

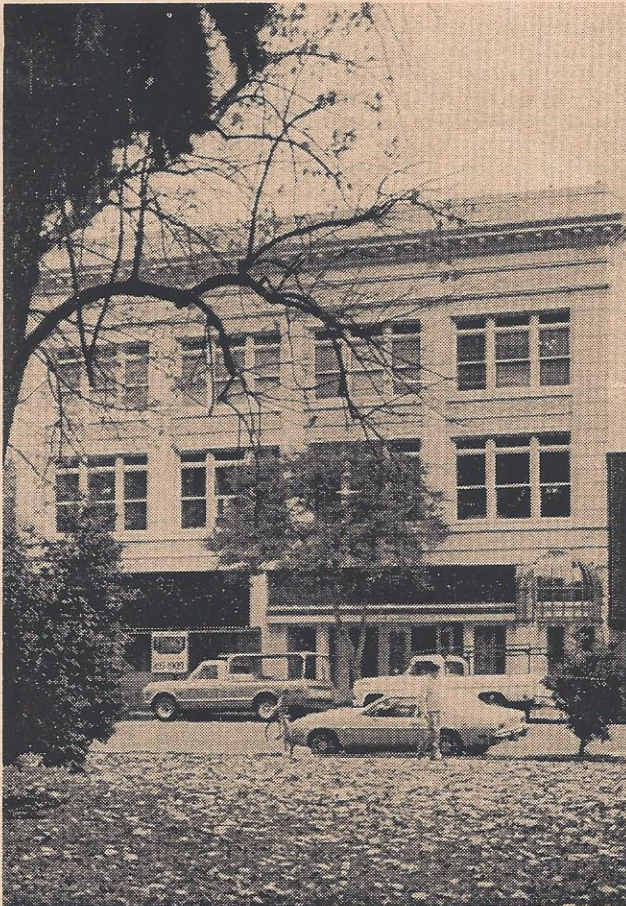
CHICO HERITAGE ASSOCIATION

p.o. box 2078 chico, ca 95927

THE ACTION'S BACK ON MAIN STREET

National Preservation Week, with the theme of 'The Action's Back on Main Street', is May 12-18 and the Chico Heritage Association is participating in several ways. Two organized walking tours of Chico's 'south of campus' area will be given, one on Wednesday, May 15th, at 5:30 p.m. with John Gallardo as guide, and the second on Saturday, May 18th, at 10:00 a.m. with Liz Stewart as guide. These tours will give interested parties the opportunity to join a small group for an informative guided tour of Chico's oldest residential neighborhood. There will be a \$1.00 charge for those participating in the tour which will start at 3rd and Chestnut Streets and last approximately 1 hour. Walking tour pamphlets will also be available at the tour site for \$1.00.

During National Preservation Week, Chico Heritage Association will also present its first Preservation Awards, made in recognition of the recipients' dedication and efforts to help preserve parts of Chico's architectural heritage.



Silberstein Park Building

PRESERVATION AWARDS

Chico Heritage Association proudly announces the presentation of its first-ever Preservation Awards. Four recipients have been selected for the honors and each will be presented with a plaque during National Preservation Week, May 12-18.

The main emphasis in these first awards is restoration. The varied nature of the four structures suggests the variety and richness of our architectural heritage in Chico, and the manner in which our older structures can be successfully returned to useful and profitable lives. Such rebirth enriches and enhances the entire community, and those responsible are to be applauded for their efforts and dedication. The recipients are:

- The Silberstein Park Building, 1909, 430 Broadway *Restoration*
- The Lee-Mansfield House, c. 1890, 344 Flume St. *Restoration*
- The Burkett House, c. 1887, 229 Flume St. *Adaptive Re-use*
- The 'Little Chapman Mansion', c. 1859, 1871, 1874, 256 E. 12th St. *Restoration*

SILBERSTEIN PARK BUILDING

Location: 430 Broadway

Owner: SAFOR Corporation, Chico

The Silberstein Park Building was built in 1909 with A.J. Bryan as supervising architect and Will Oser, a S.F. architectural engineer, as designer. The 3-story brick structure features a terra cotta facade, the most elaborate in this part of northern California. It was warmly received by the local residents as a newspaper article of the time notes: 'This is a building that Chico is proud of and it will long stand as a monument to the city. . .'

Originally the building, owned by Herman Silberstein, housed offices, with the Lyric Theater occupying a portion of the downstairs area. By 1915 the offices were converted into hotel rooms and the building was called the La Grande Hotel. The hotel fell on hard times and closed about 1980. Shortly after this time, through the efforts of Chico Heritage Association representatives Quentin Griffiths and Giovanna R. Jackson, it was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Bank of America purchased the building with plans to demolish it for expansion of their operations, but instead sold it to SAFOR Corporation of Chico in 1983. SAFOR Corporation has since put the building under extensive interior renovation and exterior restoration.

The interior has been tastefully and sensitively renovated, incorporating as much of the original detail as possible, including the stairway bannisters and mosaic floor tiles.

Because the structure is listed in the National Register, and the exterior restoration was faithfully done within the guidelines set by the National Register, the owners are able to qualify for a 25 percent investment tax credit.

Now occupied by shops and offices, the Silberstein Park Building is an excellent example of a commercial property that has been returned to use, retaining its exterior dignity, as well as much of its original interior detail as possible. It serves as a shining example of what can be done in the area of commercial restoration and renovation. We commend and congratulate the owners of the Silberstein Park Building for their fine renovation and restoration efforts.

THE LEE-MANSFIELD HOUSE

Location: 344 Flume St.

Style: Victorian Eclectic (stick, Eastlake porch, Mansard roof)

Owners: Louis Gates and Michael Benson

This imposing, 2-story wooden-framed home was built about 1890 by Wesley Lee, one of Chico's prominent early citizens and founder of Lee's Pharmacy (1857). In 1899 the Mansfield family purchased the home and owned it until 1971. A fire that year damaged much of the interior. The current owners, Louis Gates and Michael Benson, purchased the home and undertook Chico's first extensive restoration on a private residence. The results are apparent to the observer of this very beautiful house and grounds.

The owners purchased a fire-damaged structure that most people at the time considered a good candidate for demolition, and brought it back to its former glory. Chico Heritage Association wishes to give long-overdue recognition to the owners for their pioneering efforts to restore and preserve one of Chico's finest Victorian homes, and for serving as a model for what can be done to preserve our architectural heritage.



Burkett House

'THE LITTLE CHAPMAN MANSION'

Location: 256 E. 12th St.

Style: Downing Cottage with Greek Revival effects

Owners: Michele Shover and Barney Flynn

In 1853 George Adams Smith, a young lawyer working for John Bidwell, built brick foundation piers for a house just south of Little Chico Creek. It wasn't until 1859 that a structure was built on these foundations by Dr. J.B. Smith, a '49'er goldminer. At this time the present livingroom and dining room were constructed as a small ranchhouse. In 1871 Augustus H. Chapman expanded the house to its present size, and in 1874 added the second story. This work was probably planned by Henry Cleaveland, a nationally known architect who specialized in Downing cottages. He had been in Chico as architect of the Bidwell's Mansion.

A small conservatory was added to the 12th St. veranda in the 1890's (see picture), and removed in the 1930's. The 12th Street and Nelson Street sides look as the house did in 1874. On the east side a small gazebo sitting porch was recently added in place of a shed roofed laundry porch which was not original. The shape of this porch reflects the slanted bay window's shape on the west side of the house. The balusters on the new porch are from the Victorian house recently torn down at the corner of 3rd Ave. and the Esplanade.

A guest house is being constructed which retains the placement, shape and size of a large woodshed and pump house it replaces. Its design reflects the elements of the main house. Two interior doors of the guest house are from the old La Grande Hotel building, and its entry door was saved from a Victorian house recently burned down to make way for Ray's Video. This summer a classically shaped swimming pool will be added in front of the guest house, with raised sides of brick comparable to the main house's foundation brick. Future plans include adding the original design wooden picket fence around the property, and landscaping.



Lee-Mansfield House

BURKETT HOUSE

Location: 229 Flume St.

Style: Italianate

Owner: Albert Stoll

The Burkett House is a one-story, wood, Italianate-style house on a raised basement. Built about 1887, it was owned and occupied by the John Burkett family until about 1920, when it was remodeled for multiple-family use. Many years ago part of the front porch was enclosed as a room, and recently some small additions have been made, all in keeping with the original structure. The house colors, landscaping and general condition lend a very pleasing and authentic feeling to the property. The current owner, Albert Stoll, is to be complimented for his efforts to preserve one of Chico's 'little gems'.

With the exception of the Old Patrick House, c. 1853, the two 1859 rooms of the Chapman house comprise the oldest documented structure in the area. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the 'Little Chapman Mansion' is a splendid example of an owner's dedication and perseverance to restore an historic home. It further shows how parts of other old structures can be incorporated, instead of being destroyed, and how improvements to the property can be done in a complementary way, to enhance and blend, rather than to detract and clash. Well deserved commendations go to the owners of this house. Further information on this historic structure is contained in 'The Little Chapman Mansion', by Michele Shover, which is available at the Fireplace Book and Bistro.

'The Little Chapman Mansion' and the Lee-Mansfield House, like the Bullard House, were candidates for the bulldozer before private individuals saved them. Chico's oldest neighborhoods harbor many old buildings which hold similar promise for residential, commercial, or professional use. Chico Heritage Association urges real estate investors to consider these old structures. We also urge elected officials and City Staff to protect the residential character of our older neighborhoods so that families will be encouraged to stay and invest in their rehabilitation. 'New Victorians' are now being built, but we all need to work to save the real ones.

John Gallardo

FLASHING FRAMES AND WHIRRING SPOKES

Liz Stewart has been busy conducting informative slide show presentations on the historic building survey completed by CHA members and volunteers. Besides her presentation at Chico Heritage Association's Annual Meeting February 10th at Bidwell Mansion, she has given presentations to the following groups:

American College Club
Willows AAUW
Women's Club, Chico
Community Interest Group, AAWW, Chico
Chico HI-12 Club

Additionally, John Gallardo has given a similar talk and slide show at the Methodist Church.

Presentations on Chico's historic structures will be conducted free-of-charge for any interested group or club, and the program can be tailored to fit the particular interest of the group (commercial buildings, churches, residential, etc.). If your organization would like to enlist a CHA member for a slide-talk presentation, please contact Liz at 345-6986.

Liz has also been peddling of late, that is, peddling her bicycle to conduct bicycle tours past some of Chico's historic structures. One such tour was conducted for the Chico Velo Club, a local bike club, in late March. Besides getting some exercise and fresh air, the participants were privy to information on the history of the buildings viewed and their owners, architectural features, etc. Start oiling your bike chains and check the air in your tires as there are bound to be more bike tours in the future!

Pattie Bellefeuille

CALIFORNIA HERITAGE QUILT PROJECT

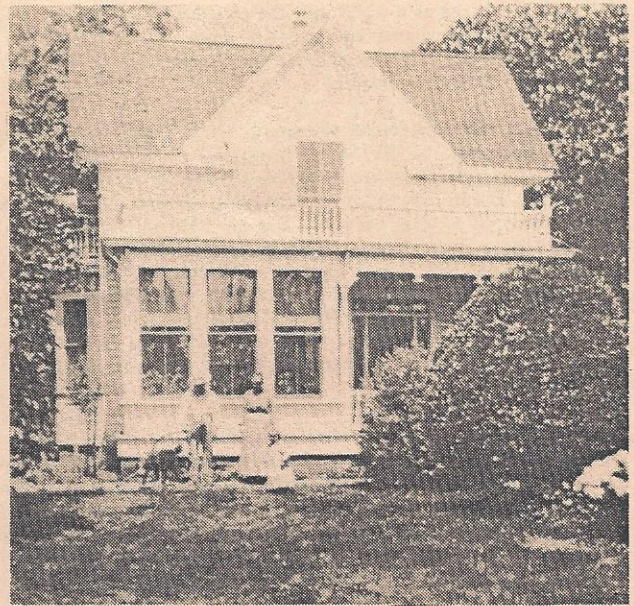
The California Heritage Quilt Project hopes to locate, photograph, register and collect the history of every quilt made in or that came to California before 1945! To find such quilts, the group will hold a 'Quilt Day' in Chico on Wednesday, June 5th, at California State University, Chico, Bell Memorial Union, Room 108 from 9:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Quilt experts, including Sally Garrouette and Lucy Hilte, will identify the pattern and record as much information as possible from the owner about the history of the quilt. Owners will receive a free brochure on the care and conservation of textiles. The quilt judged most significant will win \$100 that day. Pam Herman of Chico is coordinating the event along with many members of the Annie's Star Guild of Chico, the Ridge Quilters of Paradise, and the Piecemakers of Oroville. (Others who may be interested in volunteering that day should contact Pam at 345-2125).

Owners of quilts made or brought to the state prior to 1945 are invited to bring their heirloom treasures for a team to record owner and maker data, physical condition and aspects of design. Sometimes quilts of simple design and a variety of scrap fabric can yield valuable information to quilt historians. All quilts of the period will be welcome.

For more information contact: Teresa Higgins (Chico) 895-3906, Marian Graham (Paradise) 872-9015, Agnes McDonell (Biggs) 868-5677, and Micky Samson (Oroville) 589-2430.

ETCHING THE PAST FOR THE PRESENT

Last year Chico Heritage Association offered to keep a list of recommended local craftspeople and available products suited to the rehabilitation of antique buildings. Recently added to the list is Wisteria Etched Glass Studio who was called upon by a member of CHA to help design etched glass for an 1890's door. Mary Jo Braithwaite adapted a design borrowed from a small 1870's autograph book which had belonged to a former owner of the home. The book cover's gold embossed design was copied, enlarged, transferred and etched by sandblasting on the door window with a lovely effect.



'Little Chapman Mansion'

Mark Braithwaite handled the sandblasting. While the couple often works with contemporary design, they are very interested in reproducing authentic patterns from a variety of periods. Should you have a need for quality glass etching for your older residential or commercial building, you may wish to contact Wisteria Etched Glass Studio, P.O. Box 725, Chico, 342-8420.

SURVEY RESEARCH

Some of the buildings not completed during the last Historic Building Survey include the following:

251 E. 7th Ave.
148 W. 16th St.
1262 Broadway
946 Esplanade
1000 Esplanade
1857 Mulberry
206 W. 1st Ave.
710 W. Lindo
455 E. 3rd St.

If you would like to try your hand at researching one or more of these buildings, or have some information about them, please contact Liz Stewart at 345-6986.

Liz Stewart

WHAT STYLE IS THAT? - ITALIANATE

This article on the Italianate style will be the first of several devoted to building styles that the newsletter will carry in an attempt to encourage the development of our knowledge of our visual built environment.

First of all, there is a bit of general groundwork to keep in mind before beginning on the specifics of any one style.

A 'style' denotes the visual appearance of a structure - usually it refers to a building's general shape as well as its decorative 'dressing.' Although several styles, e.g., Octagonal and Bungalow, were only used for residences, a specific style does not normally refer to a building's function or use. Gothic Revival, Italianate, Greek Revival, etc. were all used for commercial and public buildings, residences and churches.

Building styles do not suddenly develop out of a void. Like any art form, they reflect the philosophy and outlook of their time. The latter half of the nineteenth century was devoted to an almost frantic search for an appropriate style. Its romantic use of past styles has

been characterized as a flight into the security of the past by an increasingly industrialized and fast-changing world. Never has so many completely different styles been clutched at, developed and discarded in such a short time.

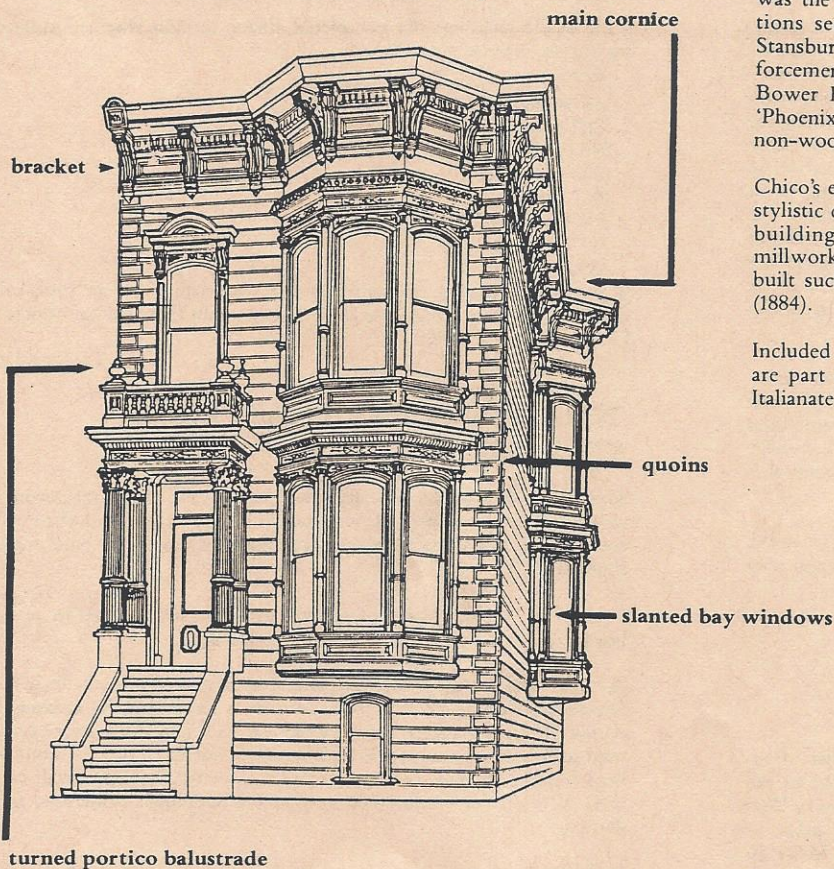
The West Coast took longer to receive, accept and absorb new fashions. Knowledge of the 'latest thing' in the East was available through magazines, pattern books and relatively quick train access after 1869. But in the matter of styles, 19th century California was a little conservative. For example, Bidwell Mansion, 1868, is considered the 'representative example of the Italian Villa style of the Pacific frontier', (H. Kirker, *California's Architectural Frontier*, Peregrine Smith, 1973, p. 70.) Yet the Italian Villa style was popular on the East coast in the 1840's and 1850's. The Italianate style is dated in style dictionaries from the 1850's to 1880's, yet it was used in Chico beginning in the early 1870's and Italianate details were still being used in 1905!

As in any social change, the time spans of each style overlap. Often a building will have elements of 2 styles, usually denoting a 'transitional' building - one in which 1 style is blending into another. Some buildings can only be described as 'eclectic' - which is not a style but a creative use of many stylistic elements with a unique end product which defies categorization. This quite often happened when competent but unsophisticated carpenters were called upon to design as well as build.

One last thing to remember about styles: 'Victorian' refers to a time period, not a style. To describe a building as a 'Victorian' means that it was built during the reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901) and therefore has the possibility of being in any of almost a dozen different styles - or combinations thereof!

Giovanna R. Jackson

Italianate With Slanted Bay



ITALIANATE STYLE

The Italianate style was one of the most popular of the many styles available during the Victorian period. The earlier Italian Villa style (Bidwell Mansion) was a romantic interpretation of towered farmhouses seen in the hills of northern Italy or glimpsed in 17th century landscape paintings. The Italianate style was essentially more sober, being based on urban Italian Renaissance palaces. It used many of the same classical details, e.g., columns, pediments, cornices, but often interpreted and combined them in ways that a Renaissance duke would never recognize! It was a style adaptable to a cottage, a grand house, or a commercial building. This adaptability was probably the key to its long popularity.

In Chico, we can trace local development of the style from the rather severe '5th St. Rooming House' (c. 1872), to the elegant and elaborate San Francisco Italianate Stansbury House (1883) to the relatively late use of Italianate details in the Gatliff House (c. 1891).

The major clue to recognizing an Italianate style building is a projecting cornice or eaves ornamented with brackets, which casts a shadow around the upper edge of the structure. Any building with bracketed eaves can be said to have at least some Italianate influence. Edith Wharton wrote a novel called *Hudson River Bracketed*, referring to the Italianate house which was used as a setting.

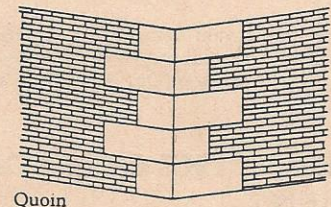
The basic building form is angular - a box or rectangle often with bay windows projecting a flat or very low pitched roof, and always a porch or veranda. In more formal residences, the veranda is relegated to the side and the entrance is emphasized with a portico - a single-story, balconied projection sheltering the main entry and supported by columns (e.g., Stansbury House). Originally the lovely fanlight door of the Walker House (1875) was protected by just such a balconied, columned portico. Tall, narrow windows emphasize verticality and are often round-headed and have decorative frames or moldings.

Building materials originally emulated stone but in this area wood was the predominant material. The small rectangular wooden sections seen at the corners of buildings (e.g., Hugh T. Bell and Stansbury Houses) are 'quoins' - imitations of the heavy stone reinforcements at the corners of Renaissance palaces. The Walker and Bower Houses (1877) and the Noonan Building (1889, now the 'Phoenix Building') are among our few brick structures and our only non-wooden Italianates.

Chico's early Italianate buildings were rather severe, relying for their stylistic clues on their boxy shapes and bracketed eaves. But as local building technology developed, more decorative detailing or millwork became available, until a fully-dressed Italianate could be built such as the Stansbury House and the original Barnard House (1884).

Included below is a chronological list of Italianate structures which are part of the Chico Historic Building Survey. In parentheses are Italianate details of special interest.

Giovanna R. Jackson

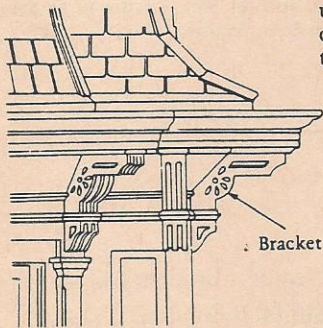


QUOIN Units of stone or brick used to accentuate the corners of a building.

CHICO ITALIANATES

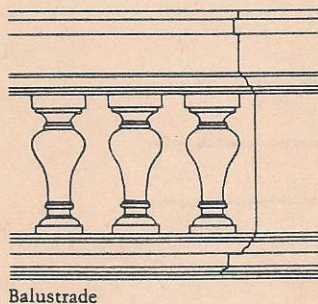
- 1868 Bidwell Mansion (towered Italian Villa style)
- 1872 5th St. Rooming House, 731 W. 5th St. (Italianate box)
- 1873 Rev. Jesse Wood House, 644 W. 4th St. (single-story side bays)
- 1874 Hugh T. Bell House, 458 E. 7th St. (quoins, front bays)
- 1875 Walker House, 702 W. 3rd St. (brick, round-headed windows)
- 1877 Bower House, River Road (brick, original veranda replaced)
- 1878 F. Fordham House, 342 Ivy (cottage or 'single-story Italianate')
- 1880 324 W. 6th St. (originally in the junction area; fairly elaborate millwork)
- 1880 Waterland Apts., 327 Normal (greatly remodeled but bracketed eaves remain)
- 1881 Ormsby House, 318 Ivy (cottage with squeezed pediment at the roofline, quoins)
- 1881 F.M. Jackson House, 330 Ivy (cottage)
- 1881 C.A. McGilvary House, 1543 Laurel (cottage)
- 1883 Stansbury House, 305 W. 5th St. (a classic San Francisco slanted bay Italianate)
- 1883 Lusk Building, 316 W. 2nd St. (quoins, round-headed windows)
- 1883 228 Ivy (double pediments at porch and rooflines)
- 1884 Barnard House, 238 Normal (south side still retains original Italianate appearance)
- 1884 C.P. Linebarger House, 1544 Laurel (kingpost brackets)
- 1885 George C. Vadney House, 765 Humboldt Ave. (rinceau brackets, original front veranda removed)
- 1886 Schwein House (square bays, remodeled veranda)
- 1887 Burkett House, 229 Flume (remodeled cottage, decorative pediment at roofline)
- 1887 W.H. Schooler House, 527 W. (cottage with remodeled front bays, quoins)
- 1889 Noonan Building (now the 'Phoenix Building'), 300 Broadway (commercial use of Italianate on 2nd floor)
- 1891 Swearingen house, 806 Normal (actually an earlier use of the style)
- 1891 Gatliff House, 168 E. 3rd Ave. (bracketed eaves and arcade-like veranda on farmhouse shape)
- 1905 Martin Stroehl House, 1630 Spruce (extremely late use of this style)

BRACKET A support element under eaves, shelves or other overhangs; often more decorative than functional.



BALUSTER An upright, often vase-shaped, support for a rail.

BALUSTRADE A series of balusters with a rail.



ITEMS OF INTEREST

Publications

If you own an older home, commercial structure, church or school, or are considering buying one, you may save yourself some problems by looking at a publication of the National Trust for Historic Preservation called *Respectful Rehabilitation: Answers to Your Questions About Old Buildings*, published by Preservation Press, 1982. Written entirely in question and answer format, this book describes how to make repairs or restorations on roofs, masonry, windows, doors, front porches, storefronts, etc. It also lists the Department of Interior guidelines which must be followed should you want to qualify for tax credit on commercial property under the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981. It is important to know and understand the guidelines for National Trust properties, even if the property is on state and local listings. The Public Library has a copy of this publication, or it may be ordered at a cost of \$9.95 (plus \$2.50 for handling and 6 percent sales tax) from:

Preservation Bookshop
1600 H St., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20006

Classes

From time to time the University of California at Davis Extension offers classes of great interest to architectural historians, photographers and those interested in interior design of California homes. The spring catalog, called *Venture: Lifelong Learning*, lists: 'Masters' Seminar in Architectural Photography', May 17-19, Monterey, Instructor Morley Baer, \$100.

In the past two other courses were taught which may be offered again: 'Architecture of the Sacramento Valley' and 'California Interiors.'

For catalog information contact the Registration Office, University Extension, U.C. Davis, CA 95916, or call (800) 752-0881.

Renovation Supplies

The Renovator's Supply, Inc., Renovator's Old Mill, Millers Falls, MA 01349, (413) 659-2211, might have just the item you need for your renovation project. Such items as boot scrapers, door hardware, hooks, plumbing, lighting fixtures and shades, embossed wall sculpture (like that in the Stansbury House) are available through this supply outfit. If in the market, you may wish to contact them for a catalog.

Centerville Museum

An entertaining Sunday drive might include a trip to the Centerville Museum which is open 1-5:00 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. John Nopel's 'History of Butte County' class (offered through Butte College) visited the museum on a field trip last quarter and found it to be filled with interesting relics and information of the past.

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PLEASE JOIN!

Please help Chico Heritage Association preserve and enhance the historic cultural resources of our city. We have a unique chance right now to make important positive influences toward saving our past the way it was, enhancing our present the way we like it, and determining our future the way we would like it to be. The Association operates with funds derived from (1) memberships and donations, (2) fund-raising events, and (3) government grants for historic resources surveys. Your involvement is essential. For those of you who are or have been members, we thank you for your continued or past support. For those of you who have not yet joined, please do so. Memberships are on the calendar year, and 1985 dues are now payable.

CHICO HERITAGE ASSOCIATION 895-3848 P. O. BOX 2078 CHICO, CA 95927

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