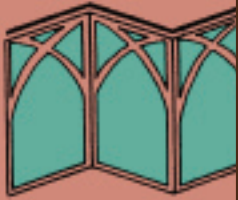
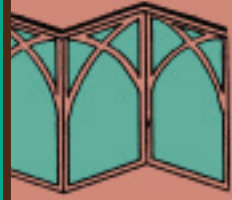


BERKELEY ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE ASSOCIATION



THE BAHHA NEWSLETTER



NO. 153

HOUSE TOUR NUMBER

SPRING 2019



Berkeley Community Theatre Threatened?— see page 4



Garber House

THE BAHA NEWSLETTER

NO. 153

SPRING 2019



Berkeley Community Theatre

C O N T E N T S

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- BAHA's website includes notices of events, a list of Berkeley landmarks, illustrated essays, and more: berkeleyheritage.com/
- BAHA also maintains a blog where stories and notices of immediate interest are posted in a timely manner: baha-news.blogspot.com/

Cover: Berkeley Community Theatre (Corlett & Gutterson, 1937–50) in the Civic Center. From the opening day program, 1950, BAHA Archives. Above left: The Garber House, "Belle-Rose," (Wright & Saunders, 1879), site of the spring House Tour. From An Illustrated History of the University of California by William Carey Jones, 1894. Right: The Berkeley Community Theatre nearing completion, c. 1949. BAHA Archives.

BAHA PRESERVATION AWARDS: NOMINATION DEADLINE

It's almost April 15th, and that means nominations for BAHA Preservation Awards are due. We took a hiatus from our Awards program last year, but it returns for 2019. We have last year's nominations under consideration, but also welcome additional nominations.

If you know of a project that is a good example of historic preservation in Berkeley, let us know! We are interested in restorations and careful building remodels, accomplished sympathetically with an understanding of how to reinvigorate and complement historic buildings. Ideally, the project should be visible from the street, but interior work also can be nominated. Nominations do not need to be designated Landmarks, and small projects are as worthy of

consideration as large ones.

All projects must have been completed by April 15 (projects still under construction can be nominated, but will be considered in future years).

We need the exact address and, ideally, the name and contact information of the property owner so they can be contacted for a committee visit and further project details. (However, even if you know only the address and not the owner information, don't hesitate to nominate the project.)

Send BAHA your nominations by April 15 and we will pass them on to the Awards Committee (baha@berkeleyheritage.com). A Preservation Awards event will be held later this year to honor the winners.

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The BAHA Newsletter is published quarterly by the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association and is sent to all members of the Association. Contents of this issue © 2019 by the Berkeley Architectural Heritage Association, P.O. Box 1137, Berkeley, California 94701. tel: (510) 841-2242; e-mail: baha@berkeleyheritage.com; website: www.berkeleyheritage.com.
Produced: March 2019. Contributors this issue: Anthony Bruce, Steven Finacom.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BAHA is a non-profit—a durable, middle-aged, one now, but still looking to the future—and at the core of our governance structure is our Board of Directors. Board members and officers are elected each May at our Annual Meeting for the general membership.

We are looking for a few additional good women or men to serve on the Board in the coming year.

The responsibilities of Board members are simple. The term is for one year (June to June, essentially) although it's not uncommon for our Board members to be re-elected. We ask Board members to be fundamentally committed to historic preservation—that's our mission—although we understand that not everyone will always agree on the best strategy for every preservation issue.

The Board meets once a month, typically on the third Monday evening. We hear reports from the staff, discuss upcoming events and activities, and plan for the future. The Board regularly reviews and approves expenditures, and approves an annual budget.

We hope that each Board member will take an active interest and become involved in at least one part of the organization, such as events, archives, research, publications, or preservation action, and participate in a committee on that topic. We are a “working board,” not an honorary one, in that respect.

We are also flexible with time commitments. Some Board members give several hours a week to BAHA volunteer activities. Others, for various reasons, can only participate in the Board meetings, but we value their input.

Do you live in the general Berkeley area, are you familiar with BAHA, do you believe in our mission as a historic preservation and education organization, and do you have some volunteer time or expertise to share? If you do, and would like to be considered for the Board, please email the office. We would love to hear from, and consider, you.

Steven Finacom,
President

ANNUAL MEETING: MAY 30

Mark your calendar for BAHA's 2019 Annual Membership Meeting, which will be held at the Hillside Club on the evening of Thursday, May 30. Meet other supporters of BAHA, old and new, and participate in the election of officers and directors for the 2019–20 year. Members, watch your mail and e-mail for the official invitation in May.

COMMUNITY ASSET THREATENED

BERKELEY has what was once the largest indoor theater space in the western United States: the magnificent Berkeley Community Theatre. The drum-shaped, white-painted building sits on the northern edge of the Berkeley High School campus and was planned to serve not only the large high school population, but the general community—hence the name.

Alarms were raised last year over the future of the building when the Berkeley Unified School District (BUSD) discussed it as part of its ongoing facilities planning process. This process has a complex history, but one plan promulgated in studies commissioned by the BUSD was to significantly alter the interior of the huge auditorium, cutting up the more than 3,000-seat space into a 1,200-seat box-like theater, surrounded by new classrooms and offices built in the rest of the auditorium and the balcony.

The cost of this “master plan” for the building was estimated at close to \$130 million, with the ironic end result being a theater space that would be unusable for large events. The historic character of the curving, Moderne theater interior would also be completely compromised. Community members and the Landmarks Preservation Commission began to look at the issues. It seemed apparent that the BUSD viewed the building as a white elephant that existed primarily to serve the high school, not the broader community.

The good news is that in recent months, BUSD appears to have backed off from this approach and indicated that more study is needed, and that the District has not yet concluded the interior of the main theater should be reduced in size. BUSD also doesn’t have the tens of millions of additional dollars it would cost to accomplish this project.

Two projects *are* currently funded for the Community Theatre. One is a “gut and remodel” of the classroom wing (at the northeast) where practice and other spaces for band, orchestra, dance, and other performing arts classes would be reconfigured and rebuilt. This project is scheduled to go ahead, as is a seismic upgrade of the whole building.

The future of the main theater space still hangs in doubt. During the remainder of this year, and next, as BUSD discusses facilities planning and possible future bond issues, there needs to be an active community presence advocating for the importance of restoring and reusing the theater properly.

History argues that the Community Theatre be restored to its original glory, at full seating size, and managed and used for both school and community activities. (BUSD already has a design concept that would allow access to the Theatre through a courtyard from Allston Way without bringing the public onto the school campus proper).

Through the decades, this exceptional building has hosted innumerable concerts, performances, lectures, and public meetings. Entertainers and international figures from the Dalai Lama to Desmond Tutu, from the Grateful Dead to Jimi Hendricks to Elton John, have appeared there in front of sold-out audiences.

The theater has hosted full-scale Broadway musicals and was expressly designed for theater organ concerts as well. Last fall, it was the site of a packed election rally with Bernie Sanders. It has more seats in one room than Oakland’s Paramount or Fox theaters, or Zellerbach Hall on the University campus. A properly restored Community Theatre would be a tremendous asset to Berkeley as well as a source of income for BUSD or City programs.

The Community Theatre is also a linchpin for a revitalized Civic Center. The nearby Veterans Memorial Building, City Hall, and Civic Center Park all have potential for hosting public and private events, but they don’t have an indoor space that can host thousands of people at once. That space is the Community Theatre. With the full size theater in operation, and with the large number of hotel rooms under construction or already located Downtown, Berkeley could finally host mid-sized conferences, conventions, and similar events in the center of town.

A 1998 study done for BUSD by Dakota Enterprises, Inc., concluded: “the bottom line . . . is that the Berkeley Community Theatre can be a viable economic asset of the Berkeley Unified School District and a valuable part of the cultural life of Berkeley, but to do so BCT must be seen as a *community asset*, not just a high school auditorium” (emphasis in original).

That is the same approach that must be taken today. Although the Community Theatre may be owned by the BUSD, it was built with the intention to serve the whole Berkeley and Bay Area community. The BUSD, City of Berkeley, and private groups should work together to refurbish and bring back into full use this civic jewel.

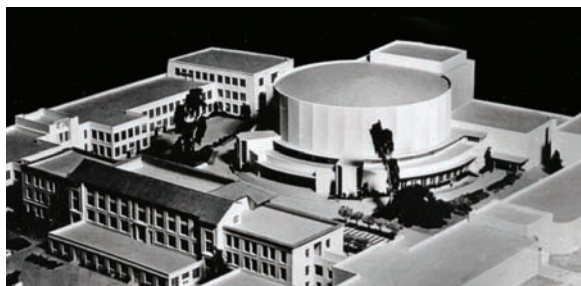
... THE BERKELEY COMMUNITY THEATRE

BOTH the citizens of Berkeley and Berkeley High School students waited a very long time for the completion of an auditorium that would serve both the artistic needs of the community and the everyday needs of a growing student body. The sleek and monumental Berkeley Community Theatre was designed by Henry Gutterson and William G. Corlett in 1938, and was dedicated with great fanfare on June 5, 1950. What took so long? After the steel frame of the building, with its immense circular main auditorium, was completed, a world war intervened and construction was halted so that building materials could be diverted instead to the war effort.

An article by Don Dudley in the June 1950 issue of *Opera and Concert* conveys the excitement generated by the newly completed community asset. “The building is planned primarily for the use of the public school department, but the needs of the city as a whole have been given equal consideration. The result of that planning is a magnificently equipped theater, capable of bandying comparison with such an edifice as San Francisco’s War Memorial Opera House. It stands ready to do duty as a headquarters for musical and dramatic activities of all sorts for all residents of the community.” During its inaugural year, the Berkeley Community Theatre planned to host Vladimir Horowitz, the Monte Carlo Ballet, and the San Francisco Symphony, among others.

The author went on to say, “The tremendous sweep of the auditorium’s exterior is broken by arresting and symbolic figures of giant size; fitting expressions of the structure they grace. Of them, Robert B. Howard, their creator, has said, ‘It is hoped the people of Berkeley will see in these works some expression of the great democratic and cultural traditions their city has offered so generously to the community, the nation, and the world. The unusually complete facilities of this great building, offering not only the auditorium and its stage for dramatic and other theater use, but also its extensive system of studios, and its exhibition galleries for painting and sculpture; making this truly a cultural center, and immediately suggested the fine arts symbolism.’”

The striking and unexpected color scheme of the auditorium, which is immediately noticed by anyone entering the space, is explained by Mr. Dudley: “In working out the color scheme, the architects gave first



A circa 1938 architects’ model of the Berkeley High School campus, showing the monumental scale of the Berkeley Community Theatre. BAHA Archives.

consideration to a feeling of youth and freshness. The wife of architect Gutterson was largely responsible for the color tones ultimately used in the theater. The core theme actually was gleaned from an Oriental print in the Gutterson library. To bring the walls closer to both stage and audience an ‘intrusive coral’ was used and repeated in the ceiling. Because underlying materials are of different composition, the coral changes tone, sweeping from a deep color to a light, delicate shade. Triple rails of bronze, introducing a warm note, are picked up again in front of the stage where a unique bronze fan provides illumination for the orchestra pit.

“Color precedes the guest at the Berkeley Community Theatre. At the main entrance, after a brick terrace, the vestibule is paved in terrazzo [with a green] background, introducing the first tone of one of the predominant colors inside [green carpet and upholstery in the auditorium]. The foyer floor is black, marbleized in green; the walls are finished in Oriental wood panels.”

The article concluded: “Berkeley residents have a suitable place within their city limits for housing symphony orchestras, touring ballet companies, and nationally known recitalists, as well as orchestras, drama groups, and recitalists from their own city. Here is a community endeavor which will not end with an imposing but empty memento. It will endure, through its constant use, as a monument to the efforts of a progressive citizenry and their public officials.”

The Berkeley Community Theatre was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1998 as part of a Civic Center Historic District application prepared by Susan Cerny, Jerri Holan, and Linda Perry. The theater was designated City of Berkeley Landmark No. 176 in 1992.

LATEST BERKELEY LANDMARKS

Landmark Applications are Accessible Online

Landmark No. 329

Thomas and Louise Hicks House
Chapin A. Martin, builder (1904)
2901 Benvenue Avenue at Russell Street
Designated: 1 March 2018

THE Arts & Crafts-style Hicks House, built by Chapin A. Martin, is one of the most distinctive and best-preserved houses in the Elmwood district. It was among the earliest houses constructed in the Berry-Bangs Tract, and the first house on its block. The Hicks House retains integrity of location, design, materials, setting, feeling, and association.

The Hicks House is distinguished by a cross-gabled roof with flaring eaves and upturned bargeboards; a symmetrical *façade* marked by large twin gables; a shingled second story overhanging a first story clad in heavily textured stucco; decorative rafter-tails in the eaves under the second story; an abundance of original wood-sash windows with latticed lights; clinker-brick base skirt, porch columns, porch parapets, and chimneys; and a central recessed portico with a heavy timber beam, exposed ceiling joists, and clinker-brick pilasters flanking the front door.

Landmark No. 330

George Wilson House
M. J. Welch, architect (1885–86)
2415 Blake Street
Designated: 6 December 2018

DESIGNED by a prolific San Francisco architect, this small Italianate cottage was constructed a decade after the 1875 subdivision of the Leonard Tract, which had been open farmland until and shortly after that time. As such, the Wilson House represents one of the few original surviving structures in the tract.



The Hicks House. Steven Finacom, c. 2019.

In its early days, the Hicks House was the home of a lumber dealer, followed in rapid succession by two executives of the Sherwin Williams paint company. For 37 years between 1919 and 1956, the Hicks House served as the manse of St. John's Presbyterian Church and was the home of its pastors, notably Rev. Francis Wayland Russell, D.D., and Rev. Stanley Armstrong Hunter, D.D., both of whom were nationally known religious leaders. When St. John's sold the Hicks House in 1956, it became the home and working studio of Mynard and Mary Groom Jones, two well-known concert singers and voice teachers who trained generations of classical singers.



The Wilson House in 1939. Donogh photo, BAHA Archives.

Contrary to prevailing legends that have painted him as a banker who built himself a summer home in Berkeley, George Wilson (1847–1926) was an Irish immigrant who came to America in 1871 and settled in San Francisco, where he worked as a clerk, porter, and night watchman. The Berkeley residence was meant to be the Wilson family’s primary home, but the then-isolated locale soon drove them back to San Francisco. By 1900, Wilson was a widower with four daughters aged eight to sixteen. The Southside neighborhood was developing, and a small commercial center had materialized at the nearby intersection

of Telegraph Avenue and Dwight Way. Beginning in 1902, the Wilsons were again listed in the Berkeley directory. The Blake Street house remained in the family until the early 1970s.

In 1974 the house was bought by Herbert J. Bofinger (1920–1999), an architectural and landscape designer who lived here until his death. In 1979, Bofinger designed a shingled cottage in the Third Bay Tradition style that now sits, embowered by towering redwoods and other greenery, in the deep backyard. The cottage and Bofinger’s lush bird-friendly landscaping, including ponds, are included in the landmark site.

Landmark No. 331.

Torrey House and Cottage

Ernest Coxhead, architect (1905–06);

Walter T. Steilberg, architect (1935)

1 and 5 Canyon Road

Designated: 6 December 2018

THIS Panoramic Hill parcel is distinguished for its three major features: the Frederic & Alice Torrey residence (1905–06), designed by famed architect Ernest Coxhead in the First Bay Tradition style; the elegant Beaux-Arts stairway leading to the house, designed by Torrey’s partner, Henry Atkins; and the Second Bay Tradition shingled cottage atop a three-car Fabricrete garage (1935), designed by noted architect Walter T. Steilberg, who lived next door.

Frederic Cheever Torrey (1864–1935) was a famous art dealer and a partner in the tony San Francisco firm of Vickery, Atkins & Torrey, purveyors of paintings in oil and water color, fine prints, objects of art, and picture frames. In 1913, Torrey caused a major uproar when he purchased the most ballyhooed painting of that year’s Armory Show in New York: Marcel Duchamp’s *Nude Descending a Staircase*. One of the *Nude*’s most frequent observers was a straggly-looking boy of 16 who lived close by at 2350 Prospect Street and often entered the house without knock-



Torrey House when new. BAHA Archives.

ing, selecting a book from the shelves and settling down to read. His name was Thornton Wilder.

The Torrey house, cottage, and stairway form part of the Panoramic Hill Historic District, listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

LANDMARK DESIGNATION OVERTURNED

All three of the landmarks described here were nominated for landmark status by their proud owners. Since our last newsletter (Winter, 2018) a fourth designation by the Landmarks Preservation Commission—Campanile Way on the University campus—was overturned by a majority of the Berkeley City Council.

CLAREMONT'S TANGLEWOOD AND BELROSE

Grand and Gracious Residences on the Grounds of the former Garber and Palache Estates in Claremont Court will Greet Visitors on the BAHHA Spring House Tour, Sunday Afternoon between 1 and 5 o'clock, May 5th



A view along Tanglewood Road today. Anthony Bruce.

SET at the wooded base of the Berkeley Hills, and within the protective embrace of the slope's natural curve, an enchanted enclave awaits. On the afternoon of Sunday, May 5, you will visit grand and gracious residences on secluded, tree-lined streets and along a sun-drenched boulevard, majestically facing the passing world. Tanglewood Road and Belrose Avenue are the centerpieces of this quiet corner of Berkeley's Claremont Court, on land that had been set aside from initial development when the larger, adjacent, subdivision was created in 1907.

Claremont Court had been the site of two small ranches belonging to the Garber and Palache families. After the patriarch of the Palache family died, and after the 1906 devastation of San Francisco created a strong desire for residential neighborhoods in the East Bay, the two families joined forces and, with the expertise of the Mason-McDuffie Company, developed the land as Claremont Court, with a subdivision map filed at the county courthouse in March 1907. The two families, whose homes were at the eastern edge of the tract of land, kept for themselves a large unsubdi



The site of the upcoming tour as it appeared in early 1907, when the hay field and apricot orchards belonging to the Garber and Palache families were being readied for the Claremont Court development. Left to right: "Belle-Rose" (Garber House), "Tanglewood" (home of Juliet Garber and Frank Stringham), "Edgefield" (home of Belle Garber and Whitney Palache), and the under-construction Claremont Hotel. BAHHA Archives, gift of Judith Palache Gregory.

vided section of the property. Here stood the original Garber and Palache homes, “Belle-Rose” (1879) and “Fairview” (even older). Close by were “Edgefield,” the 1894 home of Belle Garber and Whitney Palache, and “Tanglewood” (1905), the home of another Garber daughter, Juliet, and her husband, Frank Stringham, a future mayor of Berkeley.

Eventually this private section, too, was ready for its own transformation into a residential neighborhood. In April 1916, a map—with the prosaic name of “Plot of Tanglewood Road Opening”—was filed at the county, creating a new subdivision from the remaining land of the pioneer families. Juliet Garber Stringham insisted on the right to name the new street, as the Garbers had not been happy with the real estate company’s corruption of “Belle-Rose” into “Belrose” in 1907. Juliet chose “Tanglewood,” the name taken from the title of a favorite book from her childhood, Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *Tanglewood Tales*.



The Garber House as it looked shortly before it was demolished. Berkeley Daily Gazette photo, 1958.



A Tanglewood Road house designed by Ernest Coxhead. Anthony Bruce, 2019.

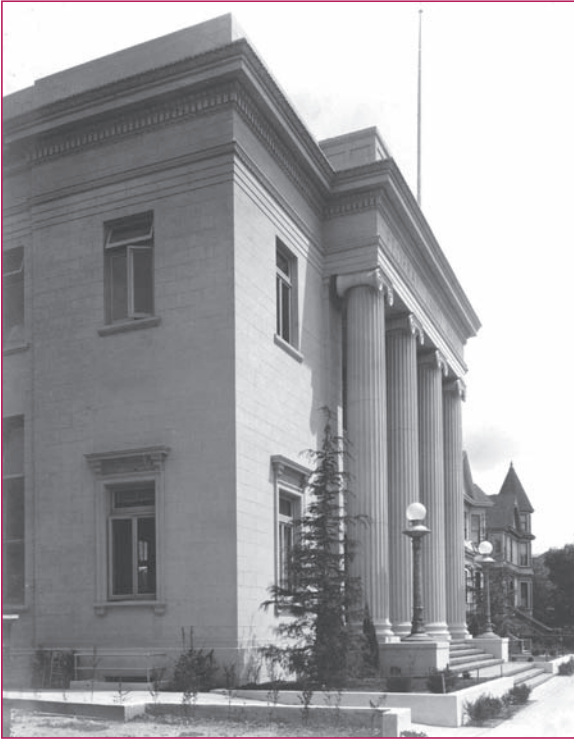
Curving Tanglewood Road followed the contours of the Garbers’ driveway that had led off Claremont Avenue (Fish Ranch Road). Spacious building sites were offered on both sides of Tanglewood, along a newly created block of Garber Street, and along the eastern side of Belrose Avenue. No houses were built here until 1919, most likely due to the upheaval of the First World War. The last lots were built upon in 1927. All of the houses were designed sumptuously, befitting the established character of Claremont Court as Berkeley’s own version of Pacific Heights.

The next chapter in the development of this residential enclave came in 1958. The Garber family home, a fanciful, turreted Victorian country residence, designed by the firm of Wright & Saunders in 1879, was demolished after the death of the last Garber daughter, Lida. New homesites were created in its place. The following year, three Mid-Century Modern houses were built. Surprisingly, these newer houses changed the street’s ambience only slightly, since they are as sumptuous as their neighbors, and their gardens as lush.

Several of the elegant residences will be open on the tour. You will see the work of architects Ernest Coxhead, Walter Ratcliff, William Schirmer (an Oakland architect with only two houses in Berkeley), Roland Stringham (cousin of Frank Stringham), Morrow and Garren, John Bakewell, Jr. (architect of Berkeley’s City Hall), and Roger Lee (a perennial Mid-Century favorite). The sanctuary of St. Clement’s Episcopal Church, designed in redwood by Willis Polk in 1908, will be open. The land upon which the church stands was donated by the Palache family.

Volunteers are needed the day of the tour (in exchange for complimentary admission). Please call Phyllis at 510-508-4389.

AN OLD CIVIC BUILDING IS DEMOLISHED



Federal Land Bank (James W. Plachek, 1922), 2223 Fulton Street. Plachek Collection, BAHA Archives.

SOME HISTORIC BUILDINGS pass from the scene with great controversy. Others seem to simply expire and their departure is largely overlooked.

One of the latter is 2223 Fulton Street, a University campus building on a projecting bulb of land where Fulton curves past Kittredge Street. Demolition began last year when the interior was gutted, and now the entire structure is coming down.

How did this building come about? Although it looks younger, it actually was 97 years old, and in its early years was a prominent civic ornament.

It once stood on the western edge of four square blocks of private homes that the University purchased and moved or demolished in the late 1920s for the construction of Edwards Track Stadium, the Evans Baseball Diamond, and the Men's Gymnasium (now Haas Pavilion).

2223 Fulton was one of only three buildings that remained on their original sites from the now vanished off-campus neighborhood that once lay between Strawberry Creek and Bancroft Way. (The other two remaining buildings are the old First Unitarian Church sanctuary at Bancroft and Dana [Albert C. Schweinfurth, 1898], since rehabilitated by the University as a performing arts facility; and the Architects and Engineers Building just north of Sproul Hall, a modest three-story office structure built by the University in the 1920s on what was then a corner city lot at the intersection of Barrow [*sic*] Lane and Allston Way.)

University accounts of the planned demolition of 2223 Fulton posted online are almost entirely a-historical. The presence of the Institute of East Asian Studies in the building from 1985 to 2014 was noted, but there seems to be no present-day campus awareness of the storied history of the place. Perhaps this is because 2223 Fulton looked for decades like a Modern era—perhaps 1950s—building.

Entombed within the structure, but with elements still visible to the discerning eye, is a neoclassical temple-like building designed in 1922 by James W. Plachek as a home for a regional branch of the Federal Land Bank. It was built by contractor Lawton & Vezey for \$125,000 and featured a lobby “finished in three tones of marble,” and a large banking hall with mezzanine. The building was placed so that it would visually anchor the eastern terminus of Kittredge Street with its classical columned portico and broad brick stairs.

The Federal Land Bank system was created by Congress in 1916, establishing a systemized way for the federal government to assist farmers and ranchers with affordable loans to purchase land and farming supplies, including equipment, seed, and livestock, and to retire higher-interest private mortgages on existing land.

Berkeley's branch was chartered April 3, 1917, one of twelve district land banks throughout the country. Berkeley was a natural site for this activity a century ago because the University of California's large and influential College of Agriculture was headquartered here.

The Berkeley branch of the Federal Land Bank first operated out of rented quarters, then moved to its purpose-built home in Plachek's new building. In 1938 a larger, replacement, home for the Land Bank—also designed by Plachek—was completed at 2180 Milvia Street. This is now the Martin Luther King, Jr., Civic Center Building, where Berkeley City government offices are housed.

The 1922 Land Bank structure was highly praised when it was finished. A review in *The Architect and Engineer* in August 1923 said it “may be safely classed as one of our best examples of traditional classic design. . . . The structure must be seen to be appreciated. Its quiet, simple poise at once suggests a building of semi-public character.” The writer touted the design as an architectural example private banks could emulate. Mrs. Plachek later told BAHA that professors in the architecture department thought the Ionic columns so perfect, that students were asked to sketch them

Local architectural historian Michael Corbett later wrote, “The design drew on Renaissance and classical sources and included an Ionic entrance portico, an entablature and cornice around the front and sides of the building, and decorative frames around windows and the front door. There were iron lamps on either side of brick entry steps. Inside, there were marble floors, Corinthian columns, and bronze hardware.”

During the Depression the building played another public role. Various New Deal programs were located there, including one in which skilled craftsmen and women created models, dioramas, and illustrations for the National Park Service. And from 1946 to 1961 the California Farm Bureau Federation had offices in the building.

In 1949, architect and U.C. Professor Michael Goodman designed a remodel and expansion for the Farm Bureau. Goodman almost completely covered up the classical elements, although the building's original windows survived. Plachek's elegant cylindrical columns were boxed in with turquoise terra cotta panels, and additional floors were added to the building with modern bands of windows across the front. The exterior was painted a flesh pink.

Corbett characterized Goodman's work as “P.W.A.



Demolition of 2223 Fulton Street underway. Steven Finacom, March 2019.

Moderne in the square columns of the base and the International style in the horizontal window bands.”

In 1962, the University of California purchased the building, and the U.C. Press moved there from its two-decade home at the U.C. Printing Plant a block north (now remodeled into the University of California, Berkeley Art Museum). The U.C. Press experienced part of its scholarly and publishing heyday in the building. U.C. Extension also had offices in the building, starting in 1963.

Later, a number of distinguished University programs were temporarily quartered there after their founding, including the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute in its early years, and the Institute of East Asian Studies, mentioned above.

In the early 21st century, the Berkeley campus negotiated a deal with the State of California regarding the seismically “poor” building. If the State would fund the construction of a replacement building for Warren Hall, the University would not request State funds for the seismic retrofit of 2223 Fulton. The building then began surviving on borrowed time, which runs out this year.

By Steven Finacom, with appreciation to Michael Corbett for his research study of the building in 2000.

BAHA GARDEN TENDED

A Day All About Roses



Gregg Lowery explaining rose pruning techniques in the McCreary-Greer House garden. Steven Finacom, 2019.

BAHA had a wonderful garden work day at the McCreary-Greer House, in between the rains, on Sunday, January 13. Organized by BAHA President Steven Finacom and former BAHA Board member Linda Perry, the event focused on winter pruning and care of BAHA's extensive collection of rose bushes.

Our garden, first planted at the turn of the 19th century, is one of few—perhaps the only—estate gardens remaining in Berkeley's College Homestead Tract. It features some four dozen rose bushes, from diminutive hybrid teas to massive climbers. Some were planted by Alice Greer, who saved and owned the house in the 1960s; some perhaps date to the McCreary family era. More recent rose donations are from past BAHA President John McBride.

Volunteers came from both BAHA and the Friends of Vintage Roses, a non-profit based in

Sebastopol that maintains a huge collection of old and heritage roses.

At the start of the BAHA rose event, Gregg Lowery, a nationally known rosarian, gave everyone a thoughtful hands-on tutorial on both the theory and technique of rose pruning. (One surprise: there is no research evidence that shows pruning rose branches at a diagonal is best. Lowery recommended a simple perpendicular cut.)

Next, hard working volunteer crews carefully pruned at least two thirds of the roses, weeded several areas, and cut back overgrowth. Some 20 bins of garden debris were collected, and BAHA Board members Carrie Olson and Leila Moncharsh followed up in subsequent weeks removing the mass of clippings. The work day volunteers were fed with local Extreme Pizza and with gourmet doughnuts brought by Linda Perry from the Anderson Valley.

The garden was put in good shape for the heavy rains of late January and February, and everyone now looks forward to the budding and blossoming of the expertly pruned roses. For extra garden color, we have some pots of daffodils on the back porch by the office door that should come into bloom in March. This year's crop of cinerarias and freesias is coming in well.

We would like to have follow-up garden work parties. If you're interested, please see the note on volunteering elsewhere in this newsletter.

We are also considering a summer event when many of our roses are in bloom. Gregg Lowery would then talk further about roses, using our historic garden as his classroom.

In other garden news, BAHA once again supplied numerous California buckeye seeds from one of our garden trees to the U.C. Botanical Garden for their propagation and sale, and our local blue jays are back in our garden.

Past BAHA President Sarah Wikander is coordinating a long-planned project to upgrade the automatic irrigation in the BAHA garden. The goal is to finish by summer. Many thanks to Sarah

is lending her professional expertise and other resources to this project, and to Leila Moncharsh and Carrie Olson who kept the garden watered the past two summers.

If you wish to know more about the Friends of Vintage Roses, see their website at <http://thefriendsofvintageroses.org>. They are planning a major event, “Rosalia,” on May 18 in Sebastopol. It will feature educational displays and presentations about old roses, as well as a “large sale of

the old and rare roses we have propagated from our collection” and other nursery plants.

The next day, May 19, the Veteran’s Memorial Building in Albany hosts the annual “Celebration of Old Roses” which is a must-go event for many local garden enthusiasts and also has many plants—not just roses—for sale. See <http://www.celebrationofoldroses.org/celebration-of-old-roses.php> for details.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AT BAHA

We depend on our friendly volunteers and members to help BAHA activities go well. Here are six specific volunteer opportunities with BAHA in coming months. Most would involve just a few hours of your time. For all of these opportunities contact the BAHA office, preferably by e-mail, at baha@berkeleyheritage.com.

House Tour.

As always, we welcome both returning and new House Tour volunteers. You will receive complimentary admission to the House Tour (a \$40 to \$50 value) if you volunteer for half of the tour time—just two hours. The tour is in a compact area, so the travel time between houses will be very short.

Volunteer shifts generally involve helping to staff a house, but there are other opportunities, including assistance with the reception. We are particularly in need of several volunteers who can be the core staff for our book table.

Contact the office if you would like to be a new volunteer. If you’re a previous volunteer, please watch for information about tour details and assignments in the mail or by email.

Mailing Parties.

We have several mass mailings coming up in the next few months, including the spring newsletter and the May Annual Meeting announcement. Can you volunteer some time to help with envelope stuffing and labeling at the BAHA office? A few more people helping will make the mailings go very fast. Let us know, and we can then alert you by e-mail.

Book Festival.

This year the Bay Area Book Festival in Downtown Berkeley will unfortunately occur on our House Tour weekend. For that reason, we’re not going to have a booth at the Festival, since all our volunteers and energy will be needed on Sunday at the House Tour. However, we do have the opportunity to sell some BAHA books in the Berkeley History Center run by the Berkeley Historical Society during the Book Festival festivities. We will need a couple of volunteers who can help staff the History Center in the Veterans Memorial Building for a few hours between 10 and 5 on Saturday, May 4.

Research Training.

One of BAHA’s core activities is opening the office at least once a week for research. People visit and call with all sorts of historical inquiries and projects; our staff and volunteers help guide them through BAHA’s extensive archival resources and suggest other research options.

We would like to train a small group of volunteers to be available as research assistants at the office. This will be especially helpful if you would also like to know how to pursue an architectural research project of your own, such as documenting your own home or neighborhood.

Would you like some in-office research training, probably during the summer, and then be able to help BAHA out with occasional duties at the office?

Annual Meeting.

If you’ve attended any of BAHA’s Annual Meetings and Preservation Awards Presentations, you know that the event runs smoothly with a group of volunteers helping to serve dinner, welcome attendees, and set up and take down furnishings. The 2019 Annual Meeting is planned for Thursday, May 30. Would you volunteer an hour or two of time that evening, or also help with the advance planning?

Garden Work Parties.

After professionally renovating the irrigation system in the garden, by summer there are likely to be more volunteer work parties to help with garden tasks, including pruning, weeding, and general clean-up. No experience needed!

Would you like to be on a mailing list for announcements of periodic garden work days? Let BAHA President Steven Finacom know directly at berkeley1860@gmail.com

TWO BIG THANK-YOU'S!

BAHA is fortunate to own the McCreary-Greer House where our offices are located. But the nearly 120-year-old mansion requires a great deal of upkeep and investment. BAHA thanks BAHA Corporate Secretary **Carrie Olson** for her diligent volunteer oversight of the major job of repainting our historic McCreary-Greer House last year. From soliciting bids, to working with the painter, Arana Craftsman Painters, to overseeing the repair of deteriorated wooden elements on the front porch and rear of the house, Carrie spent scores of hours managing the project.

Carrie has also taken the lead in updating the furnishings of BAHA's three fully furnished rental apartments at the McCreary-Greer House, all necessarily accomplished in the short time-frame between tenants' stays. The rents, carefully managed by Treasurer Stephanie Manning, provide most of the income to cover major house investments, such as the repainting.



The McCreary-Greer House, repainted. Anthony Bruce, 2018.

We also extend BAHA's heartfelt appreciation to BAHA volunteer website editor **Daniella Thompson** who initiated a "Network for Good" online fundraiser for BAHA last Fall. Her effort raised about \$1, 500, to date, in gifts to BAHA from others on Facebook. Daniella also posts most of the material on BAHA's active Facebook page.



Daniella Thompson in 2014.

IN MEMORIAM

Marian K. Altman	Joseph Redding Mixer
Donald A. Bell	Madeline Holcomb Mixer
Marian Binkley	Eleanor Moscow
Robert Bruce Bishop	Zetta-Lynne Poli
Robert Pack Browning	Dee S. Pruyin
Barbara Bull	Shelley Rideout
Barbara Haskell Cadwalader	Deborah Ritchey
Rosalie Dwyer	James H. Samuels
Gene Genter	Paul Slater
George Edward Goldman	Franz Snyder
Carolyn Hartsough	Ralph L. Stevenson
Sheila Keppel	Rosemary Stoller
Patricia Krevans	Molly Sullivan
David Littlejohn	Roger C. Thompson
David Lowenthal	Patricia Robertson Todhunter
Sheila Maybeck Bathurst	Dr. Sylvia Tower
Jeanne McHugh	Dr. Edward Waller

GIFTS TO BAHA

- From **Julie Nachtwey**: a large panoramic photo of Claremont and The Uplands in 1908 by early Claremont resident Walter Chowen.
- From **Pam Valois**: *An Expression of Vision*, on Maybeck's Principia College; from **Bill Kostura**: *Berkeley, The Town and Gown of It* by George Pettitt.
- Monetary gifts: **Roland Brandel, Rosalind Gordon, Gordon McKellar, JoAnn B. Price, Senta Pugh-Chamberlain, Michael Rice, Goodwin Sammel, Jim Sharp, William M. Sharp, Kristine Steensma, and Robert Tucker.**
- Monetary gifts in memory of Paul Grunland from **Eleanor Bade, and Barbara and Sam Skelly.**
- Donation from **Barbara Epler** to the McCreary-Greer House Preservation Fund in memory of Robert Hunter McCreary IV.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

BAHA welcomes the following people who have joined BAHA since the last Newsletter went out.

James Angus
Jacqueline Barber
Janet Barton &
Barry Balk
Laurel Benjamin
Aaron Brown
David Campbell
Karen Chapman
Christine Codding
Laurie & John Cullen
Cynthia Curtner
Karen Dreyfus
Paul Eriksen
Peter Ewell &
Helga Recke
Kenneth Fechtner

Lawrence Furiga
Mariana Gallardo
Liz Ginno
Patricia Grisham
Peter Guerrero
Peg Healy
Cynthia Hegedus
Stephanie Hulka
Robert Johnson
Smita Joshi
Helen Kennedy
Denise & Mark Koker
Carol Kunita
Gregory La Blanc
Nancy Lehrkind
Margaret J. Linden

Eleanor Lyon &
Matt Marostica
Sheri Madden
Rodger March family
Iris Markus
Carly McFadden
Bonnie G. Meyer
Marnie Fricke Mufti
Leslie & Dennis Olle
Stefanie Olsen
Pam Ormsby
Aysun Ozkose
Patricia Paulson
Chris Porto
Mario Raya &
Uzziel Prado
David Richman
Christopher Riess &
Leonard Mudrock

Janet Roberts
Amy Robeson
Terry Robinson-Kochi
Tom Robinson
Jan Robitscher
Yasmin Sanie-Hay
Heidi Schmidt
Leigh Schneider
Samuli Seppala
Brad Sinclair
Lisa Shaffer
Kieron Slaughter
Holly Smith
Donna Storey
Catherine Tenner
William Theobald
George Tucker
Alfred Twu
Jodee Upjohn

Anna Urrea
Chris Walker
Virginia Warheit
Wayne Whitney
Sam Zuckerman

CONTRIBUTING

Sandra Ayer
Paula Bauer
Jerome Buttrick
John J. Costello
Andrew Jeffries
Maria Keenan
Carolyn McNiven
Liriola Quiel
Samuli Seppala
Julie Snyder
Star Grocery
Heather Watson

SUSTAINING

Virginia Stock

HONORARY

Jenny & Ian Appleyard
Edward L. Bennett
Kathleen &
Jonathan DeYoe
Thomas Francis &
George Perezvelez
Jaclyn Mercedes &
Songjune Lee
Wendy Pulling
Joan & Don Wilson
Adam Woltag

AND RENEWED MEMBERS:

John Aronovici, Eleanor Bade, Priscilla Birge, Siegfried E. Brockmann, Norah Brower, Lisa Bruce, Jim Canty, Fran Cappelletti, Jay Claiborne, Elizabeth Crews, Michael Darby & Toni Martin, Gary Deluhery, Bruce Dodd, S. Entwistle, Lisa Esherick, Sandy & Tom Friedland, Phyllis & Phil Gale, Gale Garcia, Neysa Garrett, Clare Griffith, Nadine Hack, Thacher Hurd, Claudia & James Ingols, Don Jacobus, Sara P. Knight, Julie Lehman, Marston Leigh, Mary Lowenthal, Daisy Marshall, Howard Mel, Julie Nachtwey, Doris Nassiry, Ginger Ogle, Gary Parsons, Therese Pipe, Hellen Quan, Nancy & John Randolph, Charlotte Rea, Richard Riffer, George Strauss, Susan Subtle, Tarpoff & Talbert, Janice Thomas, Brian Ullensvang & Mary Brennan, Pam Valois, Sayre Van Young & Diane Davenport, Dave Weinstein, Jean Weiss, Madeline

Wells, Patty Whisler, Alison Zaremba & Dan Marvin, Bill Zerkle, Hale Zukas

CONTRIBUTING

Margaret Anderson & James Sheehan, Sheila & Lloyd Andres, Jeffrey Angell, Pam Atkinson, Sue & Richard Bender, Carol Berkenkotter, Jacqueline Beth & Keith Miller, Mr. & Mrs. Robert B. Bishop, Carol M. Bowen & Christopher R. Bowen, Zelda Bronstein, Kevin Bruce, Ann & Patrick Buechner, C.E.N.A., Bill Clemens, Kim & Kazumi Cranney, Marguerite Cromptier, Jean & Phil Darnall, Lynne & Audel Davis, Blair Dean, Mary Hope Dean, Amy Di Costanzo, Candice Economides & David Hill, Ted Feldsher & Sally McLaughlin, Jim Fisher, Sally Freedman, Kate & Dan Funk, Sarah Gill, Blake Gilmore, Norman Givant, Stephen & Elizabeth Katz Goodman, Margaret Han, Jeanne Harrah-Johnson, Jacci Harris, Larry Hartsough,

Trish & Tony Hawthorne, Lucia Howard, J. Pearce Hurley, Sandra Innes, Ann & Dobbie Jenkins, Bill Jetton/Jetton Construction, Dan Johnson, Jason Kaldis, Kathleen Kelly & Allan Gatzke, Lee Kempf & Carl Kempf, Jeremy Knight, Sally Levinson, Vivian & Alfredo Lopez, M. Lovell, Robert Marsh, Suzanne Masuret, Ann May & Rod Freeland, George McCord, Yvonne McCredie, Daniel McDonald & Alex Komoroske, Christina & Michael Meyer, Sally Miller (in memory of Caroline & David Miller), Margaret Odrain, Barbara & Philip O'Hay, Jana Olson/Panache Lighting, Lorraine Osmundson, John Parman & Kathryn Snowden, George Petty, Nancy Pietrafesa & John Danner, Judy & Fred Porta, Caroline Purves, Richard Rahm, Kent Rasmussen, Judith & John Ratcliffe, Charlotte Rea, Gayle Richardson, Maxine Risley, Barbara Robben, Linda & Stephen Rosen, Laurie & Ken Sarachan, Melinda & Roy Samuelson, Nan Sandusky, Pam Shan-

drick, Joan & Ron Sipherd, Daniel Smith/DSA Architects, Carolyn & Marvin Smoller, David Snippen, Alison L. Steel, Susan Taylor, Paul Templeton, Rebecca & Robert Tracy, John R. Underhill, Marilyn Willats, Sara Williams, Steven R. Winkel, Katinka Wyle.

SUSTAINING

Abrams/Millikan, Lorna & Warren Bryne, Fredrica Drotos, Susan & Charles Fadley, & Keith Fisher, John Gordon & Janis Mitchell, John Lineweaver, Diane Lynch, Sandra McKenzie, Richard Marcus & Andrea Saltzman, Joan & Donald Mastronarde, Daniel McDonald & John A. Komorske, Jean & Roger Moss, Jean K. Reilly, John Northmore Roberts, Thornwall Properties, Inc., Ann K. U. Tussing.

PATRON

Howard Arendtson & David Bigham, Eunice M. Childs, Deborah Finch, Kathie & Jack Longinotti, Mara Melandry, Megan Micco.

HONORARY

Dianne Ayres & Tim Hansen, Carl Bunch, Peggy Grunland, Nancy Pakter, Don & Marsha Kay Lehmer



McCreary-Greer House garden in springtime. Anthony Bruce.



BAHA SPRING HOUSE TOUR

CLAREMONT'S JANGLEWOOD AND BELROSE



Sunday afternoon, May 5, from 1 to 5 o'clock
Admission: \$50 (\$40 BAHA Members)

Visit several of the gracious and stately houses that were built in a small residential development that had been created in 1916 in a quiet corner of the Garber and Palache properties. See works of architects Ernest Coxhead, Willis Polk, Walter Ratcliff, William Schirmer, Roland Stringham, Morrow and Garren, Claude Barton, and Roger Lee.

Volunteers receive complimentary admission. Call (510) 508-4389 to help on tour day.

A FIRST, SUCCESSFUL, CERNY LECTURE

ON THURSDAY, September 13, 2018, BAHA held the inaugural Annual Susan Dinkelspiel Cerny Lecture featuring Richard Guy Wilson, Commonwealth Professor of Architectural History from the University of Virginia.

Wilson spoke with insight, wisdom, and humor about how California's original preservation movement—saving the deteriorated Spanish era California Missions—began in the late 19th century and not only helped preserve those reminders of California's earliest historic period, but stimulated understanding of the need to continue to study and preserve the architecture and history of the still-young state.

Well over a hundred people attended the lecture which was held in the Berkeley City Club. It was followed by an informal reception across the street in the front parlor of BAHA's historic McCreary-Greer House.

The talk was the first in a series of annual lectures that will be offered by BAHA in memory of Susan Cerny, who contributed a lifetime of work towards the preservation of historic and architecturally significant structures, and served BAHA as president, board member, author of two editions of *Berkeley Landmarks*, lead editor of *41 Berkeley Walking Tours*, and as an indefatigable volunteer.

The lecture was endowed by generous private donors who wished to permanently honor Susan's memory. With this funding we were able to offer the event admission-free and open to the general public. BAHA member Richard Wessell donated a beautiful antique framed photo of the Carmel Mission as a thank-you gift to the speaker.



Joe Cerny and Richard Guy Wilson at the lecture. Steven Finacom, 2018.