



UTILITAS • FIRMITAS • VENUSTAS

Northern California Chapter
Society of Architectural Historians

The Newsletter

Volume 8, Number 2
September 2005

The Architecture of CHICO

NCCSAH Tour, October 21st & 22nd

CHICO is the largest city in the northern Sacramento Valley. It's a lively university town with an active art scene (one of the top 10 art towns in the US for its size*), rooted in a rich agricultural area, and with abundant recreational opportunities.

It is said that three factors were responsible for Chico's development and economic stability: a visionary man and his wife, a school and an industry.

John Bidwell bought the *Rancho del Arroyo Chico* in the 1840s and established his residence on the north side of Big Chico Creek. In 1860, he commissioned a surveyor to create a 50-block townsite between Big and Little Chico Creeks. This original grid plan remains today to form the downtown, still the heart of Chico. In 1889, the Chico Normal School opened on 10 acres of what had been Bidwell's cherry orchard. Now known as California State University, Chico, it has been a major force in the continuing economic health of the community. Bidwell's home, Bidwell Mansion (1865-68) now a part of the State Park System, is the premiere west coast example of the Italian Villa style. The Bidwell legacy continued with the donation by his widow of 2,250 acres to the City of Chico for Bidwell Park which extends 10 miles north into the foothills.

*100 Best Art Towns in America by John Villani, 2005



Chico's Senator Theater c. 1970 (Image Courtesy of:
Special Collections Dept. Meriam Library, CSU, Chico).

Upcoming Events & News

The 2005 **National Trust, National Preservation Conference** will be held in Portland, Oregon from September 27 - October 2, 2005. Learn how Portland has used urban growth boundaries, transportation, and other innovations to protect adjacent farmland and open space, and create one of the most delightful downtowns in the county. For more information see www.nationaltrust.org.

The **59th annual meeting of the Society of Architectural Historians** will be held in Savannah, Georgia from April 26-29, 2006. Papers, presentations, and tours are part of the program. For more information see the SAH website at www.sah.org.

The **60th annual meeting of the Society of Architectural Historians** will be held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania from April 9-15, 2007. Papers, presentations, and tours are part of the program. For more information see the SAH website at www.sah.org.

The **Vernacular Architecture Forum Annual Meeting** will be held in New York City from June 14 - June 17, 2006. The conference consists of tours of the area, a juried paper session, workshops, board and committee meetings, special events and excursions. For more information see www.vernaculararchitectureforum.org.

Presidio House Tours September 17 & 18 and September 24 & 25. Free tours of the post's historic housing at Pilots' Row. These 1921 homes are undergoing renovation and feature temporary exhibits on the aviators of the 1920s-30s and their families. No reservations required. Meet at the Officers' Club, 50 Moraga Ave. San Francisco, Ca. This is a moderately strenuous tour with steep front steps. For more information www.presidio.gov or call 415-561-5500.

The **AIA SF** will be hosting **Eichler Homes Lecture and Tour** October 4, 2005 & October 8, 2005. The Eichler Home Tours program will showcase Joseph Eichler's modern residential aesthetics and lifestyles in Marin, the Diamond Heights neighborhood of San Francisco, as well as a multifamily development in the Hayes Valley neighborhood of San Francisco. For more information and costs see www@aia.org.

Chico, continued.



Evidence of the architectural millwork available due to the large local lumber industry is seen in structures beginning in the 1870's. Diamond Match Co. established its western U.S. headquarters in Chico in 1903. In addition to being a major local employer for many years, Diamond Match attempted to establish its own company town, Barber, around the plant. Many early 20th century Chico residences from the pre-war era were built from Diamond Match plans. The plant closed in the 1980s and the development of its site has been a center of much discussion.

Chico Heritage Association was established around 1980 in response to a downtown preservation emergency. It has since been involved in providing a SHPO- sponsored historic resources survey in the early 1980's, the saving of several important local structures, and the designation of the National Register South of Campus Historic District. CHA is looking forward to hosting the fall Northern California chapter meeting. A Friday evening buffet will be held at one of Chico's most well-preserved and researched local historic homes. Saturday will be devoted to touring Chico's rich architectural heritage, from 19th century vernacular and high style buildings up through our local New Urbanism neighborhood.

**Chico Heritage Association is hosting the
NCCSAH Tours of Chico
Chico, California October 21st and 22nd**



Bidwell Mansion, Chico Alumni House, Kendall Hall, and Senator Theater (Coutesy of CSU Merriam Library Special Collections)

**Registration for October 21s and 22nd Events:
[please print]**

Name: _____

Affiliation: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

E-mail address: _____

Buffet Supper, October 21st @ \$25 \$ _____

**Saturday Tour (includes bus and box lunch)
@\$35 for members and \$45 for nonmembers** \$ _____

Total enclosed \$ _____

**Please make checks payable to NCCSAH and mail to: c/o Lissa McKee
NCCSAH Treasurer, 307 Starling Road, Mill Valley, CA 94941.**

**For more information please call Giovanna R. Jackson at (530) 898-6878.
E-mail: grjackson@scsuchico.edu.**

Chico Motel/Hotel/B&B Suggestions: All quoted rates do not include 10% hotel tax. Note: numbered streets are downtown, numbered avenues are north of downtown. A complete list of Chico accommodations can be found at chicochamber.com

Heritage Inn Express (725 Broadway, corner of 8th St.)

Phone: 800 660-1417

Rates: Single: \$53, Double: \$60.40 or 2 beds: \$62.50

10 rooms are being held for both Fri. & Sat. nights at this rate until Mon. Oct. 17; ask for "SAH" rate.

Goodman House Bed & Breakfast (1362 Esplanade, @ 4th Ave.)

Phone: 530 566-0256

Website: <http://www.goodmanhouse.net>

Rates: \$105 -130, all private baths, queen beds

Grateful Bed (B&B) (1462 Arcadian, corner of 5th Ave.)

Phone: 530 342-2464

E-Mail: thegratefulbed@chico.com

Web: <http://northvalley.net/gratefulbed/>

Rates: \$110-150

Hotel Diamond (220 W. 4th St., & Broadway)

Phone: 866 993-3100

Web: <http://www.HotelDiamondChico.com>

Rates: Single: \$159 (\$143 with AAA discount) or Double: \$169 (\$152 with AAA discount).

**Chico Tours
Oct. 21-22**

**EVENT
SCHEDULE**



Friday, October 21

6:30 pm **Buffet at Little Chapman Mansion** (National Register, private home) at 256 E. 12th St. with **Chico history overview by Professor Michele Shover** (home owner)

Saturday, October 22

8:30 am **Registration & coffee** at Bidwell Mansion Visitors' Center

9:00 am **Tour of Bidwell Mansion** (National Register, California State Parks)

10:30 am **Tour of CSU, Chico campus**, including President's Mansion (Julia Morgan, arch.), Bidwell Bowl (WPA amphitheater), Bidwell Presbyterian Church (1910; 1932, undergoing a major renovation)

11:30am **Tour of historic downtown** starting from Chico Museum and including U.S. Post Office (1916, National Register), Senator Theater (1929, Miller & Pflueger)

1:00 pm **Box lunch & interior tour of Stansbury House** (1883 Italianate, National Register)

2:30 pm **Bus tour through South of Campus Historic District** (National Register) with stops at "3d St. Language Houses" and former S.P. Depot

3:30-6:30 pm **Bus to Northgraves Mansion at Patrick Ranch** (c. 1875), passing by former Diamond Match Plant and Squire Wright House (1853). Tour of Doe Mill Neighborhood (New Urbanism development)

7 or 8pm **No-host dinner at local restaurant**

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

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

MEMBERSHIPS ARE FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR.

NCCSAH Officers:

President, Ward Hill
Vice President, David Blackburn
Treasurer, Lissa McKee
Secretary, Jody Stock
Pres. Officer, Chris Ver Planck



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The Northern California Chapter
Society of Architectural Historians
The Newsletter

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.

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 _____

