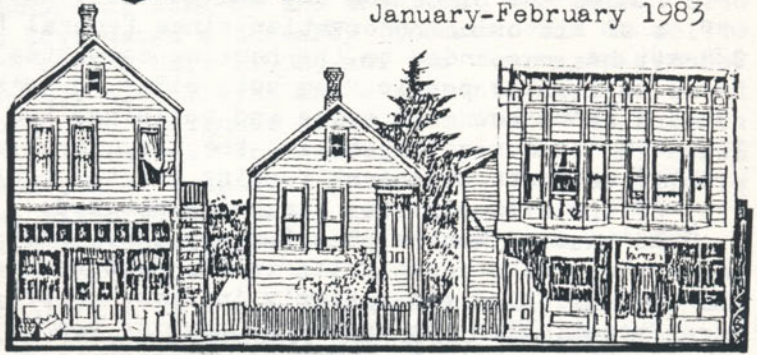


**THE BERKELEY
ARCHITECTURAL
HERITAGE
NEWSLETTER**

No. 41

January-February 1983

**Historic
Districts
under attack**

In recent weeks, attacks have been levied against BAH's preservation efforts on two key issues: the Delaware Street Historic District in Ocean View and the 200 unit apartment building on the Deaf and Blind Schools site.

Although the two are separate issues, the local press has covered both controversies as one, in an effort to focus public attention on the claims of the Gray Panthers of Berkeley. The effect has been generally upsetting to preservation activists who have been working for years to see these 2 sites restored.

Basically the Panthers' housing committee claims that the creation of low income housing should take a high priority in Berkeley, a fact that no one disputes. However, the committee goes on to demand the demolition of all the structures on Delaware Street to make space for this housing. This demand comes as a surprise to many, since for years some of these same people have fought vigorously to save the old houses. Also, for the last 3 years, neighborhood representatives have been meeting with city staff and councilmembers to plan for 62 new low income apartment units and the restoration of Delaware Street. BAH's support for Delaware Street began earlier, with the survey of Berkeley's historic buildings in 1978. In 1980 Lesley Emmington and Stephanie Manning, committed to restoration, met with Lee Coe and all three agreed that although 2 old houses would be lost, the 62 units were worth building and Delaware Street could remain and be restored. Yet Lee Coe is now the leading spokesman for demolishing Delaware Street. However, support for restoration is strong among City Councilmembers, the Landmarks Commission, the Project Area Committee, the Berkeley Historical Society, and BAH to go through with the project. The buildings are being prepared for new foundations, and Bill Coburn, AIA, has been retained as restoration architect. The 62 new units are now under construction, and the use of Delaware Street for more apartments would make this some of the densest housing in the city, not to mention that the city would lose its historic district. Vista College professor Charles Wollenberg has said that protection of these buildings would "help to protect the historic social composition of Berkeley not only as an upper class university town but as a city of working people living near the local industries that employ them." →

On the Deaf and Blind Schools site, the housing committee is doggedly pushing forward the construction of 200 units for the elderly and is doing its best to discredit BAHA and the Landmarks Preservation Commission which recently criticized the design for the housing as being too dense, taking up open space, and not considering the renovation of existing buildings. The entire site, structures and landscaping, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and plans for any changes will have to be approved by the State Office of Historic Preservation since federal funds are involved. The City Council has responded to the housing committee's pressure by forming a task force to include people from both sides to work out a solution. A question remains as to how much space and buildings the University can or should release for this use. hopefully, the task force will work out a solution to this problem so that government funding for the housing is not lost and the integrity of the historic site can be maintained.

As ensuing months pose further challenges to historic preservation, BAHA members can take consolation in the fact that all City Council candidates in the last election spoke highly in favor of preservation, especially on Delaware Street. With the Panthers' housing committee mounting its caustic anti-preservation publicity campaign, preservationists should write letters to the Gazette, Daily Cal, Grassroots, and Montclairion in support of the city's historic districts and in support of the Landmarks Preservation Ordinance.

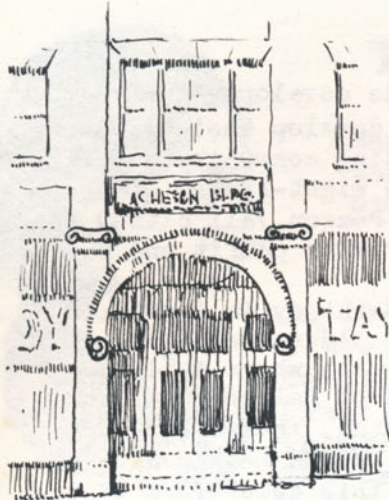
--Stephanie Manning

New Look at Landmarks Ordinance

Berkeley Design Advocates, a group formed by members of the local AIA chapter, which has been meeting for several months to consider ideas for a design review ordinance, has formed a subcommittee to study possible revisions to the Landmark Ordinance. The subcommittee was established at BDA's monthly breakfast meeting on Feb. 2, at the request of Frank Mighetto, who representing Mrs. Reeves testified against landmark designation of the Acheson buildings (see LFC article). The subcommittee, chaired by Kenneth Cardwell, will look into possible changes of the Landmark Ordinance and will survey the downtown and create a list of significant structures. It should be remembered that BAHA in 1977-79 conducted a survey emphasizing downtown for the State Office of Historic Preservation, and developed a list of 73 downtown properties considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

BDA is also concerned about an amendment to the Landmark Ordinance proposed by JoAnn Price and adopted by the Landmarks Commission. It would require that no demolition permit be allowed for a city landmark following the year's suspension required by the ordinance, until the owner of the property provides: (1) bona fide working drawings, (2) verified copy of the funding agreement, (3) a proposed date of completion for the new building to go up on the site. This amendment is a remedy for the situation that has occurred, for example, at Milvia and Addison, where the George Fape Flaning Mill was demolished last year, and the owner now apparently has no financing for a new building.

--Arlene Silk, Landmarks Commission & BAHA president



The Acheson Physicians' Building was named Berkeley's 63rd landmark by the Landmarks Preservation Commission on January 17. The MacFarlane's building was declared a Structure of Merit. The 1908 Physicians' Building is the third commercial work by the architect George Mohr to be designated a Berkeley landmark. The other two are Oxford Hall (1906) and the Bonita Apartments (1904). With 7 ayes and 2 abstentions, the motion to designate cited "architectural & historical reasons. The Acheson Physicians' Building represented a special period of downtown Berkeley history, and was a keystone of the whole classical development of the downtown between 1903 and 1910."

At the continued public hearing architects Frank Mighetto, representing owner/executor Agnes Reeves, and Kenneth Cardwell testified against both buildings. Bruce Judd, who serves on the State Historic Resources Commission which screens buildings to be placed on the National Register, conveyed his support for both buildings, which he felt would qualify for the Register and for the substantial tax credits available for rehabilitation. At an earlier public hearing in October, Brad Paul, formerly of the Western Regional Office of the National Trust, likewise presented the tax advantages and supported the designation.

Mrs. Reeves has appealed the LPC decision to the City Council, and has been quoted in the local press saying she wants to demolish both buildings. The City Council will review the matter at its March 8 meeting. The Acheson Physicians' Building narrowly escaped the 1923 fire, when dynamite charges were set so that the building could act as a fire break. But the wind changed at the last moment, and the building was spared. It has remained a landmark downtown ever since, and would be an excellent candidate for restoration and recycling. It has been identified as eligible for the National Register in the State Historic Resources Inventory conducted by BAH in 1977-79 for the State Office of Historic Preservation, and is listed as a historic resource in the West Side Study conducted for the University of California. It would be tragic for the Physicians' Building to have survived the devastating 1923 fire only to be lost to the pressures of development today.

At the February 14 LPC meeting, 2 buildings were considered but rejected for landmark status: the City Hall Annex at 1835 Allston (1925, by James Flaherty) and the Lucky Store at 1451 Shattuck (1947, from plans by industrial designer Raymond Loewy). Lucky's was the first building to be referred and initiated under the Neighborhood Commercial Preservation Ordinance, passed by the voters last November. In other business, the LPC approved plans for the new roof of the addition to the West Berkeley Health Center (formerly West Berkeley Children's Day Care Center, built by Walter Ratcliff Jr. in 1927), and agreed to meet with the Gray Panthers to discuss plans for new housing units on the California Schools for the Deaf and Blind site.

--Arlene Silk, Landmarks Commission & BAH president

downtown in the 80's

Potential conflicts always exist in any area-wide development effort. These conflicts usually occur when owners' rights to develop their property in the strongest economic way come up against overriding community concerns. Such concerns might be public amenities, safety, view sight-lines, or preservation of desired historic characteristics. For this reason, all cities regulate development to assure a fair balance between private profit and public need.

In the case of historic preservation, downtown Berkeley is fortunate that economics itself dictates renovation of existing older structures and relegates new development in most cases to vacant parcels where building costs are far cheaper. To wit: the recent renovations of Palmers/Shattuck Square, the old Roos Bros. building, the Studio Building, Trumpetvine Court, the Shattuck Hotel, the Library and Post Office, the Pasand Restaurant, the Boone Academy, and the Shattuck Apartments building. This quiet form of re-development, called adaptive reuse, has been marching gently forward for the past five years affecting well over a million square feet of our downtown's most beautiful older structures and representing a recent cash investment by property owners of well over ten million dollars in downtown Berkeley to date. Such reuse is encouraged by the attractive federal tax credits available for rehabilitation of historic buildings.

This huge investment can be expected to continue at even a faster pace in coming years with the stimulus of new development. It is the type and character of the "new development" which is the overriding concern of all Berkeley's citizens and which is the leading subject of debate about downtown Berkeley today.

Some of the groups leading the discussion on downtown planning are: the University of California and its West Side Study, the City of Berkeley and its Planning and Landmarks Commissions, Berkeley Architectural Heritage and its Downtown Steering Committee, the Council of Neighborhood Associations and its member organizations, the architectural profession and their Berkeley Design Advocates, and transit and environmental groups such as Urban Ecology.

It is my hope that a conscientious planning effort will be continued and battle lines won't be drawn over single small issues such as landmarks versus owners' right to develop--issues which can cloud the cooperative overview so necessary to arrive at good design guidelines for Berkeley's heart, Downtown Berkeley. Good new development should stimulate, not detract from, the revitalization of our older city center. Let us work together to see that all succeed in Downtown Berkeley.

--Jeffrey Leiter, BAHA Downtown Steering Committee

NOTICE!

John Beach is arranging the annual BAHA lecture series, tentatively for 4 Thursdays in April. Speakers will be 4 contemporary architects & designers who also have scholarly or practical historical interests, discussing how past & present interact in their work: William Coburn, Frances Butler, Jeremy Kotas, Tim Andersen. John Beach will introduce & comment on all 4 lectures. Watch for more details soon.



THE SIMPLE HOME



Bernard Maybeck became the club's idol, Charles Keeler its high priest, and The Simple Home naturally became its bible.

-Dimitri Shipounoff

In 1979 Peregrine Smith, Inc., publishers, re-issued THE SIMPLE HOME with an informative introduction by historian, artisan and BAHHA member, Dimitri Shipounoff detailing Keeler's life and the intellectual community in Berkeley at the turn of the century. This attractive hardbound volume is now available through BAHHA at a 20% discount. All

the original photos used to illustrate THE SIMPLE HOME are included, as are many additional historical pictures of Keeler and local houses in the Bay Region style.

THE SIMPLE HOME was written by Charles Keeler in 1904 when he was president of Berkeley's Hillside Club. The club, founded in 1898 by Keeler and other North Berkeley residents with like ideas on architecture and planning, existed originally to promote a type of domestic architecture compatible with the natural landscape. Its hallmarks were and still are the use of redwood, klinker brick and other untreated materials, and an intimate relationship between the structure and its landscaping. The warm redwood houses designed by Maybeck and other Bay Region architects that now give Berkeley its unique architectural character are a direct expression of the goals of the Hillside Club and reflect the "honesty and simplicity" of construction for which Keeler pleaded in THE SIMPLE HOME.

This book is a basic document in the history of Berkeley's distinctive architecture and of interest to all BAHHA members. Books may be ordered by mail (\$7.95; \$10 incl. tax and postage) or purchased at the BAHHA Office (845-6591).

YOU CAN ORDER BY MAIL

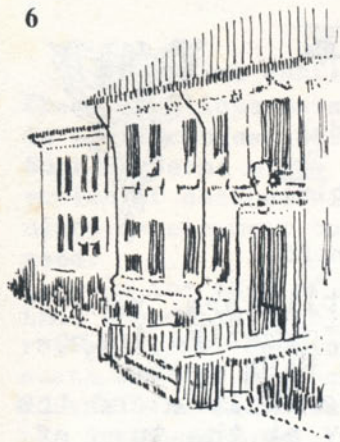
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Berkeley High Centennial

A celebration on campus to commemorate the centennial of Berkeley High School & re-introduce a sense of respect & pride for the accomplishments of the first 100 years is being organized for May 21 by representatives of several interested community groups--Berkeley High Alumni Association & Boosters Club & PTA, Berkeley Architectural Heritage, & Berkeley Historical Society.

An afternoon program will be highlighted by a rededication of the 1920 Academic ("C") Building, which has undergone extensive remodeling in the last 2 years & is the oldest structure on campus. An open house of some buildings will give those who have not been on campus

for some time a chance to remember their own history through exhibits on such traditions as sports, music, theater, visual arts, & architecture. The assembling of archive material has begun & a call for supplementary material from private collections is out! If you have items of historical interest to loan to the exhibit, whether pictorial or memorabilia, please call the BAHA office.

Evening events are still taking shape & should include a performance by the Drama Department & a lecture on early Berkeley & the development of the High School & its traditions. Also being planned are food concessions, souvenir sales, & a Casino Night which will hope to raise funds. The Fair is conceived as an umbrella event whose proceeds will be applied to specific needs of the many financially strapped programs within Berkeley High School, with the cooperation of the various school and community service groups. It addresses the need & importance of outside support groups in a time of fiscal difficulties within the school district.

We would like to invite participation by additional organizations. The more events & activities to support the concept of celebrating the centennial the better. Our initial monetary needs are basically promotional, & we are pursuing donations to produce a batch of T-shirts for fund-raising & publicity. The logo printed on the T-shirts--the terra cotta facade of the C Building--will be coordinated to apply to the printed handbills, posters, and brochures. It is hoped that student participation in the many Fair activities will foster an understanding of the relationship between the distinctive character of the past and a responsible future.

-- Clifford Wolin, Centennial Planning Committee

Pres·er·va'tion in our Schools

BAHA member Trish Hawthorne teaches a class on architecture & history in the Berkeley Schools' Gifted & Talented program, & to reach more students is preparing material for classroom teachers to use, including the film "Houses Have History" by Judith Lynch & Helaine Prentice. In terms children can understand, it presents local architectural styles, their relationship to local history, & the possibilities of restoration & preservation. It is now part of BUSD's film library, thanks to donations from BAHA & In Dulci Jubilo.

Trish is also looking for building features to use in these classes--moldings, carvings, turnings, hardware,...: 845-6591/527-4672.

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Members

and Members Renewed

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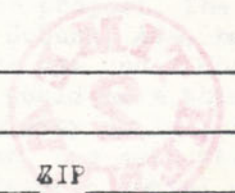
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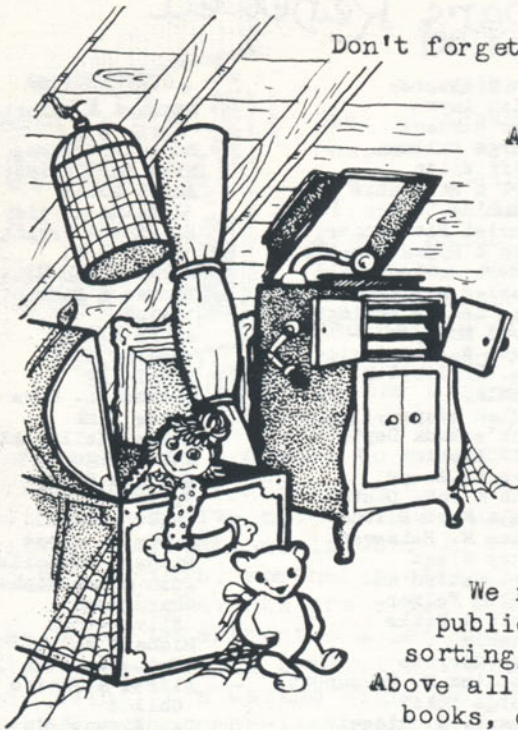
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Don't forget the **ATTIC SALE**
for fun and profit !

April 30 & May 1, University & Milvia

Because we are paying rent; because there are no longer preservation grants to support our office; because the spring house tour was in October last year ... this must be a gigantic fundraiser !

Think of us as you spring clean...as you plan your calendar for April/May. That special whatsit you've been looking for may turn up !
We need you -- do you need us ?

We need help at the sale itself & beforehand-- publicity, hauling, storage (until mid-March), sorting, pricing, setting up, selling, clean-up. Above all now we need merchandise: furniture, antiques, books, clothing, housewares, tools, office equipment.

To volunteer or donate items, call the BAHA office, 845-6591.

NOTICE!

Once again BAHA is moving its office. BUSD is asking us to vacate our space at 1835 Allston by March 7 so Instructional Media can occupy the building. Our new location is not yet known, though there are several possibilities. To find us after March 7, call our office number, 845-6591, or check the door of 1835 Allston.

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