

The Cupola

The Newsletter of the Pardee Home Museum

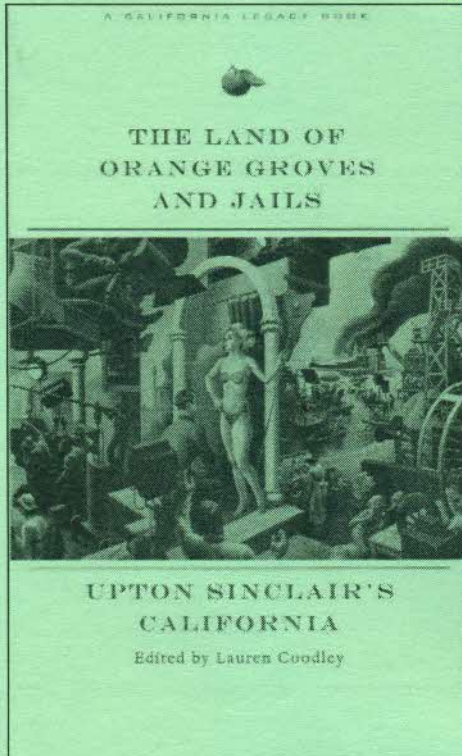
SUMMER 2005

Oakland City
Landmark 1975

National Register of
Historic Places 1976

California Historic
Landmark 1998

Upton Sinclair Pays a Visit to the Pardee Home Museum



The museum hosted a highly successful book reading and signing on Sunday, January 16th, featuring Lauren Coodley, editor of an acclaimed new anthology of writings by Upton Sinclair. Both the author and the book, *The Land of Orange Groves and Jails: Upton Sinclair's California*, were prominently featured in the Datebook section of the *San Francisco Chronicle* just days before the book reading at the Pardee Home, so we were barely able to accommodate all the people who showed up for the event, and we actually ran out of books to sell and have signed by Lauren.

For those readers who associate Sinclair solely with his most famous book, *The Jungle*, an expose of working conditions in the Chicago meat-packing industry, it may come as a surprise to learn that Sinclair left the Midwest early on to spend most of his life in southern California, where he was a successful author and activist. Today, too few

Californians remember that Sinclair garnered a remarkable 40% of the vote when he was the Democratic candidate for governor in 1934, running on a socialist platform to "End Poverty in California" now. As museum director David Nicolai pointed out in introductory comments at the book reading, George Pardee and Upton Sinclair shared the experience of having run for the governor's seat in California, and both were considered progressive leaders during their day.

However, Sinclair was a gubernatorial candidate 32 years after Pardee, and his brand of progressive politics was not similar to Pardee's. In fact, without uncovering documentary evidence in our archives about the 1934 election, it is very safe to say that the elderly Pardee would have heartily disapproved of Sinclair's radical Depression-era politics, and, like most of his former Progressive colleagues who

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Major Improvements Underway at Our Poppy Porch Gift Shop

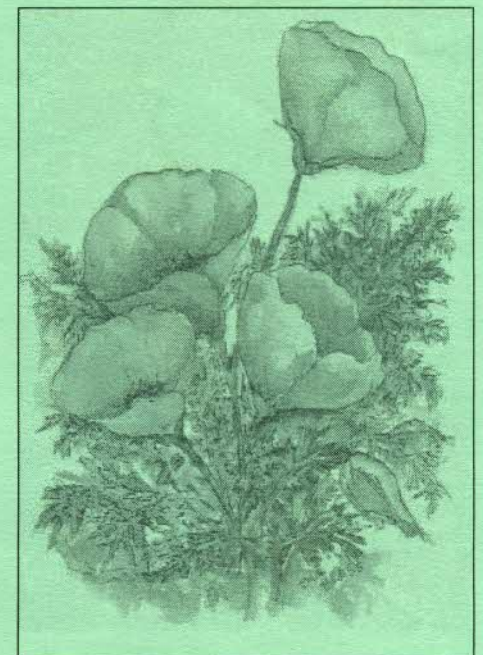
With a big assist from Erin Mullen-Brosnan, a masters student in museum studies at SFSU and short-term employee of the museum, we now have a greatly improved gift shop in the side porch.

It is now known at the "Poppy Porch Gift Shop," in honor of George Pardee's 1903 proclamation naming the poppy the state flower of California.

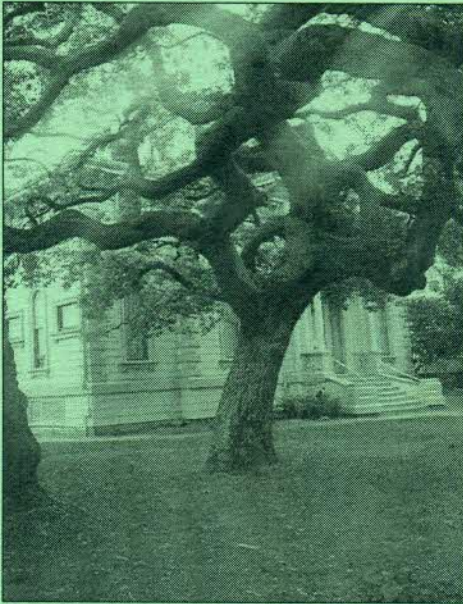
According to Erin, "We're very proud of our greatly-improved inventory, and we promise to get in our perennial bestseller, Beth Bagwell's *Oakland, The Story of a City*, as soon as it is reprinted by the Oakland Heritage Alliance."

In addition to mugs, magnets, T-shirts, postcards, and notecards honoring the Pardee Home, we have books and maps of Oakland and Bay Area history and architecture, and, for the first time, poppy seeds, poppy notecards, and poppy potholders crafted and donated by museum member Jeanette Bemis. Be sure to visit the gift shop on your next visit to the museum.

FULL-COLOR POPPY notecards, shown at right, are available in the Poppy Porch Gift Shop.



Historic Trees Trimmed in Our Gardens



David Nicolai

THE NEWLY-TRIMMED oak in front of the house.

In mid-March, a crew from the highly-regarded Berkeley firm of Brende and Lamb Tree and Shrub Care spent three full days trimming five historic trees at the Pardee Home.

These trees had not been trimmed in many, many years, and they were crying out for attention: to assure their long-term health, to improve their appearance, and to allow better growing conditions for the lawn underneath them and surrounding plants.

The three most important trees were the coastal live oaks, one in the front and two in the back; the other two were the loquat tree on the west side of the carriage house and a holly tree outside the home's kitchen. All are welcome to drop by the Pardee Home and see how great the trees now look after this long overdue work.



David Nicolai

THE LOQUAT TREE gets a long-overdue trimming.

News of the Museum's Board of Trustees

We wish to say farewell to two departing trustees and welcome to one new and one returning trustee. Jim Riewerts, a retired Morgan Stanley broker who knew Helen and Madeline Pardee from the days when he managed their accounts, continued to advise the trustees about their investments and then joined the board following his retirement from Morgan Stanley. Jim served on the board for about two years before his resignation earlier this year, and we are very grateful for his many years of service to the Pardee family and the Pardee Home Foundation.

We also offer a belated farewell to Dick Reinhardt who resigned from the board last year after seven years of service to the museum. Dick played a pivotal role in securing major funding for our ambitious gardens restoration project, and for that we will always be grateful. Dick, a former journalist and journalism instructor, left the board to find more time for his many other passions and pastimes, including writing, gardening, and traveling.

Our new trustee is Llewellyn Thompson II, or "Wally," a semi-retired attorney and Alameda resident, who has assumed the

responsibilities of treasurer of the Pardee Home Foundation. Wally is a native of Denver, Colorado, who earned undergraduate and law degrees from the University of San Francisco and has lived in California for the past forty-five years. In 1994, after 25 years, Wally retired from Fitzgerald, Abbott, and Beardsley, the East Bay's oldest law firm. He is also retired from the Army Reserves, where he attained the rank of Colonel. For many years, he was the owner and manager of Horsehide, an Oakland slow-pitch softball team; he was also a co-founder of Aid to Adoption of Special Kids and has raised eight boys himself.

Our returning trustee is Deanna Lyon, who is coming back to the board after an absence of three years. Deanna, who grew up in Washington state, Hawaii, and California, is a graduate of Cal State-Fullerton and Boalt Hall School of Law at UC-Berkeley. She is a partner in the Oakland law firm of Wendel, Rosen, Black, and Dean, where she has worked since graduating from law school, and she specializes in probate, estate planning, and trust law. A Kensington resident and

quilter in her free time, Deanna and her husband Richard have two sons, one a resident of Cambridge, Massachusetts after graduating from MIT, and the other an undergraduate at Tulane University in New Orleans.

Finally, we wish to congratulate our chairman Stan Stidham, who was the guest of honor at a reception held at St. Paul's Episcopal Church this past January. Stan was retiring from the church choir, and he was presented with a plaque and a deluxe cake honoring his 57 (!!!) years of singing in the choir.

To learn more about becoming a volunteer at the Pardee Home Museum, please call 444-2187

