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PAC*SJ's New Director



Megan Bellue

Meet Megan Bellue, the new Executive Director for PAC*SJ. Megan comes to us with a wealth of preservation experience and hit the ground running when she started with us in December.

Most recently Megan was an Associate Planner with the City of Sacramento, working closely on the review process of projects related to historic properties. She also reviewed Environmental Impact Reports, managed historic resources surveys and monitored their compliance with industry and federal standards.

While with the City of Sacramento she also interacted with the City's Design Review Preservation Board and the City Council.

Megan has over 10 years of preservation experience, including several years with the National Trust for Historic Preservation in Washington, D.C. While with the Trust she managed the Forum Online magazine and oversaw the expansion of that as a nationwide resource for the preservation community. She also managed the Preservation Leadership Training and other Trust training programs.

Her extensive preservation experience also includes serving as the Executive Director of the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions based in Athens, Georgia and with the Preservation Action in Washington, D.C.

Threatened: Agricultural Asset Since the 1920's

The Bay Area Research and Extension Center (BAREC), was formerly a University of California Agricultural research site. BAREC is located at 90 N. Winchester Boulevard and consists of 17 acres of "agricultural zoned" land that has been an agriculture asset for the community, the state, and the country since the 1920s. The BAREC site has ties back to the Civil War and even housed children with physical and mental disabilities.

"Save BAREC" is a collage of volunteers drawn from concerned citizens, educators, activists, and professionals, who volunteer to reclaim this abandoned agricultural site and put it back to productive use for the benefit of current and future generations. They want this urban agriculture land to be the example for sustainable living, including many community programs, food sources, and education, while capturing all of the vast amounts of history the land has experienced over the past 150+ years. They suggest that specific areas will be dedicated for fruit orchards, row crops, berries, vegetables, dense bio-intensive farming, a "hands on" children's garden, a landscape training and demonstration center, a native plant area, a visitor's center, and museum.

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BIRGE CLARKE: *Continued from page 19*

most significant buildings include: The President Hotel on University Avenue; the Post Office on Hamilton; the former Police and Fire Building at 440 Bryant; the Lucie Stern Community Center and the Spanish-style block of 500 Ramona Street. Many of the commercial buildings along University Avenue were also products of his drawing board.



The former Police and Fire Building on Bryant Street in Palo Alto.

Although Birge Clarke will always be remembered for his Spanish Eclectic makeover of Palo Alto, he also did numerous residential designs in other styles, the Moderne, for example, later in his career.

His was a long and productive life. While traveling in Egypt in 1989 (at the age of 96) he died suddenly of a stroke. A local hero during his lifetime, Clarke's name is still legend in our area's architectural history.

■
JACK DOUGLAS

Threatened: Agricultural Asset Since the 1920's

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The 17.5-acre parcel on Winchester Road in Santa Clara was a home for widows, children and orphans of Union Veterans from the Civil War. Later, it became a facility for the care and training of disabled children, contributing important research in the areas of dealing with child disabilities such as blindness and hearing loss. These early housing structures and medical facilities were demolished in the mid-1960's.



The Research Building was constructed in 1922, using local redwood.

In the 1920's, the present building at 125 Santa Clara-Los Gatos Road (90 North Winchester Road) was completed. Designed by University of California Davis Architectural students and constructed of redwood from Sanborn Park in Saratoga, the building was occupied by University of California researchers until 2002 when the facility closed and was returned to the State of California. During those days of agricultural research, both Shasta and Lassen strawberries were developed at the property and others, including Fresno and Tioga followed with better flavor. Research continued with tomatoes, and smog control issues. Because farmers were being blamed for so much pollution from burning their fruit tree cuttings, new methods of disposal were developed, such as chipping and grinding up the plant material.

By 1983, the superintendent of the facility noted that the focus of the research had shifted to the backyard gardener and focused on the needs of the homeowner's, such as water conservation and reduction in pesticide usage.

The Bay Area Research and Extension Center closed on January 1, 2003. The promised \$2 million permanent augmentation to the Cooperative Extension that was part of the original deal, was never realized and UCCE received \$1 million for the transfer of the total 17.5 agricultural property. Left behind were 3 greenhouses, a shop, historical home with shop, potting shed, remaining experiments, including oak trees, and outbuildings. The pump for the working water well was removed. ■

For more details on the current issues, please visit the website (www.savebarec.org) or call 888-227-3280.

Source: Kirk Vartan, Save BAREC

Strategic Activity Coordinator



BAREC – Looking east, shop on left side, potting shed, greenhouses and chemical shed to right.



The Preservation Action Council of San José (PAC*SJ) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation dedicated to preserving San José's architectural heritage through education, advocacy and events.

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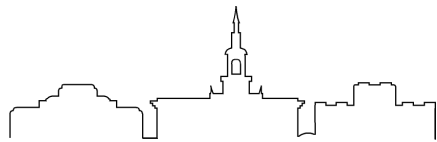
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