Former San Jose City Hall in the early days of operation

Jose, but to the affection all of us have for our City."

The relocation of the City Hall, away from downtown, was controversial for some, but at the time many others agreed that the move followed San Jose City's vision. The drive to increase San Jose's growth and prominence was led by City Manager A. P. "Dutch" Hamann.

Donald Francis Haines was chosen as the architect for the mid-century City Hall. His first projects were completed for the U.S. Navy in Hawaii and after the war he joined a New York architectural firm. Later, following a joint partnership with a Honolulu architect, he arrived in California in 1948 and worked for San Francisco's prestigious architectural firm, Angus McSweeney. In 1953, Haines located his own architectural firm

(Continued on page 2)

#### Our Former City Hall (Cont'd)

in San Jose at 144 West San Carlos Street, with subsequent offices in Stockton and San Francisco. He specialized in public school design. Haines closed his San Jose office after the completion of the former City Hall and headed his firm in San Francisco until his retirement. In addition to the 1958 City Hall and many schools in San Jose and the Bay Area, Donald Francis Haines & Associates designed the San Jose Civic Center Garage, San Jose Air Reserve Office Building, GEM Department Store, St. Nicholas Motel Apartments, and the Recreational Center for the Blind.

The cost of the former City Hall building, equipment, sidewalks and office furniture totaled slightly over 2.6 million dollars. The builder was Carl N. Swenson Co., Inc.

The former City Hall is constructed in concrete and steel with curtain walls of glass and aqua porcelain enamel panels. Brick veneer covers the remaining walls. The building is one of the first curtain wall buildings constructed on the West Coast during the Modern Period and is an excellent example of architectural innovation in the 1950s. (A curtain wall, in relation to a building, means an outer wall that is non-structural and does not carry any of the dead load weight from the building. The wall is usually made of lightweight material, reducing construction costs and, if made of glass, allows natural light to reach far inside the structure.)

In addition to the curtain wall construction, new materials, innovative designs, and the building's "geometric sculptural forms" blended important trends of mid-century architecture in the post-WW II era (aka Period of Industrialization and Urbanization.) A four-story, lengthy curved office



is published quarterly by the PRESERVATION ACTION COUNCIL OF SAN JOSE

The opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of PAC\*SJ itself.

Editors: Gayle Frank & Julia Howlett Please submit your letters, comments and suggestions to  $\underline{info@preservation.org} \ \ \textit{OR}$ 

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The north side of the Former City Hall where offices with operable windows were located. Photo taken in 2011.

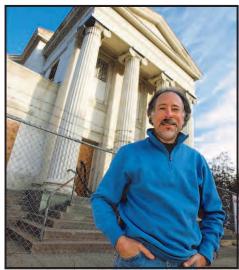
building connects to a two-story wedge-shaped wing. The two-story wing contains the main entrance lobby, the council chambers with walnut paneling, and cafeteria. The large lobby once served as a public and ceremonial space. One of the striking features inside the lobby is a graceful curved stairway with chrome handrails and open railings.

The innovative design, construction techniques, and the excellent quality of form, composition and detailing of the former City Hall was recognized and praised throughout the architectural community. Articles praising the structure appeared in at least four publications, including *Look* Magazine, *Architect and Engineer, Engineering News Record* and *The American City*. San Jose's newest City Hall represented a change in the form and direction of governmental buildings.

The former City Hall is surrounded by grand redwood and pine trees, which contribute to a park-like setting. A landmark plaque was installed in the parking circle around the time of our 1976 Bicentennial celebration. It commemorates the site as the original San Jose pueblo, El Pueblo de San Jose de Guadalupe. This first civil settlement in Upper California (Alta California) was established on November 29<sup>th</sup>, 1777 by Spain.

The City Hall Complex included a smaller Health Building at 161 West Mission which consisted of three one-story wings; a two-story, fourth wing was added in 1964. This smaller building complements the Former City Hall building but is not ranked as historically significant. (Continued on page 5)

#### **Executive Director's Message**



Brian Grayson

Photo: Silicon Valley Community Newspapers

Historic Preservation in the City of San Jose is in need of preservation itself. The City of San Jose is in crisis mode. Every day we hear about the dire financial straits City is facing. Staffing is being reduced. City services are being cut. Salaries and pensions are shrinking. The Redevelopment Agency has been downsized almost out of exis-

tence. The financial horror stories go on and on.

In spite of these ongoing drastic budget cuts, there is still enough money to demolish another historic building in San Jose -- the Martin Luther King Library building is scheduled to come down in August. Money continues to be found for other projects such as the elusive baseball stadium but there is still no funding or staff for historic preservation in San Jose.

The Planning Department is attempting to deal with historic preservation as best they can given the current situation, but they have no dedicated staff or funding for historic preservation. The Department is working with us to try and prevent any further loss of historic resources, and we are attempting to assist where we can with our limited resources.

Supporting PAC\*SJ will help us help the City continue historic preservation programs, at least at some level. Membership dues and donations will allow us to continue our work during this critical time for the City. Membership renewal notices go out quarterly -- please return yours upon receipt and be as generous as possible.

We continue to support the concept proposed by the San Jose Fire Museum that would have them move their outstanding collection of fire apparatus and memorabilia to old Fire Station One. The City has been reluctant to allow this world-class collection to be housed in this historic building. We see this as a win-win solution to allow the Museum to

operate in the old fire station and let the public finally have the opportunity to visit this amazing collection. Hopefully the City will see the wisdom in this proposal before it is too late

There is a lot of work to do and as always, we need people as well as funding. We recently held a very successful Garage Sale that not only raised much needed funds, but the event is also good for the environment. People clean out their homes of unneeded items, others purchase them producing funds for PAC\*SJ, these items stay out of the landfill, and everyone is happy. Thanks to Patt Curia and Ellen Garboske and their amazing volunteer army for their many hours of work producing this successful event. It would not happen without the hard work and dedication of many people.

Our annual Movie Night, held in May, was another event that was fun for all. Event Chairs Joe Melehan, Jim Zetterquist, and Bill Foley, put together a "Film Cocktail" showing vintage images of San Jose and the Santa Clara Valley. Costumed attendees added to the festivities as did the great variety of foods based on recipes from decades past. Thanks to everyone who volunteered to help and to all of our attendees.

The Board recently elected a new slate of officers to lead our organization. Congratulations to Joe Melehan who will be serving a second term as President. Thanks to Joe and the rest of the officers for their willingness to serve along with our current Board.

These may be dismal times for preservation in San Jose, but together we can continue to advocate and preserve our historic resources.

**Brian Grayson PAC\*SJ Executive Director** 



#### PAC\*SJ President's Message

#### Hello Again

Greetings to PAC\*SJ members and interested readers of *Continuity*. My name is Joe Melehan and I am the "new" president of the Board of the Preservation Action Council of San Jose. This is my second term as president. My initial term was approximately four years ago. I am happy to once again serve in this capacity because we have such a great board, staff and membership.

I hope that many of you were able to attend our annual Movie Night earlier this month. It was a great event that we produced with the cooperation of the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County and the Fruit Cocktail Club. One again, this event proved that being a preservationist can be fun and educational. I am continually amazed at how generous our members can be. Thank you to all that donated their time and money. It was great to see how many people got into the spirit and either dressed up or prepared a vintage recipe and brought an old-fashioned dish. We have an amazing amount of subject matter on film and plan more events similar to this one. If you have some home movies that might document some of this Valley's history, please consider sharing them with us.

However, not all is fun and games here at PAC\*SJ. Rest assured your organization is constantly on the lookout for significant and worthy buildings in our community that might be at risk. Our advocacy community has done an outstanding job keeping their "finger on the pulse" of endangered structures. I am pleased to inform you that we have been able to work well with some city staff and developers

who have brought us in early in the process to seek our input on potential projects. We always want to participate up front, rather than fight the battle late in the game.

I am seeking greater input from our members. If you have some suggestions or ideas on how we can improve our



PAC\*SJ President Joe Melehan at Movie Night

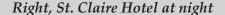
organization, please contact us and we will consider all constructive comments.

Finally, please keep in mind this Fall we will hold a local history trivia contest. You do not need to be an expert to participate. This is our big fundraiser of the year and we hope to have a huge number of our members and potential members attend. Put a team together. The event is scheduled for October 27. Look for the details in our newsletter and our website. •

Joe Melehan PAC\*SJ President

#### Going on Vacation?

Are you traveling this summer? You might want to check out a few historic hotels throughout the country. The National Trust has launched a new website that integrates history and heritage travel with technology. To find a historic hotel in America, go to the new website, <a href="www.HistoricHotels.org">www.HistoricHotels.org</a>. There are 235 historic hotels, ranging from small historic inns to city-center icons, from converted factories to grand dame hotels and resorts. You can easily choose from a variety of package and historic experiences. Our historic St. Claire Hotel in San Jose is listed on the website.





#### Our Former City Hall (Cont'd)

The six-story Annex was built later in the mid-1970s to accommodate an increased work force. The contemporary design of the Annex harmonizes with the innovative main building and is set back from the original structure. The use of split-faced blocks on the Annex matches the council chambers wing. The Annex is not considered as historically significant as the former City Hall building.

According to the historical report, the former City Hall qualifies for Federal, State, and City landmark status because of architectural merit and significant connections to San Jose's history, events and prominent citizens. It is a distinguished mid-century building constructed by the people of San Jose through a special bond election. The physical integrity of the building and the surroundings have been maintained. The building is an important symbol of San Jose during its period of rapid growth and is part of our City history.

Just recently the former City Hall has been bartered in a deal between San Jose and Santa Clara County, to reduce the debt owed to the County. At this time it is not known what the future holds for this historic structure. We have been told that the County is studying options.

(A Brief History of San Jose City Halls continued on page 6)





Top right, Former City Hall Annex surrounded by tall trees.

Above, Former City Hall facing south.

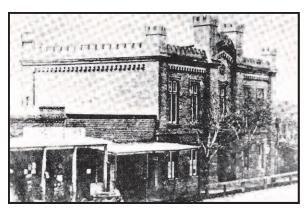
Photos taken in 2011 (G. Frank)

#### Our Former City Hall (Cont'd)

#### Brief History of San Jose City Halls

A 1798 adobe structure was the first documented government building in the pueblo of San Jose, apart from the earlier 1783 adobe Juzgado (meaning court of law in Spanish) at an unknown location near the Guadalupe River. The 1798 Juzgado, with a tile-roof, served as an assembly house, courthouse and jail and was located at the northwest corner of South Market and Post Streets. When the Juzgado was sold to become a hotel in 1850, temporary quarters for City Hall included a rented adobe on Lightson St and then the old State House in the Plaza.

Plans for a new City Hall developed by enlarging and remodeling another adobe at 35 North Market Street. Levi Goodrich designed this first permanent City Hall with a Gothic-style façade. It served as City Hall from 1855 until about 1870, when the building was re-built and re-designed with a Greek influence.





Top photo: First permanent San Jose City Hall, a rebuilt adobe with a Gothic style façade designed by Levi Goodrich in 1870.

Above, same City Hall with a new Greek style.

A special election in 1887 approved the plans to proceed with a new City Hall with a budget of \$150,000. Theodore Lenzen was chosen as the architect and the new building included the Police Department, jail and library along with the previous governmental functions. The brick and terracotta City Hall, in the middle of the Plaza Park on Market and San Antonio Streets, was an impressive structure that evolved from Italianate and Victorian designs with "French Empire detailing."



1889 San Jose City Hall at Plaza Park (Market and San Antonio Streets.) Demolished in June, 1958.

This massive structure served San Jose from 1889 until 1958, when it was replaced with the "new" City Hall at North First Street. Many citizens, including Clyde Arbuckle, San Jose's iconic historian, fought to save the majestic edifice, but to no avail. It was demolished in June, 1958. When PAC\*SJ took a survey of candidates running for City Council in 2006, one of the questions was: "Is there a historic building in San Jose that you regret losing?" Four of the candidates replied that they regretted the loss of the distinctive City Hall at Plaza Park. Let's hope that in the future, citizens and politicians will not be regretting the loss of our mid-century icon on North First Street. \*\*C8\*\*

**Gayle Frank** 

Sources: 1) Franklin Maggi & Leslie Dill, *Preliminary Historic Report, Former City Hall, Annex and Health Building, and DPR 523A, 523B,* San Jose, CA, Archives & Architecture, 2007.

2) Archival Photos: Bill Foley & Calif. Pioneers of Santa Clara County

#### **Preservation Kudos**

#### **Rengstorff House Anniversary**

Congratulations to the "Friends of Rengstorff House" and the City of Mountain View for reaching the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the historic home's beautiful restoration; it is the oldest house in Mountain View. A celebration party of living history was held on May 22 with many exhibitors, tours, costumed docents and demonstrations.

Henry Rengstorff (1829 -1906) arrived in San Francisco in 1850, moved to the South Bay and eventually saved enough money to purchase multiple pieces of land for farming. He raised grain and hay near Milpitas, kept cattle in San Mateo and grew fruit trees in Los Altos. Henry, his wife Christine and seven children lived in the Mountain View house that was built around 1867. It is said to be "one of the finest examples of Victorian Italianate architecture on the West Coast."

The house design includes a hip roof, central gable, a widow's walk, and front portico supported by columns. The arched, double hung windows look over a five-paneled front door. Bay windows on each side of the front door and matching brick chimneys add to the symmetry of the design. The 12 rooms in the house have 10-foot high ceilings and one side of the house is a mirror image of the other. The interior is fully decorated in the appropriate era.

Henry Rengstorff built a ship landing near the present location of the Rengstorff House. He "improved farm irrigation methods and developed innovative processes for dredging to facilitate shipping" that greatly contributed to the economy of Mountain View. Now, a 40-acre parcel of Henry's land makes up the first nine holes of the Shoreline Golf Links.

The City of Mountain View purchased the house in 1979. The House was moved to its present location, was restored and finally dedicated in March, 1991 as a public venue.

The Rengstorff House is located at 3070 North Shoreline Boulevard, near Michael's Restaurant and the Sailing Lake. If you didn't catch their party, try and visit the house when you can. Tour hours are Tuesday, Wednesday and Sunday from 11 am to 5 pm. The phone number is 650-903-6392.

Source: http://www.r-house.org/







Top, Rengstorff House at Shoreline in Mountain View.

Above, interior front parlor

Left, fireplace

#### Hangar One Update

The removal of the Hangar One siding is progressing. The first panel, starting at the north end and the top, was detached on April 21st. Workers are removing much of the siding from the interior of the Hangar from elaborate scaffolding and platforms. Interior elevators deliver the contaminated siding down to the ground. A few workers assist with the roof removal on the exterior. To insure that the Hangar's contaminants are contained, biological activity is inspected and observed in addition to extensive monitoring and sampling of workers, air, soil and water.

The latest news on saving the historic corrugated windows in the Hangar is disappointing. In a letter from Scott Anderson, BRAC Environmental Coordinator (BEC), he explains that after much discussion, planning and investigation, conclusions were as follows: "significant damage to the corrugated windows (cracks, rust, water tightness),

Top right, Vintage photo of Hangar One interior with two rows of windows. Above, view of corrugated glass windows that are cracked. Photo from http://www.nuqu.org/20110513/1085/

To view recent photos of the siding removal of Hangar One, go to <a href="http://www.slideshare.net/sbwms/hangar-one-update-">http://www.slideshare.net/sbwms/hangar-one-update-</a> to-the-moffett-rab. The presentation is entitled Hangar 1 Removal Action Update, by Bryce Bartelma, Navy BRAC PMO

and the window attachments (rust, putty, water tightness) was present and it was not economically feasible to keep the windows in-place or to save the windows at all. Based on their evaluation of the corrugated windows, NASA indicated to the Navy that they were no longer asking for the Navy to save the windows or keep them in-place. Therefore, the Navy is continuing with our currently scoped removal action activities. The Navy will be removing and saving a few of the corrugated window panes and providing them to NASA for historic representation."

The completion of fieldwork, confirmation sampling and demobilization is expected by early 2012. An Action Completion Report is scheduled for Spring/Summer of 2012.

Of course, the biggest remaining question is how and when our County will get back our historic Hangar One, originally built in 1932, with the siding replaced. We are counting on NASA and Congress to come through. In addition to keeping our historic icon in the South Bay for history's sake, Hangar One would be a great asset for the 2020 World's Fair, if by chance it should be held here.

To watch an excellent video on Hangar One history, check out <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?">http://www.youtube.com/watch?</a> v=7ULYSkZSfEo&feature=player embedded. This film was written and narrated by Mark Messersmith with Daya Curley on camera and as editor.

### PAC\*SJ Presents Our Annual Celebration Gala

# Local History Trivia Night



# Save the Date! Thurs., October 27th—6 PM San Jose Woman's Club 75 S. 11th St.



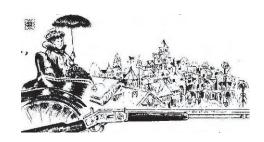
- Are you a Santa Clara County history buff or just love a challenge?
  - Make your organization proud, grab the gold
    - Bring a team or join one at the event
      - · Includes beer and casual dinner
      - Auction, raffle, fun and prizes
  - More details to follow, watch our website for latest news

Come dressed as a local historical person and introduce yourself





Drawings: Ralph Rambo



#### Ways to Learn Local History—Get Ready for our History Trivia Night

#### **Moffett Field Historical Society Museum**

Hours: Wed-Sat., 10-2

Admission \$5; Youth \$2 and Seniors, \$3.

Learn about the fascinating history of Moffett Field. The museum is located at Moffett Field in the shadow of the iconic and historic Hangar One.

#### Detained at Liberty's Door: The Story of Liberty Lost on Angel Island At

California History Center, DeAnza College Through June 24th

Exhibit Hours: Tuesday – Thursday, 9:30 a.m. to 12 Noon and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Mondays and Fridays by appointment. Special Saturday hours to be announced.

For more information contact: Tom Izu, (408) 864-8986, izutom@deanza.edu

## Now Available PAC\*SJ's 20th Anniversary DVD

Produced by Bill Foley Featuring Karita Hummer, Paul Bernal, Jack Douglas, Ellen Garboske and Brian Grayson.

This inspiring DVD about the early days of PAC\*SJ is a gift at the \$100 PAC\*SJ membership level (see page 23) or can be purchased for \$15 on its own plus \$3 for postage and handling. To purchase call the office at 408-998-8105 or send a check to:

PAC\*SJ, History Park, 1650 Senter Road, San Jose, CA 95112.

#### San Jose Architectural Tour June 25th

Before there was new urbanism, there was San Jose. Many people may walk by the city's historic civic buildings every day without noticing them. Now is your chance to explore these hidden architectural gems during a special walking tour.

12:00 Check in at San Jose City Hall, Community Room 12:15 Lecture by Anthony Raynsford, assistant professor in the School of Art and Design at San Jose State University

1:00 City Hall Tour by Steinberg Architects2:00 Historic Santa Clara County Courthouse led by Beth Wyman

3:00 St. James Post Office led by Alida Bray4:00 San Jose Museum of Art led by Walter Rask4:45 Wine and cheese reception at the San Jose Museum of Art

Tours at each location will start promptly, please don't be late. Admission is \$25 (\$20 for members of sponsoring groups), which includes an introductory talk, walking tour, admission to the Museum and all buildings on the tour, and a reception.

This program is sponsored by History San José, Preservation Action Council of San Jose, San José Public Art, the American Institute of Architects, and the San Jose Museum of Art.

Tickets online — visit www.preservation.org for link.

#### Intel Computer Museum

#### **Robert Noyce Building**

Intel's headquarters in the heart of Silicon Valley.

Hours are Mon-Fri – 9-6; Saturdays 10-5.

Admission and parking are free.

Intel Computer Museum 2200 Mission College Boulevard Santa Clara, CA 408-765-0503 www.intel.com

#### Successful Spring Garage Sale

Thanks to all of the donors and volunteers who made our PAC\*SJ Spring Garage Sale a special event. As always the sale covered three front yards: Salas, Curia and Wangness-Liesentfelt. We generated \$5300 that will go toward educational and advocacy expenses.

We received a record number of donations this season and much of it from Naglee Park residents. More items arrived throughout the sale weekend and there were a few very interesting items left that were displayed in the SALES column of the PAC\*SJ website, www.preservation.org.

Some of the interesting items received included 100 beer steins and mugs with emblems of various universities or military bases, drafting tables, sofas, a radial arm saw, salvage doors, overhead projectors, Bavarian china, aluminum ware, vintage train set, complete bedroom set, lots of "orphan" chairs, punching bag, BBQ grill, lots of house wares, Easter décor and cute dust catchers.

Thanks to the sales and display artists who volunteered all 3 days: Ellen Garboske, Judy Hill, Joan Bohnett, Sheik Ali, and Tom Aldridge. Also,

Preservation Action Council of San Jose Representation of San Jose Represen

Above, from left, (front) Judy Hill, Rick Bernard, Ellen Garboske, (back) Connor McGuire, Judi Henderson, Patt Curia, Matt Herbert, Jesus Rohas and behind, Alice Gosak. (Photo: Patt Curia)

Lower left, Patt Curia, Tom Aldridge, Joan Bohnett and Jim Zetterquist

a special thanks to the men from Sigma Nu Fraternity for all of their efforts.

Roy's Station owner, Carole Rast, stopped by with a "box" of coffee and all of the accessories early Friday morning. A neighbor donated 5 large boxes of fabric and rather than sell it, it was offered free to local organizations such as the Girl Scouts, local drama organizations, San Jose Woman's Club, etc. The Dahlberg's dropped by on Wednesday with tarps to

cover the merchandise from an unexpected rain shower while I was out running errands.



Sales volunteers include: Ellen Garboske, Rene Coca, Alice Gosak, Leslie Masunaga, Sally Beste, Gayle Frank, Judi Henderson, Sandra Soellner, Natalie Alexander, Jane Luthard, John Mitchell, Lynda Sereno, Gilda and John Messner, Heinz Boedecker, Lucile Boone, Bev Blockie, Heather David, Luisa McEwen, Jim Zetterquist, April Halberstadt, Caroline Jumper, Judy Hill, Joan Bohnett, Tom Aldridge, and Sheik Ali.

Special thanks to Hans Halberstadt for preparing the tenderest pulled pork sandwiches for our Friday night reception and to the Phillips for donating and serving lunch on Saturday.

Patt Curia, PAC\*SJ Board Member

#### A Virtual Garage Sale?

Below are emails just before our last garage sale. The name has been changed to protect the neighbor.

**Dear Patt,** I wanted to check in with you about an item I bought at the History San Jose auction a couple of years ago. It's a ceiling medallion, made out of plaster, but the bad thing is it was sand blasted at some point. So I don't know if it would be of interest to anyone, but I thought I would check. Please let me know and I can drop it off for your PAC\*SJ garage sale. Thanks. Mrs. X

**Dear X,** We would be happy to receive it!! People see different things in each item... It might be "repurposed" or just painted over. Drop it by any time. I am home most of Sunday so that is a good time if you actually want to see me. If you want a receipt, tell me your address. Patt

Dear Patt, So I literally was walking out the door with my ceiling medallion yesterday and happened to mention to my husband where I was going. You can imagine my complete shock when he expressed interest in keeping it! I said, "You've got to be kidding me?! I thought you would be THRILLED that I was finding a new home for it." And sure enough, he said he thought we could do something with it. What, I have absolutely no idea (it doesn't fit with our house at all), so my guess is in 2 years I'll be pinging you again asking if you'd like a ceiling medallion for your sale. Unbelievable, I'm so very sorry. Today I put a check for \$30 in the mail today to at least contribute something towards the PAC\*SI effort.

**Dear X,** This is a riot...Maybe more potential donors could do the same and then I could hold a virtual garage sale!! Thanks for the donation and the thought. We may include this story in the next newsletter, names changed to protect the guilty!

Patt

#### Notable Quotable

"Architecture arouses sentiments in man. The architect's task therefore, is to make those sentiments more precise."

-Adolf Loos (1870-1933); An Austro-Hungarian architect who influenced European Modern architecture.

#### Next PAC\*SJ Garage Sale



Our next
garage sale
will be
mid-August!
Save your
stuff!!

To donate or volunteer contact Patt Curia at

pcuria@sbcglobal.net

At the Spring PAC\*SJ Garage Sale, the Rendler sisters buy a dog bed for their new puppy. (Photo: Patt Curia)

#### The City of San Jose Says......

For those of you receiving your San Jose garbage bill in the month of May, you may find a brochure with your bill from the city titled:

"Envision San Jose 2040 General Plan, Building a City of Great Places"

The first two bullet points are:
-Preserve Neighborhoods

-Protect historic resources

Under these tough economic times, it is encouraging to see our city leaders have finally recognized the economic and cultural advantages of historic preservation. We think PAC SJ has played an important role in bringing these issues to the top of their list. We hope the next time there is an application to demolish a historic resource, they will not only talk the talk but remember to walk the walk.



#### PAC\*SJ Calendar 2011

- Jun 20 Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6 8 pm. History San Jose, Passetta House.
- Jun 25 Saturday, San Jose Architectural Tour, at noon. See page 10 for details
- Jul 18 Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6 8 pm. History San Jose, Passetta House
- Aug 15 Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6 8 pm. History San Jose, Passetta House
- Oct 17 Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, 6 8 pm. History San Jose, Passetta House
- Oct 27 Thursday, PAC\*SJ Celebration Gala—Historic Trivia Night, 6 10 pm at San Jose Woman's Club, 75 So. 11th St.
- Nov 21 Monday, PAC\*SJ Board Meeting, & Annual Meeting, 6 8 pm. History San Jose, Passetta House

#### Other Historical Events of Interest

- **History San Jose**—"Valley of the Heart's Delight" fundraising dinner, June 15th at History Park
- Alameda Business Association—Rose, White and Blue Parade, July 4th at 10 am, travels from Lincoln High School to The Alameda
- **History San Jose**—"Day of Remembrance; Spirit of '45", August 13th & 14th at History Park
- Italian American Family Festa August 27th & 28th at Guadalupe River Park
- California Pioneers of Santa Clara County—California Admission Day Barbeque, Sept.10th, at History San Jose

#### ADVERTISE IN CONTINUITY!

Continuity is distributed to over 600 San José preservationists, homeowners and decision-makers. It's a great way to get your message out to your best potential customers! For ads larger than the business card, you must supply camera-ready artwork, or PAC\*SJ can provide it at an additional charge.

Buy ads in 6 issues and SAVE! Plus, all multiple-issue ads come with a free membership!

Business Card
Single issue \$50
3 issues \$120

1/4 Page
Single issue \$100
3 issues \$250

1/2 Page
Single issue \$200
3 issues \$450

Full Page
Single issue \$375
3 issues \$700

#### "Film Cocktail" Shines at Movie Night



Le Petit Trianon was the place to be on May 11<sup>th</sup>. PAC\*SJ and The Fruit Cocktail Club presented historic film footage, produced by PAC\*SJ member Bill Foley. Bill and the Fruit Cocktail Club (members of a small group whose families operated the local canneries and who enjoy sharing the history of the local fruit industry) have put together a unique presentation from the film collection belonging to the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County.

The historical films, called "A Film Cocktail," consisted of

various clips—many which have never been shown in public. Some footage came from professional film promoting San

Jose and the firefighters, but much of the "Film Cocktail" incorporated home movies of sports events, long-gone buildings and landmarks (including the demolition of Santa Clara City Hall), vintage modes of transportation such as planes, trains, trolleys, ships, boat races and automobiles of yesteryear. We saw a trip through the mines of New Almaden and visited Alum Rock Park in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some of the films were silent so audience participation was encouraged. Bill Foley, Jim Zetterquist and Joe Melehan contributed their share of wit to accompany the flicks.

The event celebrated the nostalgic days of the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s so guests were asked to bring their nostalgic dishes from those times. Wearing vintage clothing of the era was also encouraged. A tasty feast of appetizers, salads, main dishes and desserts adorned the tables out on the patio. The judges had the difficult task of deciding which of the dishes should win the awards. The final outcome was:

Best salad: Beet Salad, Peg Carlson-Bowen

Best Main Dish: Hash Skillet Pie, Katie Senigaslia

Best Dessert: Old Fashioned Custard, Sylvia Carroll

Honorable Mention: Rasberry Pear Crisp, Debbie Anderson

(Continued on page 15)



Top left, Helen Stevens and Lavonne Hardy try out nostalgic recipes on the patio at Le Petit Trianon.

Above, Nina Grayson and Patt Curia.

Left, Rick Helin, Richard Bowen, and Bill Foley. Richard and family donated multiple reels of film footage.

#### "Film Cocktail" Shines at Movie Night (Cont'd)



Other outstanding dishes included tamale pie, hamburger pasta, macaroni and cheese with hot dogs, Spamalot, onion dip, tuna casseroles, many gelatin mold salads, tomato aspic, brownies, cakes, flan with fruit cocktail, chocolate prune cake, ambrosia, nut bread, and apricot bars (which won last time.) Thanks to all the guests who brought their wonderful dishes to share.

Some of our guests wore vintage attire to Movie Night, which helped make the evening even more festive. It was a good excuse to dig out some of our old treasures and show them off. The winning outfits were:

Best Male Vintage Attire: Art Boudreault, wearing a for-

mal suit and portraying James Randol from Casa Grande.

Best Woman's Vintage Attire: Christine Kingsland, wearing a 1940s gold-colored coat (belonged to her mother-in-law) and a blouse from her mother. A cute brown hat topped the outfit perfectly.

Honorable Mention Vintage Attire: Katie Senigaslia, wearing a perky 1920's bathing suit in navy blue with white trim and accessories.

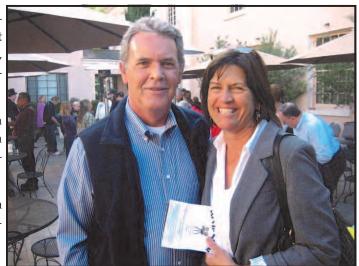
And just in case guests needed other attractions, sales tables and a silent auction were on hand. All proceeds went toward the cost of the event and PAC\*SJ's educational and advocacy efforts



to save historical buildings. The Movie Night event was free, although donations were encouraged.

This is the fourth Movie Night PAC\*SJ has held at Le Petit Trianon. We hope to hold another next year so get your recipes and outfits ready. We hope to see you at our next Movie Night. C3

(More photos on page 16)





Top left, Jim Zetterquist and Judi Stabile.

Top right, Doug and Connie Foley.

Above, Movie Night Usherettes and Judges—Nancy

Martin, Ethel Reinegger and Joanne Renk from History

San Jose's Portraits of the Past.

Left, Joan Bohnett and Steve Tedesco.

#### "Film Cocktail" Shines at Movie Night (Cont'd)





Winners: Top left, Art Boudreault

Top right, Christine Kingsland

Far Left, Katie Senigaslia



Above, Ellen Garboske Right, Franklin Maggi, John Mitchell and Andre Luthard

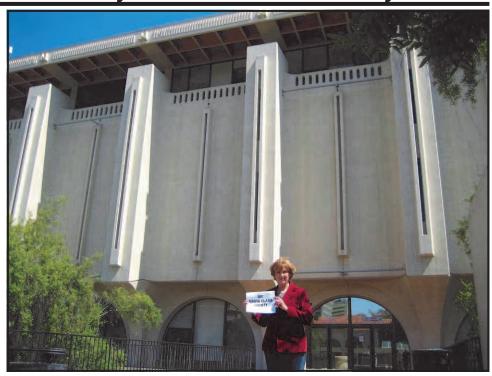
(Photos: G. Frank & E. Garboske)



#### "This Place Matters-My Santa Clara County"

"This Place Matters" was created by the National Trust for Historic Preservation to acknowledge the grassroots preservation efforts in our communities. Santa Clara County Historical Heritage Commission launched its own version of the "This Place Matters" program entitled "My Santa Clara County" as a celebration of "Historic Preservation Month" in May. The Commission invited the public to submit a digital photo of a special place in our County with a short summary of its personal significance. May 31st was the deadline for the photo entries; they will be available on line for viewing until September www.sccplanning.org.

We hope some of our PAC\*SJ members took advantage of spotlighting your favorite historical building or home in Santa Clara County. If not, get your photo ready for next year. 🕊



Gayle Frank stands in front of the former Martin Luther King Library, holding the "My Santa Clara County" sign. Tragically, this unique building from 1970 is scheduled for demolition soon.

#### **Build a Masterpiece**



Did you know that Lego now sells a kit to build the Farnsworth House? It is the tenth model in their architectural series. The kit is recommended for children 12 and older. What a great way to excite a child about architecture.

The real house was designed as a one-room weekend retreat, located in a once-rural setting southwest of Chicago. This iconic masterpiece of the International Style of architecture was designed by the renowned Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and was completed in 1951. As a minimalist "Steel & Glass" modernist symbol of the 1950s, it delicately balances clean lines, volume of space, minimal structure, and expansive glazing, creating an inviting relationship between the natural and built environments. The real house is elevated five feet three inches above the flood plain by eight steel columns, which are attached to the sides of the floor and ceiling slabs. The end of the slabs extend

beyond the column supports, creating cantilevers. The house seems to float weightlessly above the ground it occupies.

The home was designated a National Historic Landmark in 2006. It is currently owned and run as a house museum by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. 😝

#### In Memoriam



Stephanie Abbott at a PAC\*SJ Hat Party

## In Memoriam Stephanie Abbott

Stephanie Abbott passed on March 15, 2011. She was an enthusiastic member of PAC\*SJ and was the inspiration for our hat parties. Back in 2006 she donated, to PAC\*SJ, a huge collection of vintage hats which had belonged to her mother, Steffi Sims. This collection was the seed of our famous hat parties. Stephanie volunteered at our subsequent events and was always fun and helpful.

We will miss her.

#### George Espinola Memorial Fund

The Preservation Action Council has created the George Espinola Memorial Fund and is now receiving tax deductible donations to preserve his architectural legacy and to continue his educational interests. Funds may be used to encourage printing his books, educational tours, research into the works of his favorite architects and more. Please take this opportunity to support George's efforts to educate the community about San Jose's architecture.

Checks, payable to Preservation Action Council of San Jose, may be sent to: PAC\*SJ, History Park, 1650 Senter Road, San Jose, CA 95112. Please indicate the donation is for the George Espinola Memorial Fund. PAC\*SJ is a 501 c 3 non profit organization and donations are tax deductible as permitted by law.

#### Become a PAC\*SJ Board Member

PAC\*SJ is looking for qualified applicants to be considered for openings on our Board. Help us pursue our mission of preserving the architectural heritage of San Jose and assist us in educating homeowners, developers, and decision-makers about the importance of historic preservation.

If you think you would be interested, please review the Board member requirements and application on our website, www.preservation.org.

If you have questions, call us at 408-998-8105. We hope to hear from you.

#### **Exploring San Jose Landmarks**

Here are the next San Jose Landmarks from the City list. Check previous *Continuity* issues for earlier landmark descriptions at www.preservation.org.

#### HL86-38; Germania Hall, 259-261 N. 2nd St.

Originally, Germania Hall was a complex of two Victorian homes and a large, custom Hall that F. (Frank) Louis King had built in 1892-1895. The complex was called the "King Conservatory of Music" with the purpose of establishing an elite music school and performance space. The structures were early designs by local architect, Frank Delos Wolfe. The Hall, pictured lower right, seated up to 500 guests with an upper gallery, side studios and two large choral rooms included. The two Victorians housed a library, living quarters and various music practice rooms. Professor King, his

wife and three children lived in one of the Victorians.

F. Loui King, as he called himself, took great pride in his music school endeavor. His promotional material described the goal for his Conservatory of Music which read, "To establish

for the first time in the history of the State, a School of Musical Theory, embracing the entire Science of Music, Harmony, counter-

point, Fugue, Form, Instrumentation, Acoustics, Theory of Sound and History, which will be compulsory for those who have any musical pretensions or intelligence."

F. LOUI KING, A. M., B. M.

The Conservatory's opening night was December 13, 1894. The Orchestral Society program consisted of classical music. By 1895, the music and performance school became one of the leading cultural and educational institutions in San Jose and lasted until 1920.



Germania Hall in 2011

King passed away in 1914 and his son, Frank, continued on until 1923, when the Conservatory was sold to Germania Verein (German Club,) who has been the owner up to the present time. The Germania Verein was first incorporated in 1865 and has been active in San Jose ever since, with many prominent Santa Clara County pioneers as early members. Their annual masquerade balls were the social event of the year for many decades. (Continued on page 20)



#### **Exploring San Jose Landmarks** (Cont'd)

Only one front Victorian remains today with the recessed Hall that forms an inviting courtyard.

In 1999, a fire caused damage to over 50% of Germania Hall. Germania Verein, the property owner, requested financial assistance from the Redevelopment Agency to augment their resources and insurance payments. Upgraded structural systems were also needed to meet current code requirements. Germania Hall is an important piece of the downtown historic fabric and rehabilitation of Kino the building benefited the downtown Project Areas. Architect Hollis Logue provided architectural consultation and CRW Industries, Inc. completed the construction and restoration in 2001. **CS** 



#### Sources:

- 1) www.germaniaverein.org/pages/history.html
- 2) Historical Footnotes of Santa Clara Valley, Jack Douglas, SAH, 1993.
- 3) Vintage Pictures: Catalogue of the King Conservatory of Music, 1896, University of California Archives

# VIEW OF THE K. C. M. UPPER GALLERIES AND ENTRANCE TO LIBRARY.

#### HL86-39; Vintage Tower, 227-245 E. Santa Clara St.

This high-rise, Art Deco building at the corner of East Santa Clara and North 6<sup>th</sup> Streets in San Jose



was completed in 1928. A group of doctors and dentists wanted one site where patients could receive all their medical needs, so they envisioned a professional building with an adjacent parking facility. This same idea was used by Timothy Pflueger for his renowned 1930 structure at 450 Sutter in San Francisco. (Did this San Jose building influence Pflueger and the San Francisco medical professionals?) William Weeks, a prominent local architect, designed the reinforced concrete, 11-story building with strong vertical lines. The building entrance (pictured left) features a lavish terra cotta keystone façade. The most up-to-date building of its kind for the time, the Medico-Dental Building was one of four skyscrapers in San Jose built before the 1929 crash.

(Continued on page 21)

#### **Exploring San Jose Landmarks** (Cont'd)

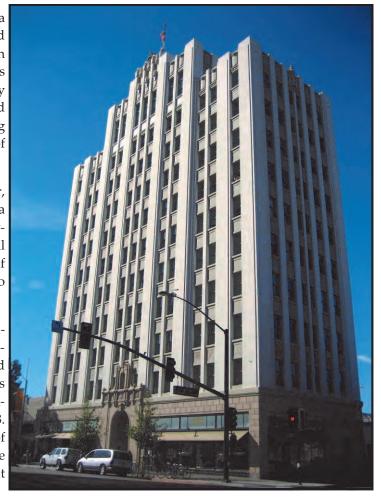
The top floor held a large public room, decorated with terra cotta shields and torches, and was set back to form east and west roof gardens. The room had a large fireplace and high ceilings with hand-stenciled crossbeams. French doors opened out to the gardens where a view of the entire valley was unobstructed. At the center of the room a giant winged figure wearing a Spartan helmet stood in the center, holding the medical caduceus. The same figure appears at the top of the building facade.

The first two floors held the pharmacy with a lunch counter, the San Jose Clinical Laboratory, Bischoff's Surgical Supply, a beauty shop and a barber. To the rear, patients and employees could park in the parking garage and fill-up at the full service gas station. Patients appreciated the convenience of parking their car and immediately taking an elevator up to the desired floor.

The Medico-Dental Building served as the city's central medical offices until the 1950s when businesses moved to the suburbs. By the 1970s the building was renovated for offices and became known as Vintage Towers. In 1988 the building was rehabilitated for condominiums but the project was a financial failure and was foreclosed by the City of San Jose in 1998. In 2005 the First Church Downtown celebrated the opening of the building that was now a low-cost housing facility. The building was renovated, restored and improved. At present it is fully occupied and managed by the Church.

Source: Historical footnotes of Santa Clara Valley, Jack Douglas, SAH, San Jose, 1993







Top, Vintage Tower in 2010, facing E. Santa Clara Street. Above, Terra cotta entrance. Left, Decoration at top of façade.

(Photos: G. Frank)

#### PAC\*SJ Annual Celebration Historic Trivia Night

Don't Miss It! **6 PM** 

Oct. 27th, Thursday



#### FILM ARCHIVE



Do you have films from the 30°s? 40°s? 50°s?



The California Pioneers of Santa Clara County are assembling a FILM ARCHIVE of the history of Santa Clara Valley, and it is your films that will form its backbone. We are extremely interested in your old films of historic events, places and people. Future generations will be able to see San Jose as you saw it and understand history in a way that still pictures cannot express. Film doesn't last forever, and under the wrong conditions can decay quickly. The Pioneers have the equipment, expertise, and ] facilities to digitally convert, exhibit, and store films, preserving them for future generations and allowing you to view and share them more easily. 16mm, 8mm, Super8 or 3 VHS footage is welcome and can be returned to you after being digitally converted. In return we will provide you a DVD copy of your film. To lend or donate your films to the California Pioneers and to posterity, please contact Bill Foley at iamsparatacus@gmail.com or 408-317-8249.

\***\*** 



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Planning a special event or meeting, or looking for an elegant, professional office space for your small business...

Le Petit Trianon Theatre, an elegant, historic building with wonderful acoustics and a storybook setting, is ideal for your event planning or business needs.

> The Main Theatre seats 348 the Keith A. Watt Recital Hall seats 80.

Our Banquet Hall can accommodate up to 150, and the brand new Versailles Courtyard can hold over 200 people for outdoor receptions. Our Executive Office Suites are approximately 150 square feet.

We are located near the new Civic Center Plaza at 72 N. 5th Street in downtown San Jose, just walking distance from the new San Jose City Hall, SJSU, County Court House, St. James Post Office, restaurants and retail outlets.

Please contact us at (408) 995-5400 or visit our website at www.trianontheatre.com for more information.

#### **Preservation Action Council of San Jose**

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		Please circle the	level at which you wish t	o join:	
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The Preservation Action Council of San José (PAC\*SJ) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation dedicated to preserving San José's architectural heritage through education, advocacy and events.

We believe that historic preservation is **good for our quality of life, good for business, and good for the environment**. We aim to integrate a strong commitment to historic preservation into the land use and development decisions of the City of San José that affect historic resources, as well as into the private decisions of property owners and developers. We try to bring owners and developers together to create historically sensitive projects that make economic sense.

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