

CONTINUITY

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Preservation Action Council of San Jose
Dedicated to Preserving San Jose's Architectural and Cultural Heritage

Fall 2024

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Two Historic Sites on Hopeful Paths Grace Baptist Church & Schiele/Alameda Park District

Grace Baptist Church

On August 7, the San Jose Historic Landmarks Commission recommended that the San Jose City Council adopt the resolution designating 484 E. San Fernando Street (Grace Baptist Church) as a City Landmark "of special historical, architectural, cultural, aesthetic, or engineering interest or value of a historic nature."

San Jose Councilmember Omar Torres originally issued a memo in September 2023 requesting a nomination for the church's designation as a City Landmark because of its historically significant qualifications.

The church was designed in 1941 by the notable San Jose 20th century architects, Binder and Curtis. Its architectural Gothic Revival style of arches, a 3-story

tower and some Art Deco features captures the beauty of styles from the past. Its integrity is excellent with original materials and architectural details remaining in good condition.

In the sanctuary, the 1921 Robert Morton pipe-organ came from the long-gone San Jose's Liberty Theater, which stood at 67 Market Street. It is the only original San Jose theater organ to remain in its home city.

Culturally, the church's early members worked toward improving civil rights and peace. Today and for past decades, the church and its partners (presently Grace Solutions) provide aid to the city's homeless population. A beloved assistant pastor from 1957 to 1986, George "Shorty" Collins, helped found the San Jose Peace and Justice Center and was

called "The Most Peaceful Man in San Jose" by the Human Relations Committee of Santa Clara County in recognition for his activism.

(Cont'd p. 2)

◀ *Grace Baptist Church at 484 E. San Fernando St. and S. 10th St.*



Sites on Hopeful Path (Cont'd)

The Church's impressive sanctuary and historic organ will likely be protected from demolition from future development projects, but additional portions of the site are idle or closed off and may become part of future housing plans.

The San Jose City Council will vote on the nomination designating Grace Baptist Church as a city landmark on September 24th.

Schiele Subdivision and Alameda Park

The second important issue on the path to success is the final vote designating the Schiele Subdivision and Alameda Park as a City Landmark Historic District. It qualifies because it is a "geographically definable area of urban character, possessing a significant concentration and continuity of site, buildings and structures unified by past events, and aesthetically by plan and physical development," as stated by the Planning Department memo.

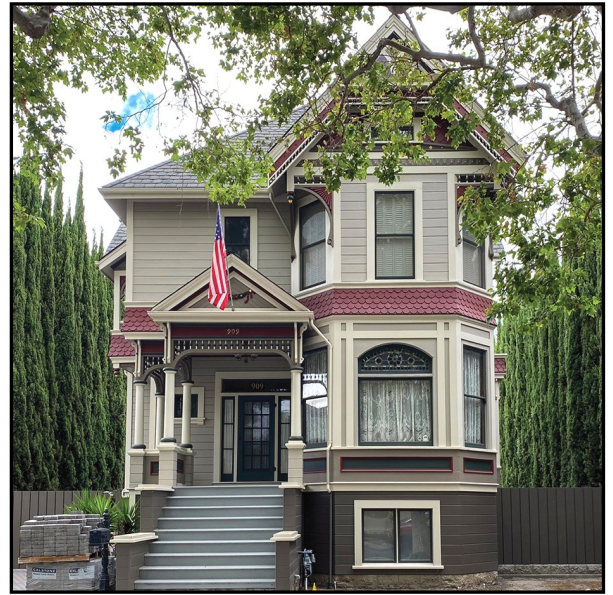
You may have attended or remember Continuity articles on the District's PAC*SJ walking tour and the celebration party on the release of the 2022 "Schiele Subdivision and Alameda Park" book by Krista Van Laan and Kay Gutknecht. The neighborhood has worked over 20 years to become designated as a historic district.

The proposed district includes Schiele, Harding, Hoover, and Pershing Avenues between The Alameda and Stockton Avenue. It was developed by two separate developers at two different times: Charles Schiele developed Schiele Avenue in the 1880s with Victorian style homes; Alameda Park was developed by Anthony Maderis beginning in 1922 with 20th century architectural styles.

In June 2020, The Historic Landmarks Commission listed the Schiele Subdivision and Alameda Park neighborhood on the San Jose Historic Resources Inventory (HRI) as an eligible Conservation Area or Candidate City Landmark Historic District. A review by the San Jose Planning Department Staff's independent field study and analysis determined the area met eligibility requirements with a high concentration of historic properties, a cohesive pattern of development, and high architectural integrity. After final updates with new information were received in reports by Archive & Architecture LLC, the proposed district assuredly met the criteria for the historic designation.

► *One of the 1890s homes on Schiele Avenue designed by highly regarded architect, Frank Wolfe.*

(Photo: Krista Van Laan)



In April 2024, the San Jose City Council adopted a resolution nominating the proposed neighborhood as a historic district and directed the Planning Department to follow through with outreach to the community and property owners.

The San Jose City Council has scheduled a vote on the Historic District designation at its September 24th council meeting.

If you have not had a chance to visit the historic neighborhood, a PAC*SJ historic walking tour is scheduled for Oct. 19th, led by the authors of the 2022 book. 🏡



A Tudor Revival, storybook variation on Schiele Avenue, built in 1926, designed by William O'Neil. (Photo: G. Frank)

Sakauye Farmstead Update

On August 13th, San Jose City Council unanimously approved the “0 Seely Avenue Mixed Use Project,” but not before strongly encouraging the developer and the City’s Parks Department to preserve the historic Sakauye Farmstead house within either the development area, public park or through an off-site relocation to History Park.

PAC*SJ has been advocating for on-site preservation since March of 2022, and we are incredibly grateful to Vice Mayor Rosemary Kamei for her supportive memorandum and her impassioned advocacy for preserving the farmstead in place. As Kamei wrote, “The significance of the site rests in *where* it is, and in what happened *there*. Maintaining a clear, abiding, and thought provoking connection to the history of this place is a valuable public exercise in its own right.”

While the City Council’s adopted action does not alone guarantee that the Sakauye House (pictured below) will be saved, the developers publicly accepted a stay of demolition of at least six months to allow City staff and preservation advocates to continue to explore preservation alternatives. The Council’s new direction is encouraging, but it’s clear that the Sakauye Farmstead is still very much in danger. PAC*SJ remains committed to working with the developers, City staff, Japanese American Museum of San Jose, and History San Jose to develop a preservation plan that protects and respects the history and character of this incredibly important site.



PAC*SJ continues to circulate our “Save the Sakauye Farmstead” petition at preservation.org/sakauye and ask that you help us spread the word about this still-endangered place!

Background

The Sakauye Farmstead, one of PAC*SJ’s Endangered 8 (see page 5), is one of the last working orchards in San Jose. It is a testament to the ingenuity and perseverance of the Sakauye family—Japanese-Americans who first planted fruit trees here around 1900. After the Sakauye family was unjustly interned at Heart Mountain, Wyoming during World War II, master horticulturist and civic leader Eiichi Sakauye returned to this family homestead in 1945 and continued living and farming here until his death in 2005. His orchard, gardens, c.1930s home and numerous barns are all threatened with demolition for a new mixed-use housing development and public park slated for the site.

The property is located at 681 E. Trimble Road and bound on the northeast by the Coyote Creek Trail, the southeast by Montague Expressway, the southwest by Seely Avenue, and the northwest by open farmland. ↻



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Editor: Gayle Frank

Please submit your letters/comments to

info@preservation.org.

408-998-8105 or to

42A S. First Street,

San Jose, CA 95113

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Adaptive Reuse of Highest Order



Hillbrook School students, faculty, and staff pictured in front of the historic Armory building at 240 N. Second Street on Aug. 26th.

Photo: Mike Sodergren

Hillbrook High School held a ribbon cutting on Aug. 26th celebrating the first day of school in its new location, the historic and restored 1934 Armory on N. Second Street, built by the WPA during the Great Depression. The historic 1894 Moir Buildings on N. First is being restored and may be ready for classes next Fall.

The two buildings stand east and west of the historic First Church of Christ, Scientist. The school activity will enliven the area which is just north of St. James Park. Wouldn't the beautiful classically designed Church make an excellent performing space for the school?

Hillbrook School, a private school, founded in 1935, is based in Los Gatos. ☞



Original Spanish Revival design rendering of the National Guard Armory in San Jose, built in 1933-34.

Source: California Military Department State Military History & Museums Program

Join a PAC*SJ Committee

Feel free to attend without a commitment to see how PAC*SJ works.

The PAC*SJ Development Committee meets the second Monday at 5 pm at our office, 42A S. First Street. Advocacy meets on Zoom at 6:30 pm on the last Thursday of most months before the following Wednesday's Landmarks Commission meeting.

For more information call us at 408-998-8105.

See p. 19 for a list of available Committees to join.

PAC*SJ Releases Latest 2024 Endangered 8!

1. First Church of Christ, Scientist

43 E. St. James Street
Built 1905
Architect: Willis Polk
Threat: Neglect

2. Sakauye Farmstead

2620 Seely Avenue
Built 1900s-1940s
Threat: Redevelopment

3. MACSA Youth Center

660 Sinclair Drive
Built 1995
Neglect, Redevelopment

4. Lawrence Hotel

71-89 E. San Fernando Street
Built 1893
Threat: Neglect

5. Forman's Arena

447 W. St. John Street
Built 1926
Threat: Neglect, Redevelopment

6. Bayside Canning Company

1290 Hope Street
Built c.1925
Threat: Neglect

7. Almaden Winery Cellar

5533 Le Franc Drive
Built 1850s
Threat: Neglect

8. Burbank Theater

560 S. Bascom Avenue
Built 1949
Threat: Neglect, Redevelopment

Every year, PAC*SJ releases its annual "Endangered 8" list to raise public awareness and galvanize support for the preservation and revitalization of San José's most critically-threatened architectural and cultural resources. These are the unique places that define San José's past and deserve to have a place in San José's future, but require urgent action in the present to avoid their irreplaceable loss. Learn more about each of these important 2024 Endangered 8 sites, and what you can do to help ensure their survival at www.preservation.org/e8-2024.



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.



8.

Burrell Park Celebrates Centennial

The residents of the original Burrell Park Subdivision, officially recorded with Santa Clara County on March 5, 1924, decided to celebrate its 100-year anniversary on August 24th of 2024. The initial subdivision map was submitted to Santa Clara County and signed off by the County Supervisor, Assessor, Surveyor, auditor, engineer, property owners (Frank L. Burrell and wife Anne), and others. The subdivision included all lots on Burrell Court, the lots on the SW side of McKendrie Street, and both sides of Hedding Court between Park Avenue and what is now Dana Avenue. At that time, in the 1920s, West Hedding Street stopped at Park Avenue, so the short extension from Park Avenue to the west end of Burrell Park was simply called Hedding Court. Sometime between 1935 to 1940, Dana Avenue stretched across Hedding.

Before Frank Burrell acquired the orchard land pre-1922, an earlier map lists it belonging to Rebecca Smith. Prunes and apricot orchards covered this area. Frank and Anne Burrell's idea for a subdivision grew into a home development that would offer smaller and more affordable houses to the San Jose citizens. At that time, surrounding houses were larger and on bigger lots--especially the stately residences nearby on The Alameda.

Frank Burrell (1876-1951) was the grandson of Lyman J. Burrell (1801-1884), an adventurous and hardworking man who arrived with his family to live in the Santa Cruz mountains in 1852. There, Lyman established Burrell Village with a store, blacksmith, and later a school. He and Mountain Charley were the earliest non-indigenous settlers in those mountains. The Burrell School, built on donated land from Lyman Burrell, is a winery today.



*Mission Revival home on Burrell Ct. built in 1924
with a matching garage.*



1924 Mission Revival with dramatic entry on Burrell Ct.

Decades later, grandson Frank lived in San Jose, was VP at Anderson-Barngrover and helped found FMC (Food Machinery Corporation). He left an estate of about \$1.3 million. He and his family lived on the SW corner of Park Avenue and Hedding Street, but the large Spanish Revival house was demolished in 1990.

In the early decades of the 20th century, an increased population necessitated more housing. Greater numbers of people arrived in Santa Clara to work in the agricultural industry and the food packing/canning industries. Transportation became more convenient, especially with more automobiles. After WWI, soldiers returned from war. Downtown San Jose was becoming an important financial center. (The population of San Jose in 1910 was 28,946; in 1920 was 39,542; in 1930 was 57,651.)

Nationally, in the early 1920s, the Federal government was anxious to increase good-quality and affordable housing

for middle-class citizens and promoted a serious campaign called Better Homes in America (BHA). (See page 16 for more on BHA.) Other subdivisions near Burrell Court were popping up in the 1920s, although there is no indication that San Jose participated in the BHA campaigns.

The real estate firm, Barnett & Phelps on N. First Street managed the Burrell Park Subdivision. One of the early newspaper ads in the

(Cont'd p. 7)

Burrell Park (Cont'd)

San Jose Mercury Herald (1/28/1923) advertised Burrell Park homes from \$3750 to \$8750 with "terms to suit." The ad mentioned that ten homes were "soon to be completed and were ready for inspection and selection." The sewer, gas, water, electricity, cement walks and curbs were already in place.

On March 8, 1924, the Peninsula Times Tribune ran an article about increased building activity reported by contractors. C. M. Cook,¹ a builder and architect from San Francisco, was commissioned to build ten new homes at Burrell Park. That same year, Christopher Cook suddenly owned the Cook Lumber Company at 315 W. Julian Ave in San Jose. Local contractor Clay. V. Brown was hired to build four more homes in Burrell Park. The article continues, announcing that the southern portion of the subdivision "will be resurveyed soon and cut into 82 additional building lots."

The ad in the San Jose Mercury Herald on May 17, 1925, comments that, "San Jose is growing fast" and lists six subdivisions, selling homes from \$5000 and up. Burrell Park was one of the six.

According to the Mercury Herald, the Burrell Park area was annexed into the City of San Jose in October 1925, and a year later the city awarded a contract for paving its streets.

In June of 1930, ads for five-room homes with a garage in Burrell Park dropped the price to \$3000, a result of the depression. By 1930, the census lists a large number of residents renting their homes in Burrell Park.

By 1931, an arial survey of the area shows small homes built all along the south side of McKendrie and much of Burrell Court except the end of the southern side. On Hedding Court larger lots filled with homes appear on both sides. Hedding Court still remained a dead end.

A 1937 map published by the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) depicts the Burrell Park neighborhood in the blue zone, defined as "still desirable" for obtaining home loans. The HOLC maps defined neighborhoods throughout the nation by their perceived risk of lending, often called "redlining."

The first houses built in Burrell Park included original 900 to 1200 square-foot homes, but at present, first or second floor additions toward the rear are common. The Spanish and Mission Revival styles prevail with unique parapets,



Mayor Mahan, Katherine Burrell, Elise Stassart - a Burrell Ct. resident/organizer, and Councilmember Dev Davis speak at the Centennial.

stucco exteriors, arches, and red tile roofs. Newer two-story homes intersperse both Burrell Court and McKendrie but are often designed with a compatible style, blending well in the neighborhood. Tudor Revival style homes stand on both streets in interesting variations.

An outstanding example of a Streamline Moderne style home (see below), built in 1947, stands on a corner lot.

(Cont'd p. 8)



Burrell Park (Cont'd)

In 2000, the Streamline house received a Restoration Award from the City of San Jose for being, "lovingly restored with close attention to every detail."

On the south side of Hedding, between Park and Dana Avenues, a few cute Spanish and Mission Revival homes from the early days remain. After widening Hedding Street around the 1960s, the north side of Hedding was rebuilt, leaving no original homes from the 1924 Burrell Park. Widening Hedding also required the removal of two of the early homes on both corners of Burrell Court and Hedding.

Some homes in the subdivision were replaced after WWII with traditional styles we commonly see in San Jose. These 1940s homes had simpler lines and less architectural decoration, often categorized as a Minimal Traditional style. With increased growth of San Jose after the war more housing was essential, so tax benefits for home ownership and generous home loans to war veterans after WWII stimulated home building. The population of San Jose in 1940 was 68,457; in 1950 was 95,280; in 1960 was 204,196.



Another Mission Revival (1926) on McKendrie Street.

Today the Burrell Park neighbors are proud of its heritage, an early 20th century subdivision of small homes with architectural styles popular in the 1920s. The centennial celebration was well attended and offered music by Saxophonist Mike Mendoza, and The Thelves, a food truck, displays of early maps and news articles, and walking tours and information table by PAC*SJ. San Jose Mayor Matt Mahon and Councilmember Dev Davis were on hand to praise the neighbors for their recognition of the neighborhood's



A 1924 McKendrie home with a Mission-like parapet.

history. Two relatives of Frank Burrell, granddaughter Katherine Burrell and her daughter, Victoria Johnson, were on hand to represent the Burrell family. The event was sponsored by Mayor Matt Mahan, Frank Burrell III, Doug Keefer and Safeway. Neighbors contributed their furniture, volunteered time, muscle, and artistic talents



*Jo Hogan, resident and organizer on Burrell Ct., reached out to PAC*SJ last year about their historic neighborhood.*

At the end of the event, members of the neighborhood association were invited to tour a few home interiors on Burrell Court: a beautiful Mission Revival design with authentic early features such as the kitchen, woodwork, windows, lovely tile fireplace, and all plaster walls. The owner was proud to say that no drywall was present in the house and therefore felt free from mold growth hazards.

We walked through a second house, the unique Streamline Moderne home, which was as exciting in the interior as the exterior, with curved walls, glass bricks, glass louvers, streamline metal stair rails, and Art Deco furniture, floors, lights, and art.

A third beautifully remodeled home in the craftsman style was also opened for a tour.

(Cont'd p. 14)



ON THE RADAR

Diridon Station Update

The Diridon Station Joint Policy Advisory Board has decided on two of the three options for expanding and modernizing the Diridon Station. They are:

Option 1: The Elevated Alternative has elevated tracks with a ground level concourse. This alternative is most like the original Concept Layout since it requires elevating the existing rail infrastructure.

•Option 2: The At-Grade Alternative has at-grade tracks and a lower-level concourse, meaning the concourse is slightly below-grade and uses gradual sloping to integrate into the surrounding street network. The At-Grade Alternative attempts to replicate the passenger experience of the Elevated Alternative without elevating the tracks.

The Diridon Station would be saved in both options.

Option 3, the Stacked Alternative, which would build rail tracks on two levels, was deemed less desirable and withdrawn from consideration.

The approximate cost range of the two alternatives is \$2.5B to \$13 Billion, based on less than 5% design in 2023 dollars.

Downtown West

Google has hired Jamestown to organize and manage its Creekside Socials while Google reevaluates its timeline for the construction of its transit village, called Downtown West. In the last year, 60 events were held on the Google

site next to Diridon Station. on Barack Obama Blvd. and S. Montgomery St. The historic, former Kearney Pattern Works and Foundry site at 57 Barack Obama Boulevard could be a prime location for a beer garden and dining spots.

First Church of Christ Scientist

PAC*SJ initiated a postcard campaign by gathering citizens' signatures on a postcard saying, "Hey Z&L, it's Time to Sell," meant for the developer/owner (Z&L) to act now and either restore the First Church of Christ Scientist on St. James Street or sell it and the surrounding property. San Jose residents, especially preservationists, have been waiting over 30 years for this architectural gem to be restored and used.

For the last eight years, Z&L, who purchased the site in 2017, has done very little to move forward with the church or the vacant land. Remember the years of deteriorated plastic coverings? Only to be finally removed by a good Samaritan. The 2017 purchase contract stipulated building over 200 homes on the land plus renovating the historic church. Why are they allowed to let this site sit vacant and continue deteriorating?

We continue mailing postcards to Z&L's representatives, and now the property management company has met with PAC*SJ to discuss possibilities for the historic church. We are cautiously hopeful but keep our expectations on hold.

Forman's Arena

San Jose's City Council has authorized \$4.5M for the demolition of the City owned historic boxing arena and other structures to meet its parking space obligation to the San Jose Sharks. Prior to meeting CEQA conditions, the site remains vulnerable to damage and loss due to neglect and lack of protections, so PAC*SJ has sent a complaint letter to the City. Meanwhile, large areas of potential parking remain idle within the now paused Downtown West project site.

To see adaptive reuse concept drawings, visit <https://www.preservation.org/e8-2024/forman's-arena> as an example of a gathering place for pre-/post-NHL games or other events that would complete the connection between San Pedro Square and the Arena.



PAC*SJ is Still Keeping An Eye On—

- Bank of Italy (Bank of America)
- State Meat Market
- Valley Title/Hale's
- Realty Building

And, our Endangered 8 structures on pg. 5

PAC*SJ 2024 Calendar

- Sep 7** Saturday, PAC*SJ **Historic Walking Tour of Palm Haven Neighborhood**, 10 AM. Sold out.
- Sep 8** Sunday, Visit PAC*SJ booth at Viva Calle in Japantown; 10 AM –3 PM
- Sep 16** Monday, PAC*SJ Board Meeting, 6:30—8:30 PM. 42A S. 1st St.*
- Oct 19** Saturday, PAC*SJ **Historic Walking Tour of the Schiele Neighborhood**, 10 AM. Reserve.
- Oct 21** Monday, PAC*SJ Board Meeting, 6:30—8:30 PM. 42A S. 1st St.*
- Nov 14-16** Fri-Sat. PAC*SJ **Holiday Treasure Sale** at 295 Sequoia Avenue. Fri 9 AM—6 PM. Sat-9 AM—1 PM. Thursday preview only 1 PM—5 PM. Free for PAC*SJ members or \$5 entry for non-members.
- Nov 19** Tuesday, PAC*SJ **Annual Meeting, Board Election, and Holiday Party**. 6:30-8:30 PM at the amazing San Jose Fire Museum, 201 N. Market St. Please reserve at *preservation.org*.
- Nov 18** Monday, PAC*SJ Board Meeting, 6:30—8:30 PM. 42A S. 1st St.*
- Dec 16** Monday, PAC*SJ Board Meeting, 6:30—8:30 PM. 42A S. 1st St.*

*Call to confirm Board meeting locations at 408-998-8105. Rarely locations may change or held online.

PAC*SJ Board Met to Strategize Five-Year Plan

The PAC*SJ Board of Directors held two strategy planning sessions on Saturday mornings in August.

The meetings included a group discussion of our Mission, Vision, Goals, Objectives, Strategies, Action Plans, etc. for PAC*SJ's five-Year Strategic Plan.

We also discussed our budgetary plans.

Reserve your spot
for a walking tour or
event at

www.preservation.org/eventpage

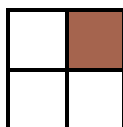
ADVERTISE IN CONTINUITY!

Continuity is distributed to over 400 San Jose 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



1/2 Page
Single issue
\$200



Full Page
Single issue
\$375

PAC*SJ Summer Block Sale a Winner

Our famous PAC*SJ Block Sale—Summer Rummage and Salvage held on July 19th and 20th had lots of helpers and deserve kudos for surviving the heat and hordes of shoppers. We were all continually amazed by the generosity of our donors!

Five driveways and sidewalks were filled, organized by “departments.” Homeowners Wangsness-Liesenfelt, Curia, Salas, Mendoza-Mason and newcomers Long-Lieberman allowed PAC*SJ to take over their frontage and driveways for 5 days—earning \$11,000 to support our mission to save historic structures in San Jose.

Thank you to all our volunteers who are listed below:

Truckers included Paul Wedel, Shawn McCarson, Graham Hale, Robert Carter, Stephen Walker, Tim McAuliff, and Lynne Stephenson.

Art Department was headed by Chief: Lisa Wangsness and new assistant Gratia Rankin. Vintage paper: Heather David and Joyce Weissman filled in for ailing Ron Hagen. Tools, media and what not Department Chief: Rosie Gallipeau, with Sara Bruce and Tim Mc. Floating Jewelry tables were controlled by Deborah Mills and Suzanne Morrone. Fine china and housewares were delicately managed by Rebecca Evans, Connie Foley, and ably assisted by Eileen Shydowski, Phyllis Dieker, Myrna Tufono, Jean Kaelin, Pat Rupel, Manuela Burge, Clare Bettencourt, and Narges Fakimi.

New volunteer Anna was instantly promoted to supervisor of linens, vintage clothes, baby goods, puzzles, and scary dolls Department. The fifth house was a new addition to the Summer Sale—the Furniture Department. The long driveway was lined with dressers, tables, chairs, clocks, etc. Wizard sales people included Efrat Shakir, Tim Mc, Patt C, Gary Hubbard, Peter Di-Donato, Andre Luthard, and man about town Tom Aldridge.

And then we have the money people: Jennifir Roman, Marni Kamzen, Wini Leeds, first timer Lisa Rosenblum, and Ben Leech, plus excellent men from the Day Labor Center. Tables were borrowed from the Acton, Nemmer-Buis, Wedels, Swirsky, and Mason homes. Matthew Massey took our media photos.

Most delicious summer salads were prepared, delivered and donated by our two Naglee Park chefs: Audrey Rust and Kim Aldridge. Recipes, please!

Thanks, Naglee Park for another fun and profitable sale. We know that this location was voted the most popular by our shoppers.

We hope to see you at the next sale, the Holiday Treasures, on Sequoia Ave. in Hanchet Park on Nov. 14-16.

—Patt Curia, Preservation Action Donations Chair

SJ Historic Landmarks Commission Vacancy

Notice: the San Jose Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) has a vacancy. The deadline to apply is September 30, 2024. Members of boards, commissions, committees and any task force must attend meetings in-person. The public may attend virtually or in-person. Public comments are accepted only in-person.

Members shall have demonstrable interest and expertise in historic preservation. Whenever possible, three members of the seven members shall have professional

expertise in architecture, history, planning, archaeology, folklore, anthropology, curation, conservation and landscape architecture. Meetings are at San Jose City Hall usually on the first Wednesday evening of the month.

For more information visit <https://sanjose.granicus.com/boards/w/923860ac785826ef> or search for San Jose Historic Landmarks Commission.



PAC*SJ Members Visit SJ Fire Museum

Our August 3rd Members Event took place at the San Jose Fire Museum at 201 N. Market Street. Since the Fire Museum was one of PAC*SJ's two winning nominations for a preservation award at the Preservation Alliance Awards Night on May 17th, we were eager for our members to see the excellent restoration of the 1951 building and the amazing exhibits. The Museum tells the inspiring story of San Jose's Fire Department, first formed in San Jose in 1854 with paid firefighters.

The 1951 Art Deco style building is a city landmark and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Museum Board Vice President, Jim Carter, was on hand with Dave Wood, Maria Wardall, Anthony Radzanowski, and April Halberstadt to split our group into smaller tours of the Museum. We visited the exterior historic bell, the office (dedicated to retired SJ Fire Captain Sam Seibert who turned 105 years old this August!), the kitchen/dining area, the unrestored second floor which served as much of the living quarters, vintage artifacts, photos, and ephemera, and most importantly the main open first floor with numerous firefighting vehicles ranging from 1890 to the 1950s, all beautifully restored.



One wonders how many hours of toil and ingenuity were spent bringing those treasures back to life.

The impressive exhibit of firefighting vehicles includes: 1958 American La France fire engine, 1954 GMC fire truck, 1931 Mack, 1899 American Steam Pumper with the 1914 Knox Martin tractor (There are only two of these in the world), 1890 Amoskeag Steam Pumper,¹ 1810 Hand Pumper, and an early hose cart that was pulled by a firefighter.



The tours covered so much information; here is a small sampling of interesting details we learned.

◊ In early days, the firefighting equipment was hauled by horses until about 1915, when motorized vehicles became available. The firefighters had to take care of their horses and clean up after them.

(Cont'd p. 13)

◀ *Jim Carter, our tour guide and Vice President of the SJ Fire Museum, talks about the 1899 American Steam Engine attached to the rare 1914 Knox Martin Tractor, made to pull the engine.*

SJ Fire Museum (Cont'd)



1810 James Smith Hand Pumper

◇ In early days, a fire alarm came through on a large bell (pictured below) that rang with a coded ring. Later, a tele-type system for receiving fire alarms was used until the 1970s. Today, alarms are all digital.

◇ Early fire trucks carried dynamite for the purpose of blowing up a burning structure that could not be saved to prevent destruction of other nearby structures.

◇ The fire helmet worn by firefighters has a long flap at the back. Its original purpose was to turn it around and use the flap to shield the firefighter's face from high heat. The design has always remained to this day.



◇ Dalmatian dogs were popular companions at the fire-houses because they provided excellent security, were compatible with the horses and ran well with them, and guarded the horses from other stray dogs when tethered at a fire. Fire Station dogs were common until the late 1970s.

◇ The restored 1931 Mack Engine, owned by the City of San Jose, is used in parades, ceremonial events, and celebrations.

◇ There were four sliding poles from the 2nd to 1st floor, each next to a dorm in the former Station One. One was moved to the new Station One next door. Two of the poles were from a fire station from 1908.

◇ A fire engine carries hoses and water. A fire truck carries all the tools/equipment and is responsible for rescue, ventilation, shutting off utilities, and more.

◇ The exterior bell (below) on N. Market in front of the Fire Museum and the present Station One is a memorial to those firefighters who lost their lives in the line of duty. There are 20 names whose deaths ranged from 1898 to 2022.



◇ The first woman firefighter in San Jose was Karen Allyn in 1981. She worked as a firefighter for 28 years.

◇ Each Saturday is always scheduled for cleanup of the fire station and its equipment. The firefighters do their own shopping for food, cooking, and clean up.

◇ At present there are about 700 firefighters at 37 stations in San Jose. A staff of around 1,000 would be ideal for a city as large as San Jose.

◇ The second floor is yet to be restored and looks as it did when the fire station closed in 2000. Plans include leaving the lockers, but reusing the dorm rooms as a conference room, an assembly area, library for the 3,000 log books, a children's activity room, and someday, a rooftop patio.

At the rear of the Fire Museum, artist Bill Vujevich is painting a new, vibrant mural illustrating a few vintage

(Cont'd p. 14)

PAC*SJ Volunteers at Remillard House

PAC*SJ member and volunteer extraordinaire, Russ Danielson, reported that work continues at the historic Ashworth-Remillard House on Story Road. Russ milled, sanded and stained new wooden slats of a picnic bench, table, and stand-alone bench.

He also disposed of the remains of a massive Palm frond and Pepper tree left from heavy winter storms. The refuse was hand carried to large green refuse cans each week until finished. Russ also cleaned out the brush and rubble surrounding the auxiliary house so trustee Sue Cucuzza and the facility associate could access the interior for clearing out. Thank you Russ for all your hard work! 🌿

Burrell Park (Cont'd)

Kudos to the Burrell Park residents, for their dedication to the neighborhood. They seemed a close-knit group, appreciating the varied styles of homes and respecting the subdivision's history. Congratulations to the Burrell Park Neighborhood Association Committee members for on a job well done spearheading this successful event. 🌿

—Gayle Frank

¹ Christopher Cook was a prolific and creative architect and builder who arrived in San Jose in 1924, advertising he was a "one-stop-shop." After two years he left San Jose, chased out by financial troubles.

SJ Fire Museum (Cont'd)

fire vehicles with firefighters putting out a fire. He also created the 15-foot bronze statue of a firefighter that stands in the rear yard. (See our group photo page 12)

The Fire Museum exists because of the generous donations from the Brandenburg Family and The Richardson Family Trust. Many others have joined the San Jose Fire Museum, a non-profit, and also contributed to the museum. Visit www.sjfiremuseum.org for more information.

The Members' Event was a great success and PAC*SJ thanks the staff of the Fire Museum for their tours. The Museum is a jewel in San Jose's Downtown, a wonderful place to visit, and a source of city pride. 🌿

—Gayle Frank

¹ During the 1906 earthquake, Franklin Fire Station #3 collapsed on this engine. The engine was dug out by the firemen and then used to fight the fires for two days. Photo of engine in last issue of Continuity.

Elections 2024 A Preservation Primer

On November 4th, 2024, local voters return to the polls in a runoff election to choose four City Council seats (Districts 2, 6, 8, and 10) and two County Supervisors (Districts 2 and 5). Those elected will have a significant influence on local land use decisions, planning initiatives, and funding priorities that directly affect historic preservation efforts city- and county-wide.

To better inform voters and candidates alike on major policy issues related to historic preservation, PAC*SJ distributed an 8-question survey prior to the March 5th primary election, which featured 30 candidates running for nine offices. The candidates who advanced to November's runoff are featured on our website at www.preservation.org/2024-candidates. (Those with an [*] have not responded to the survey).

As a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, PAC*SJ does not make candidate endorsements. However, we strongly encourage you to learn more about each candidate's position on these issues and to vote by November 4th. 🌿



Artist Bill Vujevich in front of his work in progress, a large mural on a rear wall of the Fire Museum.

(Photos: Gayle Frank)

History Park's Newest Restoration

In the History San Jose Collection at History Park there stood an old, worn out "Mud Wagon" that had seen much better days. A Farrington Historical Foundation grant provided the funds to restore the stagecoach to its original appearance and condition. It was reportedly used to transport passengers and the U.S. Mail, along dirt roads, between San Jose and our little port town—Alviso. For many decades the best way to get to San Francisco from San Jose was by a boat on the Bay.

The restoration to transform the Mud Wagon was done by all volunteers; mechanics, iron workers, and craftsmen. It was painted to match its original finish and is now in running order. The Wagon was brought out from the Trolley Barn for photos in July, 2024. This is another restored historic mode of transportation that helps tell the transportation story in Santa Clara Valley. 🐾



▲ *Before*

*1800s San Jose-Alviso
Stage Line*

◀ *After*

(Photos: Ken Middlebrook)



Notable Quotable

"At the end of the day, it's not just about the house, It's not just about creating a few plaques to tell the Sakauye story. It's about our San Jose story and an American story. I really tried not to get emotional, but this is hard because we have many (Asian American and Pacific Islander) communities that have been erased and we have a chance to do something about this."

—Rosemary Kamei, San Jose Vice Mayor, at August 13, 2024 Council Meeting

Better Homes in America Campaign

A movement to assist prospective homeowners to afford a modestly priced house was established by the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1919. To augment this project, an educational and research program, Better Homes in America (BHA), was developed to help further the mission of increasing home ownership of the best and affordable houses through the 1920s to 1935, ending due to lack of funding. Purdue University's Housing Research Foundation took over management of BHA's future activities. By 1928, at least 500 BHA communities participated in the program, and in 1935 at least 10,000 towns joined in Demonstration Week, highlighting newly built, small model homes.

Additionally, the non-profit Small House Service Bureau offered small house blueprints to be purchased by mail, allowing better new home affordability. The plans followed the Bureau's strict standards for small house quality designs, emphasizing compact, efficient, and open floor plans. Trade organizations and businesses began publishing their own small house designs in the form of catalogues. The Bureau published a monthly newsletter called "The Small Home" with articles on mortgages, finance, building materials, house plans, construction, landscaping and interior decoration. A yearly subscription was \$1.50.

A small home that followed the Bureau's guidelines and requirements were acknowledged as being superior in construction and design, such as comfort, convenience, natural lighting, ventilation, modern equipment, and proper layout of rooms—all with advice on how and where to add rooms for later.

After WWI with a growing population and the housing shortage, the federal government wanted to increase ownership, and the modernization and beautification of homes. The Better Homes in America movement advertised in household magazines and newspapers, encouraging residents to own, build, remodel, and improve their homes.

To illustrate the importance of this campaign, President Warren G. Harding and Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover kicked off the first Better Homes Week in October 1922 for the National Better Homes Advisory Council. The Better Homes Movement received broad support from both government and industry. Vice-President Calvin Coolidge served as honorary chairman of the Advisory Council of Better Homes in America, and Secretary Herbert Hoover was president of its board of directors.

On subdivision advice, the Small House Service Bureau recommended designing a variety of home plans in a neighborhood to maintain interest, individuality, and to avoid a monotonous street of identical houses. Continued repetition was deadly. Methods to increase variety described reversing the plan, eliminating a room, altering or eliminating the porch, or mixing the exterior facades with various materials such as stucco, wood, shingles, brick, or stone. Of course, we have seen all those methods of design common in tract homes ever since, but back then they were considered innovative. ↪

— Gayle Frank

THE SMALL HOME
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Sixty Bungalow Designs in This Number

◀ *A sample of the monthly newsletter published by the non-profit Architects' Small House Service Bureau beginning in 1922.*

Exploring San Jose's City Landmarks

HS92-90: Babe the Muffler Man, 808 The Alameda

The iconic big guy on The Alameda, known as Babe of Babe's Muffler Service, stands about 22 feet high—you can touch him or take a photo op if you are walking by. He is a remnant of the advertising trend in the 1940s-1960s that used giant objects to catch the eyes of prospective customers. (Mark's Hot Dog's big 'Orange' is another good San Jose example.) This Babe was the first of many, advertising the numerous Babe's Muffler franchises throughout northern California.

The square-jawed Babe stands next to the sidewalk near a very worn sign announcing, "Babe's Mufflers," in front of the "Babe & Lightning Mufflers" Shop. The shop, a brick building behind Babe, was built in the early 1930s and served as an auto repair business and a Seaside gas station before it became the muffler service center. In 1953, Babe's Muffler Service was established by Roland "Babe" Royer at 955 The Alameda, but a year later it was relocated to this location at 808 The Alameda.

Royer's story handed down over the years told about his attending a trade show in 1954, where he saw a huge, bigger-than-life model of Paul Bunyan holding an ax. He realized a similar figure, dressed in white shop clothes like his mechanics, might be a great gimmick for his muffler shop. He proceeded to commission and install Babe on The Alameda around c. 1961 and later added a big Babe to his other shops where city ordinances allowed them. He believed that the giant figures were better advertising for his muffler shops than any signs.



Babe the Muffler Man has stood at 808 The Alameda for about 65 years. He is the only one left.

(Photos: Gayle Frank in 2022)

Royer's muffler shop soon branched out with two more businesses in Willow Glen (Willow and Vine Streets) and Mountain View. By 1960 franchises were added in Seaside and Sunnyvale. A year later newspaper ads show another franchise at 8th and E. Santa Clara Streets. Los Gatos was added in 1962. The historic report states that this is the only Babe known to still exist. It is a significant example of an early style of road-side vernacular in San Jose and was listed as a city landmark in 1992.

Babe advertised his businesses in the local newspaper almost daily beginning in the 1950s.

(Cont'd p. 18)

ATTENTION V-8 OWNERS

*We Now Have In Stock
Dual Exhaust Systems for*

1955 CHEVROLETS

1955 PONTIACS

Expertly Installed While You Wait—Work Guaranteed

BABE'S MUFFLER SERVICE

808 The Alameda (corner of Wilson) CY4-8092

MORE POWER—BETTER MILEAGE—LONGER ENGINE LIFE

City Landmarks (Cont'd)

Big ads proudly publicized that Babe's Muffler Shop sponsored the Indianapolis time trials and races in 1961 and 1962 on Radio KEEN.

The business was sold in 1983 by owner Roland G. (Babe) Royer, who remained a resident of San Jose. He died in 2011 at the age of 82.

In 1991, Babe was refurbished, getting a new outfit of a light blue shirt and jeans, and with more color on his face. (His face was said to resemble Royer.) He is made of fiberglass with steel-reinforced legs and cement boots. He usually holds a real muffler painted red (or sometimes yellow) unless it has been stolen or damaged. In 2014, after the muffler had been stolen, a hockey stick replaced it for a while.

There are other huge figures throughout the country, including other 'muffler men,' but San Jose's is the only Babe. ☚

— Gayle Frank



Sources:

—*Historic Report (DPR)*, 7/29/92, Glory Anne Laffey/Archives & Architecture

—*Mercury News*, Oct. 12, 1991



Check out our enamel pins at

www.preservation.org/shop. We even have a Babe, the Muffler Man pin. ►

Our latest enamel sign pins include LaVilla Deli, Original Joe's, Cinebar, Dulceria Mi Carnaval, Manny's Cellar, The Derby, Lou's Village, and Center Paint Store. Don't forget we also have sets of four sign pins for bowling alleys, theaters, cocktails, eateries, Willow Glen, San Carlos/Stevens Creek Blvd., and more.

Visit www.preservation.org/shop to see all of our 44 pins and other items great for gift-giving.



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Preservation Action Council of San Jose Membership Application or Renewal

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*Provide email address to receive timely notices of news, events and announcements. PAC*SJ will not release your contact details.*

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(Or visit us online at www.preservation.org to renew or join)

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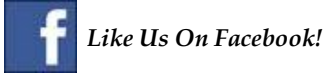
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The Preservation Action Council of San Jose is a dynamic nonprofit membership organization dedicated to **preserving our unique and diverse architectural and cultural heritage**. Through advocacy, education, and civic engagement, we promote historic preservation as an essential tool for fostering equitable, distinctive, sustainable, and prosperous communities.

We believe that **historic preservation is good for our quality of life, good for business, and good for the environment**. We aspire to integrate a strong commitment to historic preservation into the land use and development decisions of the City of San Jose 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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