



UTILITAS • FIRMITAS • VENUSTAS

Northern California Chapter  
Society of Architectural Historians

The Newsletter

Volume 10, Number 2  
August 2007

**MIDCENTURY  
SUBURBAN  
ARCHITECTURE:**

*A Tour of Daly City's  
Westlake*

**Sept 29, 2007**

This September join NCCSAH for a tour of the Westlake area of Daly City lead by Rob Keil, author of *Little Boxes: The Architecture of a Classic Midcentury Suburb*, and Ed Hageman, one of the original architects of the postwar development.

The Westlake District of Daly City, California, is one of America's earliest and most iconic postwar suburbs. Located just south of San Francisco, Westlake has frequently been compared to Levittown, New York, the first major postwar suburb in the United States. Developed by Henry Doelger, once the largest home builder in the nation, Westlake features quirky 1950s architecture created by a core team of designers to encompass nearly every building in the development. Meticulous planning made Westlake a complete city



*Innovative mass production techniques made it possible to build a Westlake house for about \$9,000 that was comfortable, stylish, and practically indestructible ([www.westlakeresource.com](http://www.westlakeresource.com)).*

within a city--one that offered all the modern suburban conveniences, including one of the first shopping malls in America.

Westlake's most famous architectural icons are its endless rows of boxy houses—the inspiration for Malvina Reynolds' folk song "Little Boxes," which became an anti-suburban anthem in the 1960s. Despite its detractors, Westlake has enjoyed considerable praise over the course of its sixty-year history. *(continued on page 4)*

## UPCOMING EVENTS & NEWS

### California Preservation Foundation

#### **Workshop Series 2007**

“California Historic Building Code Workshop”  
San Jose, CA  
August 23, 2007

### National Trust for Historic Preservation

#### **Conference Fall 2007**

Saint Paul  
October 2-6, 2007

### APTI 2007

#### **(Association of Preservation Technology)**

San Juan, Puerto Rico  
November 3-7, 2007

### AIA

#### **Historic Resources Symposium**

Texas A&M University  
February 29-March 1, 2008

### California Preservation Foundation

#### **Annual Conference Spring 2008**

Napa, CA  
April 23-26, 2008

### Vernacular Architecture Forum

#### **Spring 2008**

Fresno  
May 7-10, 2008

### AIA National Convention and Design

#### **Exposition 2008**

Boston, MA  
May 15-17, 2008

### NCCSAH Bids a Fond Farewell and Sends a Thank You to David Blackburn!

After fourteen years as a park ranger and administrator with the National Park Service in Contra Costa County, David Blackburn will be heading to Lowell, Massachusetts where he will serve as the chief of cultural programs with the Lowell National Historic Park. In the Bay Area, David served as chief of interpretation and managed operations and tours at John Muir National Historic Site in Martinez, Eugene O'Neill National Historic site in Danville, Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial, and Richmond's Rosie the Riveter, World War II/Homefront National Historic Park. David has shared his enthusiasm for Northern California architecture by serving on the NCCSAH Board for eight years, the last three as NCCSAH Vice President. David organized NCCSAH tours of WWII-era resources in Richmond and the Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site.

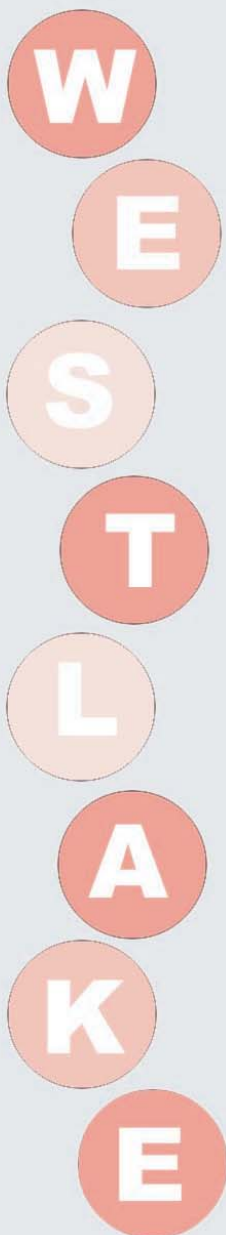
*If you are interested in joining the NCCSAH board, please contact Jody Stock at [jody@argsf.com](mailto:jody@argsf.com).*



*David on the deck of the Red Oak Victory Liberty ship, one of several tours he organized for the NCCSAH.*

# NCCSAH

## Tours



**DALY CITY**  
**September 29, 2007**

### Registration for September 29, 2007 Events [please print]

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Tour & Lunch (\$30 for NCCSAH and Daly City Historical Society members and \$40 for non members)

Total enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to "Northern California Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians" and mail to: Richard Sucre, Page & Turnbull, NCCSAH Westlake Tour, 724 Pine Street, San Francisco, CA 94108.

For more information please contact Ward Hill, [whill@pacbell.net](mailto:whill@pacbell.net).

### TOUR ITINERARY

- |                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| 10:00 to<br>10:30 am    | Coffee and pastries at the Fernando Rivera School (1960 Mario Ciampi), now the "Doelger Center", 111 Lake Merced Boulevard, Daly City   |
| 10:30 to<br>11:30 am    | <i>Little Boxes: The Architecture of a Classic Mid-Century Suburb</i> , Powerpoint presentation by author Rob Keil. Original Westlake architect Ed Hageman will talk about designing the houses and working with developer Henry Doelger. Includes question and answer section. |
| 11:30 am to<br>12:00 pm | Rob Keil will sell and autograph copies of his book, which will be available at a discounted price for attendees.   |
| 12:00 to<br>1:00 pm     | Lunch (Sandwich, salad, drink and dessert)  |
| 1:00 to<br>3:00 pm      | Bus tour of Westlake with Rob Keil and Ed Hageman. Highlights will include houses designed by Ed Hageman, developer Henry Doelger's personal residence, award-winning school designs by Mario Ciampi and some fabulous Modernist apartment buildings.                           |
| 3:30 pm                 | Happy hour at the Boulevard Cafe, John Daly Boulevard, Westlake   |

**MEMBERS:** For timely contact of news and events, **please update or confirm your e-mail address** with Lissa at [lissa\\_mckee@dot.ca.gov](mailto:lissa_mckee@dot.ca.gov) or [lissamck@hotmail.com](mailto:lissamck@hotmail.com). Thanks!



*Post-tour we'll meet for happy hour in the lounge of the Modernist-style Boulevard Cafe.*

**Directions to the Doelger Center:** South on Interstate 280: take John Daly Boulevard exit; turn right on John Daly and continue west and turn right at Lake Merced Boulevard, turn right down driveway at Westlake Park sign to the Doelger Center. North on Interstate 280: take John Daly Boulevard exit; continue along Freeway frontage to John Daly Boulevard and turn left. Continue west and turn right at Lake Merced Boulevard. From Lake Merced Boulevard turn right down driveway at Westlake Park sign to the Doelger Center.

### **WESTLAKE TOUR Continued**

The style of Westlake's homes was applied to larger buildings like restaurants, stores, and apartments, resulting in a remarkably modern



*Mario Ciampi designed a number of Westlake's schools, including the Fernando School shown here, now known as the "Doelger Center."*

and consistent neighborhood aesthetic. In the 1950s, the neighborhood's architecturally innovative schools began appearing in national magazines like Life, Architectural Forum, and Fortune. Architect Mario Ciampi, the world-renowned architect, won numerous awards and national acclaim for his space-age Westlake schools. In the 1970s, one national magazine named Westlake one of the ten best suburbs in America. In 2003, The New York Times ran an article about Henry Doelger, an eighth-grade drop out who became America's largest homebuilder, and his impact on history, citing Westlake as one of his most iconic neighborhoods.

For more information on Westlake modern architecture and planning, see [www.westlakesresource.com](http://www.westlakesresource.com) and [dalycityhistory.org/westlake](http://dalycityhistory.org/westlake).

Please send your ideas or comments concerning The Newsletter to:  
Jody Stock  
NCCSAH Newsletter Editor  
Architectural Resources Group  
Pier 9, The Embarcadero  
San Francisco, CA 94111  
phone: 415-421-1680  
e-mail: jody@argsf.com

**Remember you do not have to be a member of the National SAH to become a member of NCCSAH**

**Join or Renew Now!!**

**Individual \$20.00**

**Student \$10.00**

**Make Checks to NCCSAH**

**NCCSAH Officers:**

President, Ward Hill  
Vice President, David Blackburn  
Treasurer, Richard Sucre  
Secretary, Jody Stock  
Pres. Officer, Lissa McKee

**To become a member of the Northern California Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians**

or to renew your dues  
return this form and your dues check to  
Lissa McKee, Treasurer - NCCSAH  
307 Starling Road  
Mill Valley, CA 94941

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_



**UTILITAS • FIRMITAS • VENUSTAS**

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c/o Lissa McKee  
NCCSAH Treasurer  
307 Starling Road  
Mill Valley, CA 94941

*The mission of the NCCSAH is to further the objectives of the Society of Architectural Historians of which the Northern California Chapter is an official affiliate; promote the study and discussion of our region's architectural history and its related fields; visit significant works of architecture; and increase public awareness and appreciation of our architectural heritage. Membership is open to anyone interested in architectural history and its related fields who agrees to pay the annual dues and subscribe to the by-laws of the organization.*