



EXACTLY OPPOSITE

The Newsletter of the Berkeley Historical Society & Museum

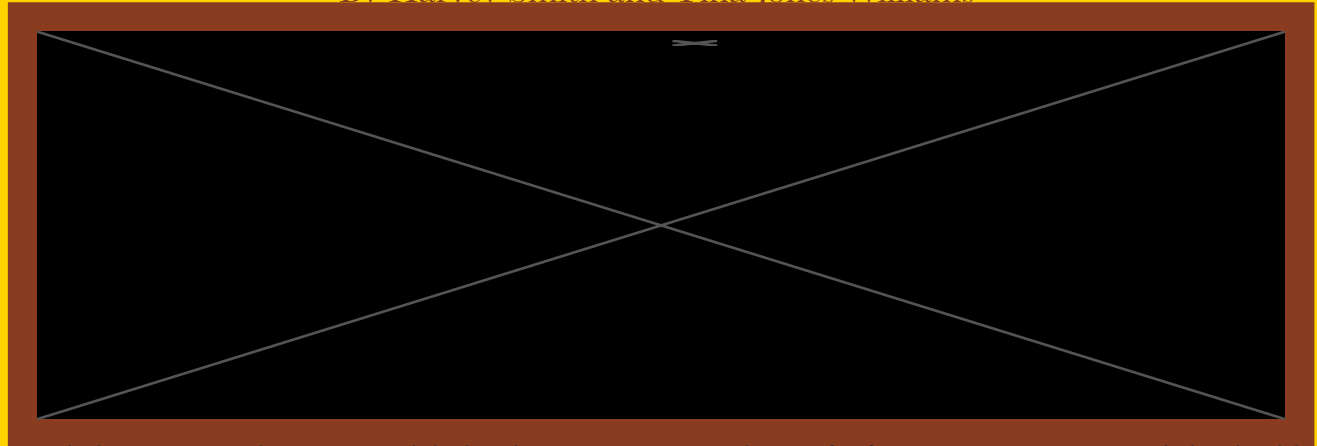
Volume 40 Number 2

Spring 2022

NEW EXHIBIT OPENS APRIL 24

African Americans in Berkeley Arts, Entertainment, Literature, Sports

By Harvey Smith and Tina Jones Williams



The Berkeley Historical Society is delighted to present Year Three of *African Americans in Berkeley*, building upon the foundation of *African Americans in Berkeley: Four Families* presented in 2019 and *African Americans in Berkeley's History and Legacy* presented in 2021.

The theme this year is significant contributions made by African American Berkeleyans in the arts, entertainment, literature and sports, spanning the years 1940 to 2010.

Some of the people featured are educator Ruth Acty (as a writer and performer), journalist Belva Davis, artists Mildred Howard and Edythe Boone, singers/musicians Tramaine Hawkins and Joshua Redman, athletes Don Barksdale, Glenn Burke, and Steve Odom, among many others.

On view are stars like Whoopi Goldberg and Richard Pryor who spent pivotal years in Berkeley, and, although not originally from Berkeley, famed writer Alice Walker, who lived here for twenty years. Also in the spotlight are gathering places like Rainbow Sign, the Black Repertory Group Theater, and the annual Berkeley Juneteenth Festival (1986 – present).

(continued, with captions, on page 3)

From Street to Ballot Box: Berkeley Politics of the 1970s, Selections from the David Mundstock Collection will close on Saturday, April 9. On **Sunday, April 3**, we will have an open house from 2 to 4 p.m. with the exhibit curators present to chat. But if you don't get a chance to view the exhibit at the Center (or would like to see some online-only items), you can visit the online version at exhibitsbhs.org.

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President's Message

The Berkeley Historical Society & Museum lists 31 oral histories and videos on its website. While each one is well worth absorbing, I picked four videos as examples to review with BHSM's Oral History Committee co-chairs, Jeanine Castello-Lin and Tonya Staros, for a window into their production. Like all our volunteers, Jeanine and Tonya work without financial compensation. The videos were: Leon Wofsy, Peter Dale Scott, Ruth Hayashi and Paul Salz, and the production questions were: (1) How were these subjects chosen? (2) What goes into preparation for the interviews? And (3) What is the lasting value of these interviews?

Choosing subjects: The one essential criterion is a connection with Berkeley; beyond that, "their personal lives have intersected with historical events of interest." In the case of Wofsy, the first connection was the Free Speech Movement, but also his U.S. Communist Party leadership. Scott was likewise involved in the FSM as an advocate of the students and was also an objective observer of other faculty viewpoints. (Both were Cal professors.) Ruth Hayashi was a "walk-in" at the History Center, bringing memorabilia and photographs relating to the Napoleon Byrne house, where she and her parents resided, as her father was the gardener and her mother the housekeeper. Ruth's video interview was conducted by two Berkeley High students.

Preparation: Jeanine and Tonya came prepared for the interview of Salz with considerable background from their production of BHSM's book *The Golden Age of International House Berkeley* (for sale at the History Center). However, the interview process itself led into territory for which they had no preparation—such as relations between the Jewish and non-Jewish population in Czechoslovakia in 1939, just before Salz boarded the *Kindertransport* for England. Since the interview of Scott was in conjunction with their work on the FSM Exhibit at the Center, Jeanine and Tonya had done a great deal of background reading. In the case of Hayashi, preparation for the interview was undertaken by the student volunteers.

Lasting value: There is little doubt. To date, these online interviews have been viewed up to nearly 400 times apiece. The videos have proven a resource for young people who didn't live through the FSM times, "making history more human, to see the values that go into historical decisions." An example of the online reach of the interviews came from a woman living in Canada who before WWII lived in "that same little village as Salz in Czechoslovakia," and who after 80 years was finally able to connect with him through BHSM. Could there be a finer compensation for these dedicated volunteers of the Oral History Committee?

George O. Petty

Tonya Staros



Jeanine Castello-Lin

(African Americans - continued from page 1)

Prominent is a photo collage of "Black Faces"—African Americans who were daily contributors to community and culture over the years here in Berkeley.

The exhibit planning team includes Dr. Stephanie Anne Johnson, Harvey Smith, Tina Jones Williams, David Knott and Byron Rumford III.

Join us on Sunday, April 24, at 3 p.m. in the Veterans Memorial Building for the opening celebration.

Images on page 1, left to right: Glenn Burke (Mark Hundley/AP); Edythe Boone (Liz Hafalia/*The Chronicle*); Tramaine Hawkins (source unknown); Richard Pryor (Bob Riha Jr/WIREIMAGE)

New Exhibit-Related Interviews Available

We are very pleased to announce the online version of *From Streets to Ballot Box: Berkeley Politics of the 1970s*, now available on BHSM's website (see link on our homepage). So if you don't think you will get a chance to view the exhibit at the Center, don't worry!

Additionally, the online exhibit features video interviews with some of the vibrant personalities of the era:

Eugene "Gus" Newport worked briefly for Malcolm X in New York, then came West and worked for the City of Berkeley before becoming the mayoral candidate of the Berkeley Citizens Action (BCA) in 1979. Newport served as mayor from 1979 to 1986, finally giving the BCA a majority on the City Council. In his interview, Gus reminisces about the BCA, Malcolm X and his own commitment to international peace.

As a member of the BCA, **Loni Hancock** served on Berkeley's City Council from 1971 to 1979, and became the first woman elected mayor of Berkeley (1986-1994). Hancock went on to become a member of the California State Assembly (2002-2008) and then a State Senator (2008-2016). In her video interview, Loni remembers the youthful energy and idealism which propelled the innovative politics of the 1970s.

In her interview, **Shirley Dean** remembers the birth of the environmental and neighborhood preservation movements. After helping pass the Landmarks Preservation Ordinance in 1974, Dean served on Berkeley's City Council for fifteen years between 1975 and 1994, and then as mayor of Berkeley for two terms (1994-2002). In her video, Shirley also recalls efforts to save the waterfront and revitalize Berkeley's downtown with a new Arts District.

A forthcoming interview with **Ying Lee** will highlight the enthusiasm and camaraderie that transformed Berkeley politics in the 1970s. Lee served as a member of Berkeley's City Council from 1973 to 1977, running for mayor, unsuccessfully, in 1975. As a longtime anti-war activist, Ying will reflect on the role played by the Vietnam War in 1970s leftwing politics.

The first in our interviewees related to *African Americans in Berkeley: Arts, Entertainment, Literature, Sports* is **Edythe Boone**, a vibrant octogenarian artist and muralist, best known in Berkeley for her 2018 mural on Ashby Avenue featuring famous figures of the South Berkeley neighborhood. Among these figures is Tina Jones Williams, who conducts this interview with Boone, eliciting stories of the transformative power of art in schools and in the community.

Interviews related to *From Street to Ballot Box* were conducted by Jeanine Castello-Lin and edited by Tonya Staros. Staros also edited Williams' interview with Boone.

Dr. Carol Aronovici: City Planning Educator and Affordable Housing Advocate

By Fred Etzel



Dr. Carol Aronovici
Photo by John Aronovici

Carol Aronovici, a pioneering leader in the field of urban planning, was a Berkeley resident for decades and a consultant to the City of Berkeley in the 1920s. He was born the son of an agrarian lawyer on September 18, 1881 in Botoșani, the capital city of Botoșani County, in the northern part of Moldavia, Romania. In 1900, along with six others, he was expelled from Romania for advocating peasant's rights. Aronovici immigrated to the United States, where upon his arrival he worked as a laborer while teaching other immigrants in New Jersey. He spoke seven languages. He acquired sufficient English to pass the entrance examinations at Cornell University and graduated in 1905 with a Bachelor of Science and Arts (BSA). Specializing in sociology and statistics, he earned a PhD from Brown University in 1911. Aronovici devoted his life to city planning and affordable housing, working as advisor, consultant, and director of various research projects for government agencies throughout the United States.

In a lengthy article published on November 1, 1913, the *Burlington Free Press* reported Dr. Carol Aronovici would visit Burlington, Vermont. He was proposing a scientific social and commercial survey “for the purpose of ascertaining what we need in various directions as well as what will help our community develop.” In 1917, Aronovici prepared a report on housing conditions in St. Paul, Minnesota (https://www.wilder.org/sites/default/files/HousingConditionsInTheCityofSaintPaul_1917.pdf).

See Figures 2 & 3. This report was prepared for the St. Paul Association of Commerce, in association with the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation. Based on a survey of more than 5,000 dwellings, Wilder researchers concluded housing conditions were “a menace to the health, safety and privacy of thousands of St. Paul people.” The findings from the report led to the enactment of the first St. Paul housing ordinance in March, 1918. Staff at the Wilder Research Institute state: “We date the beginning of Wilder Research to the publication of Aronovici’s 1917 report.” During his stay in St. Paul, Aronovici also taught at the University of Minnesota—the first college course in city planning in the U.S. In 1920, he published *Housing and the Housing Problem* based on his lectures, research and surveys of the previous decade.

After serving as secretary of St. Paul’s Planning Commission, in 1920 Aronovici moved to California to serve as the director of the California State Commission on Immigration and Housing. His tenure at the Commission was short-lived. He resigned in August, 1920, stating in St. Paul’s Black newspaper *The Recorder* that his views on the problems of housing and immigration did not coincide with the views of the executives of the Commission. In 1920, Aronovici moved his family to Berkeley, where they lived at 1616 La Vereda Road. He spent the 1920s as a lecturer at the University of California Extension and maintained a practice as a consulting city planner to various municipalities, including Richmond, Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Berkeley. At the December 24, 1920 Berkeley City Council meeting the Council accepted an offer from Aronovici to act as a consultant to the Planning Commission.

(continued on page 5)

(Aronovici - continued from page 4)

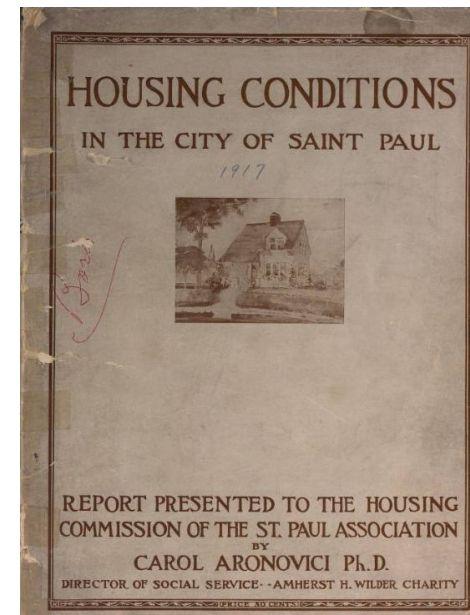


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Figure 3

On September 17, 1923, Berkeley experienced a massive conflagration consuming some 640 structures, including 584 homes in the densely-built neighborhoods north of the campus of the University of California. Aronovici helped guide the reconstruction effort.

In the mid 1920s, he formed a partnership with Southern California modernist architects Richard Neutra and Rudolph Schindler called the Architectural Group for Industry and Commerce (AGIC). They designed a new Civic Center complex for the City of Richmond, California, in 1930, but its construction was delayed for more than twenty years.

In 1934, the Museum of Modern Art in New York held an exhibition on housing from October 16 through November 7. Carol Aronovici played a major role, chairing the exhibition committee and editing an accompanying publication called *America Can't Have Housing*. The purpose of the Housing Exhibition was “to arouse public interest and foster a better understanding of the housing problem. It discusses the radical changes which must be made in our social philosophy and public policy to improve the housing condition of the masses of the American people.” This publication included articles authored by various national and international housing experts, including “The Outlook for Low-Cost Housing in America” by Aronovici and “Housing: Paper Plans, or a Workers’ Movement” by Catherine Bauer.* (https://assets.moma.org/documents/moma_catalogue_2071_300061874.pdf)

Carol Aronovici’s last consulting engagement was for the Civic Center of Richmond. Aronovici was to speak at the dedication, but the day before it took place he died on July 30, 1957 at his home at 221 Colgate Avenue, Kensington, California.

Aronovici’s approach to city planning was action-oriented, comprehensive, and based on thorough analysis of the problem(s) to be addressed. His legacy is an extensive literature of books and articles on city planning and housing. The Online Books Page comprises 21 entries he authored. (<https://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/book/lookupname?key=Aronovici%2C%20Carol%2C%201881%2D1957>) Aronovici’s legacy is relevant today as the City of Berkeley confronts the challenge of constructing 9,000 homes by 2031.

*In the 1950s, Catherine Bauer Wurster and her husband William Wilson Wurster were University of California Berkeley professors who together helped create Berkeley’s College of Environmental Design (CED), the first college of its kind in the world.

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Note: Thanks to John Aronovici, History Center Manager, who first told me about his grandfather, and Ann Harlow, BHS Board Secretary and Newsletter Editor, who suggested I write an article about him.

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What's New in the Archives?

Recent additions to the archives include the records of the Friends of Strawberry Creek, a small collection of papers of the late Frank Daar, and some items donated from the library of Willard School including some student writings and graduating class photos in panorama format. We received many Berkeley postcards from our longtime board member Ed Herny and, from another longtime volunteer, Tim Lundgren, a very nice photo album of the William J. Shore family from the 1920s. From the daughter of John Hadsell we received his papers as the chair of the committee which prepared the De Facto School Segregation report of 1963.

Our volunteers Zanelle Iwen, Pamela Gleason and Sergio Mazariegos have worked on some of these collections, and Clio Petty is nearing the end of processing the large collection of Susan Groves papers on her development of a women's studies program at Berkeley High, which also includes curriculum materials for primary and middle school students.

Our 20-year stalwart, Judy Wilkes, quietly catalogs our collection of physical objects, now over 1,000 items. She has been busy photographing these objects so they can appear in our growing visible resource, Catalogit Hub (<https://hub.catalogit.app/1438>), and I have been doing the same for our library holdings. This is a slow process, but we hope these will appear there soon.

Bill Roberts

Reminiscences of "Maybeck Country"

By Lloyd Linford

Continued from our Fall 2021 issue. Lloyd Linford (with Pam Valois) owns Maybeck's "High House" at Buena Vista Way and Maybeck Twin Drive. He recalls touring their fabled Nut Hill neighborhood with the late Robin Pennell.

The Great Fire

In 1923, many of the outward forms of this world were destroyed in a single day by a conflagration that swept through the woodsy Berkeley hillside and down toward the flats. Large parts of North Berkeley—including the Maybecks' magnificent home burned to the ground. Robin's files contained an account of the fire by a young undergraduate, Jacomena van Huizen (later, Jacomena Maybeck). "People were coming down from the hills, toward campus, because it had green grass. They went to the Campanile; there were more people all the time carrying a canary bird in a cage, the only thing they'd saved, or a whole bundle of laundry, the last thing they'd picked up. It was very exciting, and very sad. The whole hill, you know, was smoking and burning behind them."

Robin says, "That fire was so hot it was said that metal from automobiles melted and ran down the street."

Bernard Maybeck was 61 years old at the time of the conflagration. Another man might have cashed in his landholdings on the hillside to finance an early retirement, but in Ben (as he was known in the family), the catastrophe seemed to ignite a new creativity. He and son Wallen began gradually re-occupying the site of their old home, sleeping out in fine weather and in the remnants of Ben's studio when it rained.



The hillside neighborhood after the 1923 fire.

To accommodate Wallen, new walls were framed in and a roof was thrown up over the remains of this old workshop; and the magical little house known as "The Studio," or "Sack House," began to take shape at 2711 Buena Vista Way. Next, the Maybecks hauled a wooden real estate office up the hill and set it down on the tennis court of the old house. The family moved in, matching their lifestyle to the rustic surroundings. There was no attempt to rebuild the old grandeur.

(continued on page 8)



Photos of their new home, the one-room “Cottage” (now #1 MTD), show a building strikingly primitive compared to the big house it superseded. According to Robin, “The old house was so big you could see it from San Francisco.” The new houses were tiny and romantic—but included unexpected architectural elements (such as the Studio’s huge, baronial fireplace).

Bernard, Jacomena and Wallen Maybeck (l to r.) at the Cottage, 1926.

My wife Pam and I rented an evolved version of the Cottage in the late 1970s. Jacomena Maybeck was our landlady (as well as a kind of fairy godmother) and she once described the Cottage as “the house that grew like Topsy.” From its one-room origins, the house sprouted a little kitchen addition; then a carport; then the carport was enclosed and became a “summer living room.” Later a beautiful second story popped up, and part of the summer living room was divided and became a separate studio apartment. After Jackie’s death in 1996, two UC Botanical gardeners bought the house and transformed its garden into a Rousseau-like paradise. Carrying on this tradition, one of the current owners, Kathy Brown, and her family have become master gardeners themselves and generously share their unique Cottage and garden with the neighborhood and the community.

1923, the year of the Great Fire, saw changes in the relationship between Jacomena Van Huizen and Wallen Maybeck as well. Long-time friends, the two discovered that they loved music and loved to dance. Friends came up from the campus and the flats of Berkeley to socialize at the Studio, and soon casual parties were as much a fixture of the hillside life as the fanciful houses. Jackie and Wallen were married in 1929. Two grandchildren (twin girls!) were added to the family circle, formalizing the renaissance of the family—and Maybeck’s career—that occurred in the years after the fire. The family’s large holdings on the hillside were subdivided and when he sold a lot he’d often throw in a free sketch of a house he thought would look well on it. The whole family seemed to be involved in the business of design and construction. Houses went up, family members moved into them, moved out, and were replaced by other family members, each adapting the structure to fit their needs. Most of the Maybecks—from Annie and Ben, to their daughter Kerna, son Wallen and Jackie, and granddaughters Cherry and Sheila (and several of the great grandkids)—have resided at the Cottage at one time or another.

Arillaga

Jackie and Wallen built #2 MTD from sketches by the old architect, who was then residing with them at 2751 Buena Vista Way. Robin’s story about the process of building and occupying Arillaga throws a light on how the younger Maybecks went about things. “First off,” Robin says, “Wallen was an electrical engineer, and he commuted to San Francisco during the week. In other words, he had a day job! But on weekends, he and Jackie used this little putt-putt electric cement mixer to build this gigantic Maybeck fireplace. The thing contained several tons of concrete. It astonished everybody that it got built because to build it they had to construct a ramp to get that concrete up to the site, one wheelbarrow at a time.” An old door salvaged from the Arillaga Music Academy became the front door of the new house and bestowed its name on the place. “The glass panel in the door originally had the full name of the Academy painted on it gold letters, and it remained that way for many years until it was taken off, I believe, by an overly zealous cleaning lady wielding a razor blade.”

(continued on page 9)

The house was designed and built with giant roof beams in the living room and kitchen, but Jackie insisted they be carved back so they didn’t loom down so much. “The floors are made from 8-inch thick wooden hatch covers salvaged from Liberty Ships sold for scrap after the War.” Between the initiation of the project and its completion, plans for who would occupy Arillaga also changed. “Jackie and Wallen never lived in the house they’d built and it’s always been a rental,” Robin says. “My wife Annette and I lived in Arillaga while our house was being built in 1959.” An MTD resident with very long tenure on the street is Victor Seeger, a retired physics teacher, who now lives in this house. It is the last of the homes on the Drive still owned by the Maybeck family.

The Tufts’ House

Robin and I are now standing on the corner of Maybeck Twin Drive and Buena Vista Way, undecided about which way to go, up or down. But the beauty of the house we’re looking at slows our pace. The Tufts’ House, at 2733 Buena Vista Way (BVW) rose from the ashes of the ruins in 1931. “This was the third house Maybeck built for two of his favorite clients, Dr. and Mrs. John Tufts,” according to Robin. We’re looking through a filter of eucalyptus trees at the home’s majestic windows. “They were a wonderful couple, the Tufts. He was a dentist with a thriving San Francisco practice, making a tough commute by ferry. They were both artists and the minute Dr. Tufts got home, the suit coat came off and was replaced by a smock.” The Tufts loved Mexico and knew a lot of people in the art world, “including Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera,” who came to the City in 1931. I ask if Frida and Diego ever visited the house, and Robin says, “probably, but I would have been too young to notice that.”

“I do remember when this house was being built. It was in the depths of the Depression. The carpenters who worked on it were a very fine crew, and there wasn’t a whole lot of work available, so they really paid attention to what they were doing. This may be apocryphal—I’m going to have to make sure of the points I’m not sure about because there’s so much misinformation about Maybeck—but it’s my understanding that he would often work, in a design sense, with the carpenters and builders who would be involved in building things for him. A carpenter could make a suggestion and Maybeck would think about incorporating it. So even where you could have had plaster walls, and the studs and the diagonal bracing would normally be hidden—if this is true—then Maybeck came in and saw these men had beautifully done the angle of the diagonal bracing and the 2x4s, and it was very pleasing as a design. I’m reminded of John Ruskin’s idea that great architecture is made by craftsmen who think and create, and by architects who know how to use a hammer and an awl.

“If you look at the walls in there, the exposed studs themselves, the bracing and the plaster between them gives you sort of a Tudor look. And the house has a beautiful smell to it! That came because—they thought he was crazy—but as I understand it Maybeck bought what is now known as pecky cedar. It’s very aromatic and just marvelous. If you look up at the ceiling, it looks like the termites have been at work, but aesthetically it works. Or, another example, put your hand on the railing that goes up to the studio located upstairs, and it gives you a nice sensation, following the rail up to a different level.” The studio runs along the length of the upstairs of the house and looks down on the great room. Outside, a stenciled design on the garage door was painted by Maybeck himself. “Mrs. Tufts continued to live and paint here after her husband died. She was an artist and a very good one. I painted with her from the time I was a little boy and she taught me a lot about oil painting.”

CORRECTIONS TO WINTER 2022 ISSUE

In the Life Members list we had “Helen Kysh” where we should have had “Judith Kysh and Helen Marcus.”

The link for George Petty’s transcript of a tour of J. F. Altermatt houses should have been berkeleyhistoricalsociety.org/BHS_archive/Altermatt.pdf.

Taylor's Leather Goods

By Ann Harlow



2111 Stanford Place (now Kala Bagai Way)

By 1916 the shop had moved across the street to 2110 Allston, and Sam's son Wilson (born 1896) was working there. In 1922 a Berkeley Merchants and Manufacturers Fair included a display about "Taylor's Trunk Shop":



As traveling with large steamer trunks went out of fashion, the business switched to leather suitcases, briefcases, handbags, and belts.



2110 Allston Way, 1927



2213 Shattuck, 1940

In our collection are ten photos of an early Berkeley business that changed with the times. Samuel Taylor, an immigrant from Canada, opened a shop by the central Berkeley train station in 1891, focusing on harnesses and carriage fittings but including such "curiosities" as Native American artifacts. After a bankruptcy in 1901, Taylor managed to reconstitute the core business at 2109 Allston Way by 1905. As automobiles and streetcars took the place of horse-drawn vehicles, the business morphed into Taylor's Leather Goods.



2109 Allston Way

By 1930 Taylor's Leather Goods was at 2213 Shattuck, across from the Shattuck Hotel. In about 1961 it moved next door to 2221 Shattuck, where it stayed until about 1978, called simply "Taylor's" after 1972. See a blog post by Gary Messinger at californiaremembered.com/2015/06/11/shops/ about working there as a teenager in the late 1950s.



2213 Shattuck, 1956

Support the Berkeley Historical Society

Is it time to renew your membership?

If you received this newsletter by mail, please check your mailing label, and if your membership has expired, we hope to hear from you soon! If you are not yet a member or your membership has lapsed, please consider joining the Berkeley Historical Society! Membership dues are the primary support for our many activities. Members receive the quarterly newsletter and discounts on our walking tours and book purchases. All dues and donations are tax deductible as provided by law. BHS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, federal tax ID # 94-2619129. We are always looking for new members, so we invite you to share your newsletter with friends who might be interested in Berkeley history, or bring a friend to visit the History Center.

For questions or comments regarding membership, contact the Membership Secretary at membership@berkeleyhistoricalsociety.org.

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MAIL PAYMENT TO: Berkeley Historical Society, P.O. Box 1190, Berkeley, CA 94701. *Thank you!*

HAPPY BIRTHDAY! 100 YEARS IN BERKELEY

Star Grocery



3068 Claremont Avenue, Berkeley 94705

Star Grocery is Berkeley's oldest family owned and run grocery. Founded by two immigrants from Greece, it is still family run. Several remodels have occurred, but the friendly atmosphere is still there. The store has always been a part of the Claremont/Elmwood community, offering delivery and charge accounts even through the Depression. When co-founder Jim Pappas died in 1977, his son Nick took over the business with the same generous and intimate style that made his father so well loved. A big centennial celebration will be held at the Star on Sunday, April 10, 3 to 5 p.m. The public is invited.

H. Tulanian & Sons Company



2998 College Avenue, Berkeley 94705

Founded by Hatchdoor Tulanian and later run by his sons Jim and Dick for 50 years. Hatchdoor fled the Armenian genocide and finally settled in California. It is now operated by Gary Tulanian and his sister Janie, the founder's grandchildren. The colorful exterior was painted in 1990 to highlight the architecture. In 1993 Whoopi Goldberg and Ted Danson used the exterior in the movie *Made in America*. The film company made a generous donation to the restoration fund of the Elmwood Theater.

Berkeley Horticultural Nursery



1310 McGee Avenue, Berkeley 94703

Founded by George Budgen, this nursery has been a pioneer leader in California. "Berkeley Hort" has provided the Bay Area with high quality plants and introduced new hybrids through the years. It is now operated by four generations. They stock over 10,000 different plants. This year, to celebrate their centennial, they are offering monthly raffles and plant specials and, as always, good advice about what to plant in your area.