



THE BOARD AND BATTEN

Newsletter of the Pacific Grove Heritage Society

April/May 1995



Christie Martine, Heritage Society Vice President, won 3rd prize in the Victorian Fashion Show held during the Good Old Days in April. Wearing the Society's 1910 Bathhouse swimsuit, she is standing in front of her award-winning home on 15th Street.

Calander of Events

- July 22: Chautauqua Hall Anniversary
- July 24 - 29: Feast of Lanterns
- October 8: 26th Annual Victorian Home Tour
- October 14: Butterfly Parade
- December 5: Christmas At The Inns

Chautauqua Hall Celebrates An Anniversary

On July 20, 1970, the State Department of Parks and Recreation in cooperation with the City of Pacific Grove dedicated the Hall as a Registered California Landmark (#839). The large bronze plaque still sits in front of the Hall. The Chautauqua Hall Preservation Society will be celebrating the 25th anniversary of the dedication on Saturday, July 22 with a lecture and slide show in the museum followed by cake and a musical program in Chautauqua Hall. Please watch for details in the local papers.

A History of Chautauqua Hall

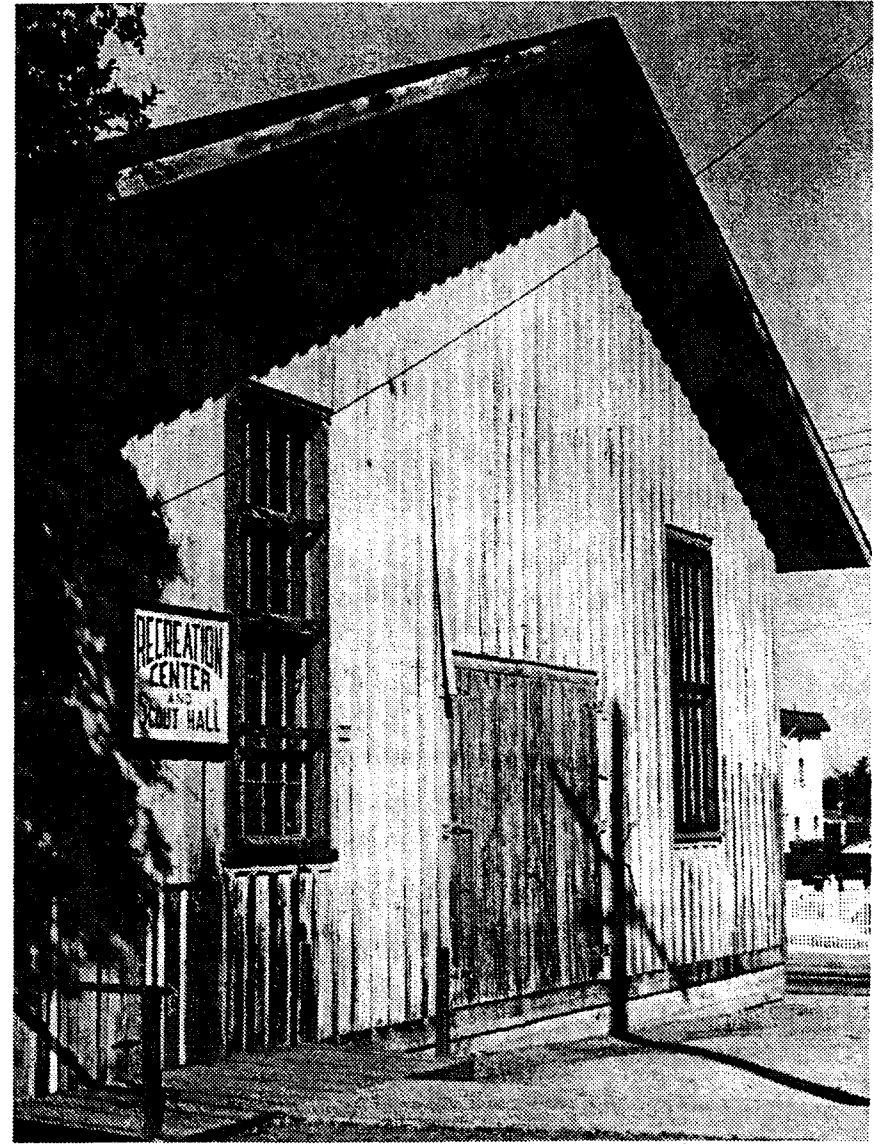
❖ (From the P. G. Tribune of February 16, 1934)

Chautauqua Hall has been identified with every stage of the development of the town since 1881. Built by the founders of the Methodist summer conference as an assembly hall, the building was later utilized as a school. As the meeting hall of Methodist church members, it frequently housed mass meetings where feeling and opinion ran high. Later it was used as the Chautauqua hall, and many a bell-like note of oratory has resounded within its walls as well as inspirational and cultural peroration. About 1903 it served as the Methodist church while the present church was being remodeled. Its service to youth commenced when it began to be used as a gymnasium for the high school, a use which continued until the present high school athletic building was erected.

Through the efforts of a group of citizens interested in scouting, the building was purchased in 1921 from Del Monte Properties company for \$2500. The sum of \$2900 was raised by public subscription from the people of Pacific Grove. Charles Barker, who was then scoutmaster, was the leader of the drive and personally collected the bulk of the money. Assisting him were F.L. Buck, H.C. Steinmetz, Ed Simpson and W.J. Gould. The extra money was used to put in curbs and gutters. The property consisted of the building and eight lots. It was then transferred to the city of Pacific Grove by deed on March 18, 1922.

As one of the CWA projects undertaken by the city, the building recently was moved 25 feet to permit the widening of Grove street (now Central). Further improvements included raising the structure and putting in a cement foundation and a new base. The rear portion was cut away and moved back about 20 feet and an extension built connecting the two old parts of the building. This has increased the space materially and has made room for eight patrol rooms or dens. Re-wiring, re-shingling, and installation of modern plumbing further improved the structure.

It is the intention of the trustees of the building that it shall be a meeting place not only for the Boy Scouts, but also for many other organizations of young people. In the future it is hoped that a new floor can be installed which will make it available as a basketball court. Kitchen equipment will be added so that suppers may be prepared and served there. These improvements will be undertaken by the Scout committee.



A 1951 photo of Chautauqua Hall. The sign reads "Recreation Center and Scout Hall".

Work Starts On New Roof For Center

❖ From the Pacific Grove Tide of August 16, 1940.

Councilman W. R. LaPorte announced yesterday that work is expected to get underway tomorrow for the installing of a new roof on the community recreation center, formerly the Boy Scout Hall. Provision for the work was made in the new city budget.

The recreation center has become one of the most popular places in town this summer since the installation of a new hardwood floor several weeks ago. At that time the underpinning of the building was strengthened. A new sidewalk has been installed in front of the building and a new safety door at the rear. Dressing rooms have also been fitted out. When the new roof has been completed, plans call for the lining of the interior walls with knotty pine. Other improvements are contemplated also.

The recreation center, located at Central avenue and Sixteenth street, is already serving a wide sphere of community activities. It has been for many years the Boy Scout headquarters and still serves in that capacity. The recreation commission now has made it the scene of regular informal dances for Pacific Grove young people and similar activities. Last week's dance, attended by nearly 300 people, was a fine demonstration of the use being made of the building. The dances are carefully supervised by the recreation commission, attendance being on invitation and limited to local residents and visitors.

Early Reference To Chautauqua Hall

(Editor's note: The following article is from the August 23, 1896 edition of the San Francisco Chronicle. It is the earliest reference I can find where Chautauqua Hall was actually called "Chautauqua Hall".)

PACIFIC GROVE, August 22. An enthusiastic Republican rally was held at the old Chautauqua Hall tonight. E. C. Scott of the McKinley Club introduced Rev. T. H. Sinex as chairman, who made a vigorous speech endorsing McKinley. J. C. Brusie, Republican nominee for the State Senate from Sacramento, made an amusing and stirring oration.

"America" was sung by a local quartet and Edward Berwick addressed a gathering on the silver issue. The house was well filled, a large number of ladies being among the audience. Much ardor was exhibited.

John Steinbeck Returns To Home Of His Father

❖ (By S.E. in the P. G. Tribune - Sep. 24, 1948)

Being a person who daydreams a great deal, one of this writer's favorite fancies has been that of meeting someone famous like John Steinbeck. In this dream, my conduct has been admirable and the conversation brilliant and cultured, with Steinbeck enthralled by my grasp of world affairs. But reality proved to be something far different.

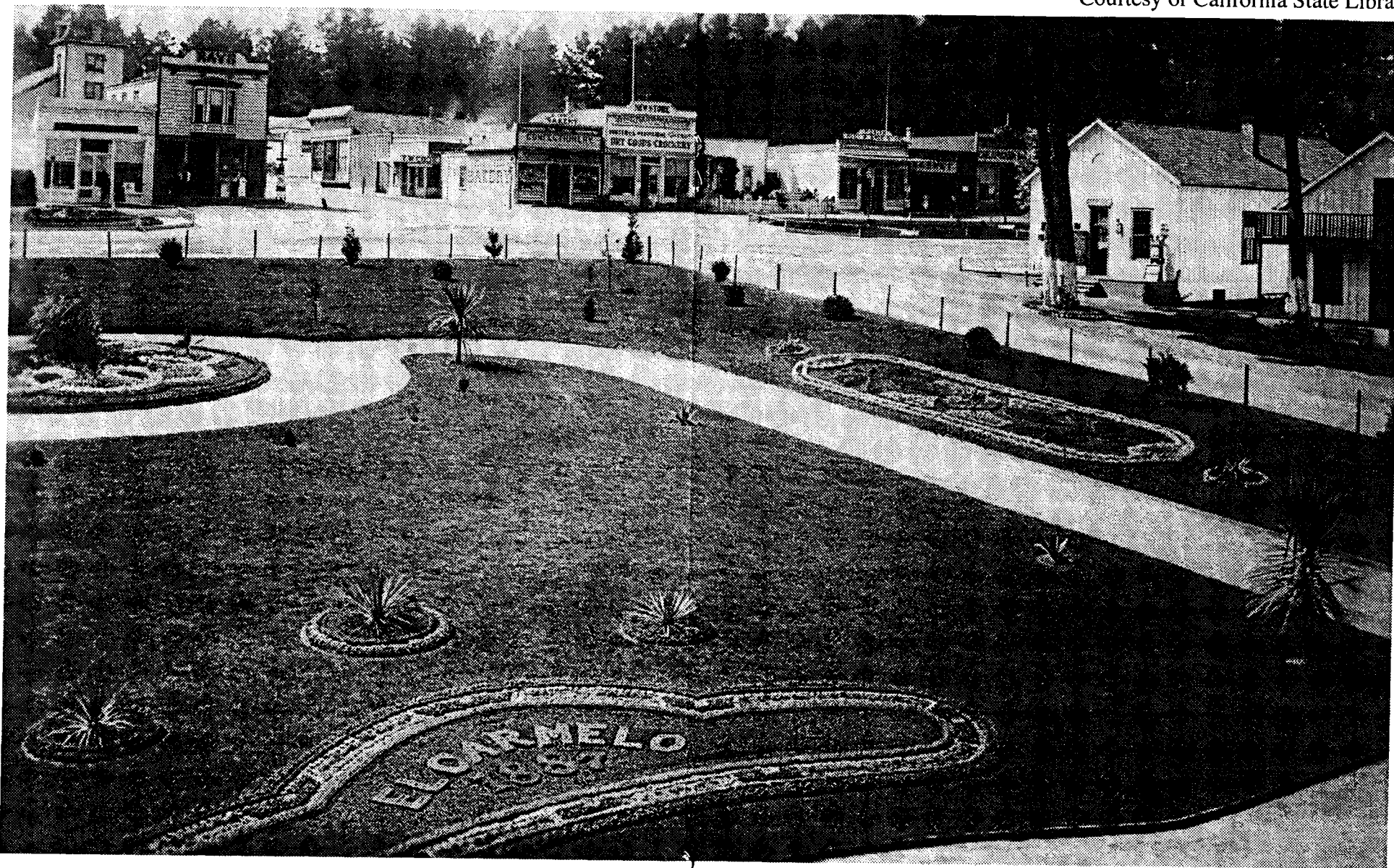
No letter of introduction - no mutual friend to perform an introduction. It took ten minutes to summon up enough courage to even enter the yard of the Steinbeck place on 11th street. There I found a beehive of activity, with painters, electricians, carpenters working on the house and a man putting plants into a flower bed. Approaching the gardener, I asked him if he could tell me where I might find Mr. Steinbeck.

The gardener being Steinbeck, the interview got off to an excellent start. Questions on world affairs, the author's plans, his next book vanished completely, and the interviewer looked like nothing more or less than a silly goldfish opening and shutting its mouth with no sounds emerging. He took pity on me and taking time off from his labors asked me into the house. There, to the accompaniment of hammering, sawing and the like, the interview began, distinguished by absolute silence on my part.

The silence was broken by his asking if I could type. Showing off like anything, I approached the typewriter in a confident manner, as here at least was something with which I was familiar. The typing consisted of a brief letter to Mr. Muir of the Monterey Telephone company requesting the installation of one of the all-important machines. It is to be hoped Mr. Muir can decipher the request, as a more incoherent jumble of typographical errors and misspelled words would be hard to imagine. At long last, however, Steinbeck's patience and tolerance won out and I prattled away merrily, forgetting the assignment was to interview Steinbeck and not vice versa.

John Steinbeck has returned to the home his father built in Pacific Grove some 50 years ago. The noted author, who may in all truthfulness call the world his home, has always considered his father's house his "idea of a place to come back to." As roving correspondent for the New York Herald Tribune, it is impossible for Steinbeck to have a "permanent" home, but the sturdily constructed, three bedroom cottage will be a close approach to one. Here he will return, between assignments, to rest and write and work in his garden.

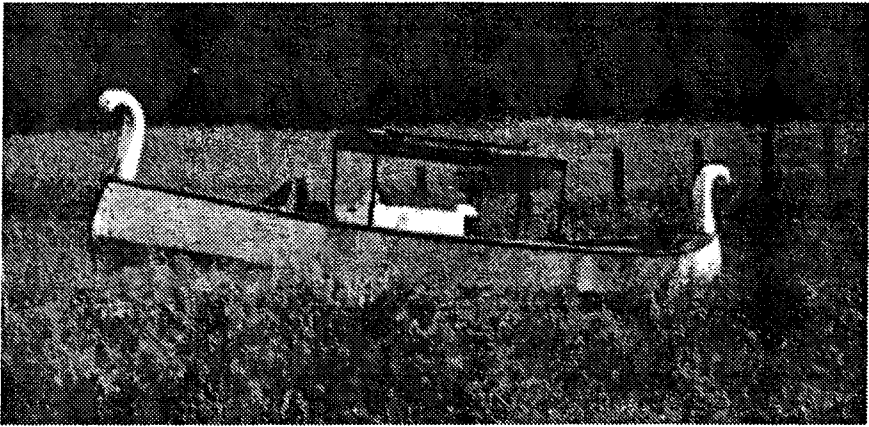
Speaking of gardens, during the short time Steinbeck has been home he has pruned trees and bushes, spaded and prepared flower beds. Saturday afternoon he transplanted a flat of cinerarias, explaining as he did so how much shade they needed, the type of plant food. He was obviously engrossed by his work in the good earth.



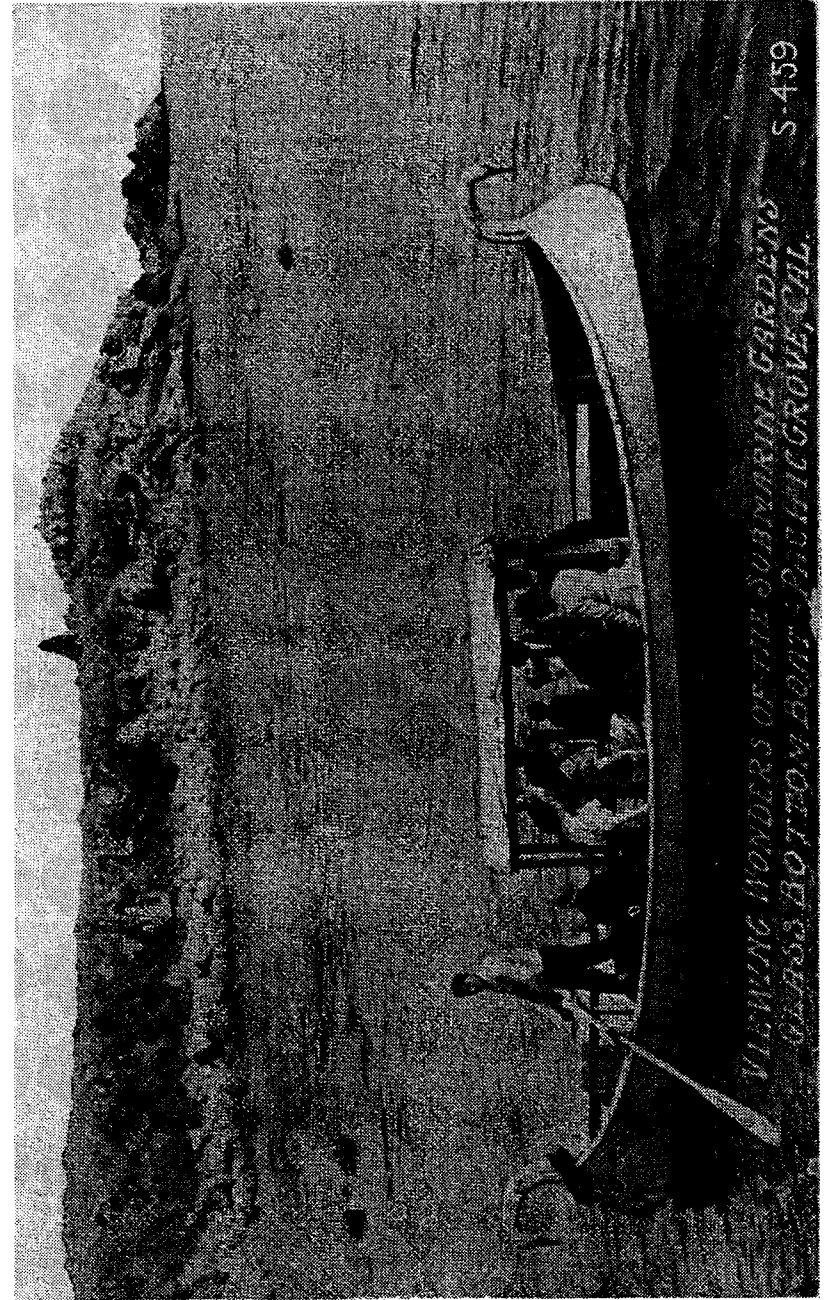
View of intersection of Lighthouse and Grand taken circa 1888 from the porch of the El Carmelo Hotel. Tower in the left rear is on the Mammoth Livery Stable. Cottage on right with upper porch is part of the hotel grounds. The building beside it is the Pacific Improvement Company's Superintendent's office. Two buildings on left are Tuttle's Pharmacy and Ray's, which is now Prim and Proper.

Want To Help Restore A Glass Bottom Boat?

William Smith has offered us a long-term, permanent(?) loan of a 1940s era glass bottom boat. The boat is in a rusted state of disrepair and is 30 feet long. We need to form a committee to determine the feasibility of restoring and storing the boat, as well as how to best use it (probably NOT in the water). If you have any ideas and/or want to help, please call President Geoff Welch at 646-8949 or drop us a note at P.O. Box 1007. in P.G.



Others Saw Us Through Postcards



Postcard sent to H. Winter in Gilroy on August 28, 1903. "Sorry I could not make it. Got a wire to come at once to this place. Maybe later I can make it. Hope you are both O.K."

Down the Piney Path

News from old Pacific Grove from the Monterey Weekly Cypress May 1889
by E. C. Davis

- ❖ The children of the Grove enjoyed a very pleasant May Day picnic at Lake Majella on the First.
- ❖ Moore, the store keeper, will occupy the old Carmelo bakery corner.
- ❖ The railroad is rapidly making progress in this direction.
- ❖ The museum is being moved to the plaza opposite the El Carmelo, thus opening up Grand Avenue.
- ❖ The blasting along the Grove extension has caused many windows to shake, but so far no damage has been done.
- ❖ Dr. Small has fitted up his office, taken off his overcoat and seems ready for business.
- ❖ It looks as though the arrival of the locomotive and a daily paper will be celebrated at the same time in Pacific Grove.
- ❖ The Chinese of Chinatown are removing the remains of their cemetery along the railroad right of way.
- ❖ Only May and 40 newcomers in the Grove already.
- ❖ Remains of aborigines are being excavated along the railway road.
- ❖ The Pacific Grove Skating Rink will open with a new floor and a brass band by June 1. It is handsomely decorated with flags and ferns.

New Members

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Packard
Mr. & Mrs. Marvin Smith
Donald Roth
Eric Huitt
Guillermo & Jone Amador
Helen, John & Jeff Ratto

Mr. & Mrs. Paul Jacobson
Mr. & Mrs. Rod Van Artsdalen
Mike & Lisa Harbert
Bobbie Chesson
Barbee & Ken Swofford
Larry Lambert & Rose Ann
Gallagher

Quilt Show & Preview Party

The Preview Party and the Quilt Show held in April were successes and we thank you for your help and attendance. There were a number of unclaimed serving dishes left after the Preview party. If you are missing one, please call Bobbie Hall at 375-7641 to claim it.

1995 Heritage Awards

On May 18th the Heritage Society announced the recipients of the 1995 Heritage Awards at its annual Historic Preservation Week Program. Vice President Christie Martine presided over the program held for the third year in a row at the historic Mayflower Church.

Many nominations were received and, as usual, the decisions were difficult. Bronze Heritage House Awards were presented to 410 Light-house (Mr. & Mrs. Bill McElyea), 112 8th Street (Marilyn Gustafson), and the Christian Church. The Heritage Design Award for new construction went to Dean & Barbara Griggs for Griggs Nursery. Letters of Commendation were given to 111 Grand (John Flatley), 156 Carmel (Gregory Kondos), 584 Central (P. G. Chamber of Commerce), 430 Laurel (John & Helen Ratto/Bill Bluhm) and 312 Central (Lowell & Wilda Northrup). After the Awards presentation, Kent Seavey, noted preservation professional, presented the slide show on vernacular architecture that he has been giving in the schools for the Heritage Society. Refreshments followed.

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Members receive *The Board and Batten* newsletter of the Heritage Society of Pacific Grove.

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