
CELEBRATION SUCCESS

June days in the Sacramento Valley can be very hot and/or have the dreaded, dry and grit-bearing “north wind.” Organizers of outdoor events therefore routinely worry whether the weather will favor or hinder. The celebration of Sunday, June 11th “lucked out.” The sun was out but the temperature was mild and the wind was quiet.

As seen in Fig. 5.18 and other photographs, the sidewalk just north of the Terminal Building had been widened and landscaped. It was named the “G Street Plaza.” Celebration lead organizer Heather Caswell and her associates selected the site as the symbolically and logistically best location to hold the event.

As an event focused on the downtown, the gathering was eligible for (and got) sponsorship by the Davis Downtown Business Association (DDBA). This was important in several ways, not least of which was the free use of several dozen plastic chairs and two shade structures the DDBA employed in other of its promotional activities. Because the DDBA was a quasi-official extension of the city government, organizers had, in turn, free use of City of Davis portable stage units and the otherwise locked City electrical outlets at the Plaza.

The above and other forms of official assistance signal that the citizens involved in the campaign to save the Terminal Building may not have been politically dominant in Davis, but they were not outsiders either. If it is not otherwise obvious in other chapters, these forms of assistance tell us that the debate over the Terminal Building was very much carried on in the mainstream of Davis political life.

1) LAIMA DRUSKIS AND SUNNY SHINE PHOTOGRAPHY

The diverse and variously involved people making up the Terminal Building campaign included two who liked to take photographs and who each assumed the role of event photographer. They were Laima Druskis and Sunny Shine. Between them, they took several rolls of film. I am extremely appreciative of their making those pictures available to me for use in this chapter and I am sorry that because of constraints of space I can only use a small portion.

2) THE OVERALL PLAN

The overall plan of the event was to create a Sunday afternoon of “hanging out” and light entertainment that would climax with an hour of fast-paced speaking **honoring** the Terminal Building and recognizing its role and significance in the community. The event would run some three hours between 1:00 and 4:00 p.m. (And, it was hoped that, in turn, the fact of the event would encourage public-at-large sentiment in the direction of saving the building in some manner.)

Because the Building was constructed in the 1920s and symbolized that period, Caswell and her circle of organizers decided to make “the 1920s” the theme of the event. Two “Twenties” aspects were quite conspicuous.

THE BACKSTREET JAZZ QUARTET. First, a local band, the Backstreet Jazz Quartet, specialized in playing music of the 1920s. The group played in part pro bono and in part paid with DDBA event promotional funds and private donations. They can be seen in several of the following photographs, but particularly in Fig. 9.2.

The fast, upbeat, and amplified music they made was a key factor in creating a festive atmosphere in the 200 block of G Street. They performed an impressively varied repertoire of jazz compositions enhanced by the excellent performance of vocalist Heidi Bekebrede.

1920s-STYLE CLOTHES. Second, in much of the publicity for the event, people were encouraged to celebrate Davis history by wearing 1920s-style clothes. To my surprise, many people actually showed up in at least some semblance of such attire. Therefore, in looking at the following photos do not jump to the conclusion that Davis people dressed oddly in 2000. They were simply trying to appear to be wearing 1920s fashions.

In addition, Heather Caswell did more than operate a women’s apparel shop at The Wardrobe. She was also fond of costumes of various kinds and had a stock that she rented out—with access to more on special occasions such as this. She personally undertook to costume a number of people.

3) THE EVENT’S TEMPLATES AND SOURCES

No undertaking is simply made-up or invented *de novo*. Instead, each is molded on and/or borrows from previous undertakings. Such was the case with this gathering.

It drew its features from two main templates for “doing” events. (1) As an aspect of her apparel business, Heather Caswell had previously organized fashion shows and costume parties, as well as having produced theater. She applied portions of these templates to this event in such features as helium-filled balloons, banners written in 1920s style fonts, poetry readings, a popcorn concession, a lemonade stand, and a snow cone concession. I have already mentioned the specialized band with a jazz singer and the 1920s costumes. These source-templates brought an emotional tenor of **upbeat celebration** to the event.

(2) A second template, to which I was disposed, was the political or protest rally. The core feature here is the parade of speakers from constituencies stressing the themes of the campaign. Classic at such events is the table of the campaign’s literature. At this event, Yolo County Historical Society publications table filled this role (Fig. 9.12). Exhibits of salient icons are also common. In this case, the icon exhibit was composed of enlarged newspaper reports of aspects of the Terminal Hotel and Cafe through the decades (Fig. 9.6.). (These news stories were seen in chapters 3 through 6, above.)

Contrasting with the first kind of template, the emotional tenor of the rally tends to anger or **indignation**. This, also, was seen, especially toward the end of the event. Overall, though, this gathering amalgamated elements of both kinds of templates, that of the celebration or party and that of the protest rally.

4) THE CROWDS

No one kept a count of the turnout, but my guess, based on having been present and on a study of the photos, is that between one and two hundred people were on the scene at various times

over the three hours. Estimating attendance is particularly tricky because people arrived and left at various times throughout the afternoon. Many seemed to have “passed through” or visited rather than to have been there the three hours or a major portion of it.

5) THE THREE-MINUTE SPEAKERS

Advised by several people, I organized the 3:00-4:00 p.m. speaker session. Having attended hundreds of political rallies as a citizen and as a sociological analyst, I approached this task with the strong belief that the bane of rallies—the runaway, undisciplined activist who vastly exceeds her or his allotted time—had to be avoided here.

I therefore built the hour around the theme of telling “three-minute stories.” At the point of inviting each speaker, I made “three minutes only” a major point. At the event and before speaking, I further admonished each on this matter. The Master of Ceremonies, David Rosenberg, supported the three-minute rule and built it in at the start as a form of humor. In various photos, one can see he is carrying a cane. In his welcoming introduction, he humorously explained that speakers who exceeded their time would be given the hook (holding up the hooked cane), just as in old time Vaudeville, and pulled off the stage. Indeed, I kept time and signaled Rosenberg when a speaker went over. One did to the degree that Rosenberg started (humorously) to use the hook, whereupon that speaker stopped. Otherwise, speakers were reasonably self-disciplined.

Figures 9.16 through 9.27. present pictures of the speakers, an identifying affiliation, and the titles of their topics. They are shown in the sequence in which they spoke at the event. As one can see, the topics were ordered chronologically, running from the early days of Davis to the present. The progression was also from historical to political or policy. The first eight addressed the history of the hotel. The last four were contemporary and policy-oriented.

The speakers themselves were almost all well known or fairly well known and long-time Davis residents. Scanning Figures 9.16 through 27, the reader can see that these are the names of people encountered in previous chapters as participants in Davis local history and preservation matters.

Each of the three-minute talks were, for varying reasons, contributions to Davis history in themselves and worthy of preserving. Fortunately, they were videotaped (and broadcast) by Davis local access Channel 5 (Davis Community Television) and a copy of that tape is available in the archives of the Hattie Weber Museum of Davis (Fransway, 2000).

6) THE SPECIALLY INVITED WHO DECLINED

As every organizer knows, not everyone invited to speak on a particular day at a specific time is available. Nor, can all those one specially invites manage to attend. Such was the case with this list of speakers and some specially invited guests (who it was hoped would elect on the spot to speak). Among speakers invited, Mayor Ken Wagstaff declined, saying he would be away from Davis that day. Among honored guests who one hoped might speak, Terminal Building owners Grace Chen and Lee Chen likewise declined with the explanation that they would not be in Davis.

7) THE MASTER OF CEREMONIES, DAVID ROSENBERG

For several reasons, the campaigners were extremely fortunate to have David Rosenberg consent to act as the master of ceremonies.

First, his presence in this high-profile role endowed the affair with mainstream import and legitimacy. He had served three terms on the Davis City Council, twice as Mayor, and was, at

this time, a Yolo County Supervisor. He had been an associate of California Governor Gray Davis since the days they both served in the Governor Jerry Brown administration and Davis had recently appointed him Commissioner of the California State Lottery, as his director of intergovernmental relations, and as a senior advisor.

Second, Rosenberg clearly loved to emcee events because he did so with some regularity for a variety of groups. As one can infer, groups asked him to do this not simply because he was rather prominent, but because he was entertaining. He was clever with both good and bad jokes, at ease, and quick on his feet with an audience. On this day, he was, in fact, at the top of his game.

Third, we have met Mr. Rosenberg before in this saga. (1) In the early 1980s, he was a member of the HRMC, the only person ever elected to the City Council who had so served. More than almost all Davis political figures, he was both familiar with and supportive of historic preservation. (2) He was no newcomer to the topic of the Terminal Building. He was in the first months of his first term as a City Council member when its nomination for designation arrived there in 1984 (Ch. 6, section 2). The designation failed on a 3-2 vote with Rosenberg joining with the fabled citizen-politician Tom Tomasi in voting yes.

He was so popular as an emcee that he could not accept all such requests. He did in this case, I surmise, because he was a supporter of the cause at hand. In addition, he and Heather Caswell had worked together with success on previous political matters.



9.1. Looking southwest across the G Street Plaza just after 3:00 p.m. Jean Jackman, back to us in the middle right, is speaking. The Backstreet Jazz Band is behind her, under the canvas shade structure. David Rosenberg is on the right, in a white jacket, his back to us. (S. Shine.)



9.2. The Backstreet Jazz Quartet. (S. Shine.)



9.3. poetry reading by Alyssa Nielsen. (S. Shine.)



9.4. Good jazz music inspired a number of people to dance, some quite well, as shown by Brad Powell and Doreen Pichotti. (S. Shine.)



9.5. "Hanging out" on the G Street Plaza. The exhibit of news accounts of events at the Terminal Hotel and Cafe is seen in the upper right. (S. Shine.)

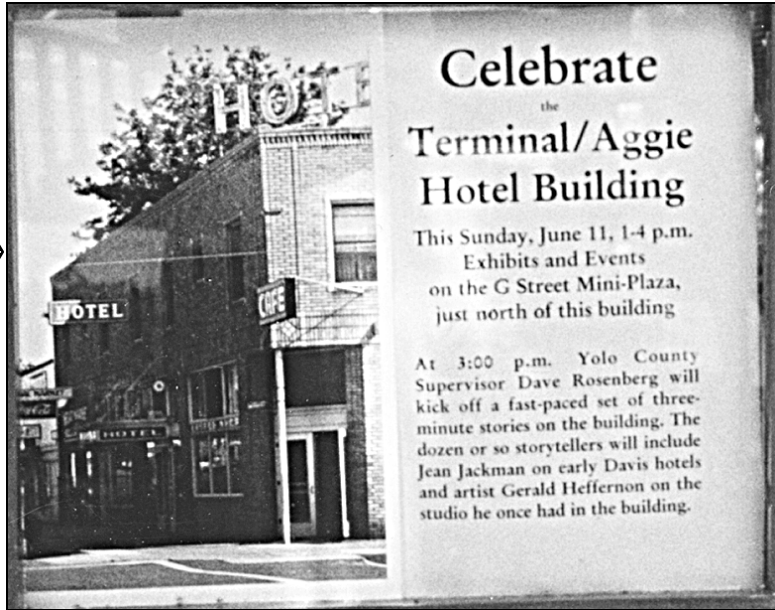


9.6. The starting point of the exhibit on the Terminal Building. (L. Druskis.)



9.7. Boy tending the lemonade stand. (L. Druskis.)

9.8. Sign announcing the event that stood on the sidewalk outside the Wardrobe. Moved to the G Street Plaza. It is also seen in Fig. 10.2.. (S. Shine.)



9.9. Davis Lumber (aka Ace Hardware) sold a wineglass etched with an image of the Davis Arch. Sunny Shine and Laura Cole-Rowe bought a number of them, added their own decorations and sold them at this event. The proceeds went to help defray the celebration's expenses. (S. Shine.)

9.10. If one was going to dress up in 1920s costume, then one should have one's picture taken. (S. Shine.)





9.11. They may appear to be drinking wine, but their glasses are empty. They are only hawking fund-raising wine glasses. (L. Druskis.)

9.12. The display table of the Yolo County Historical Society. As can be seen, that Society has a rather extensive publication program. (S. Shine.)





9.13. Another view of the literature table of the Yolo County Historical Society, this one featuring then City Council Member Susie Boyd (on the left). (L. Druskis.)



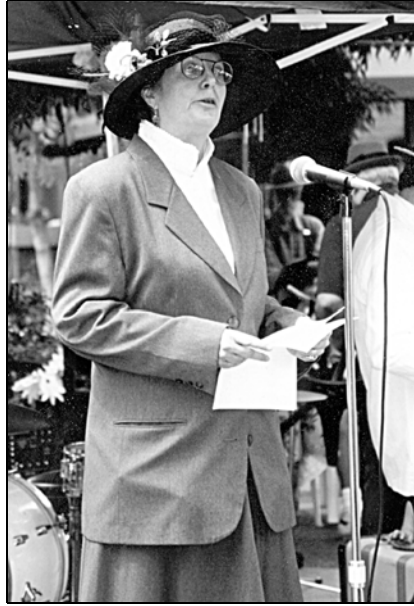
9.14. Preservation is not all old people. (S. Shine.)



9.15. At 3:00 p.m., Davis Rosenberg started to warm up the crowd for the “three-minute stories.” (L. Druskis.)



9.16. "Early Davis at Second and G." Jean Jackman, author, *Down Home Tales of Davis*. (L. Druskis.)



9.17. "Modernism Rejects Victorianism," Jeanette Shulz, Historical Resources Management Commission. (S. Shine.)



9.18. "The Terminal Cafe," Phyllis Haig, Hattie Weber Museum of Davis. (S. Shine.)

9. 19. "My Art Studio at the Aggie Hotel," Gerald Hefferson, artist and columnist. (S. Shine.)

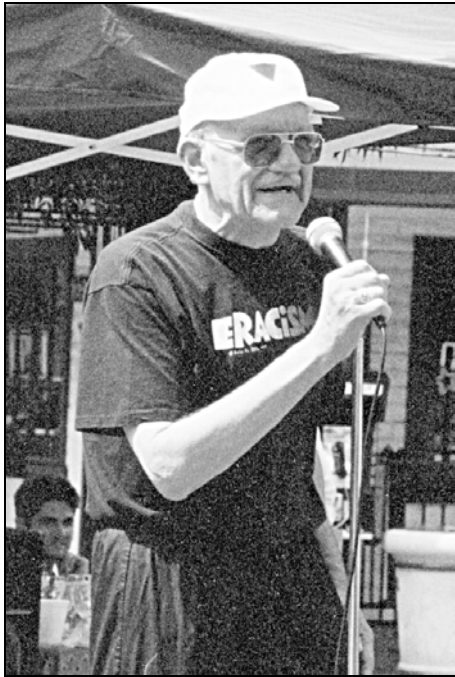


9. 20. "Memories of Hotel Residents," Audrey Hastings, Hastings' Back Porch. (S. Shine.)

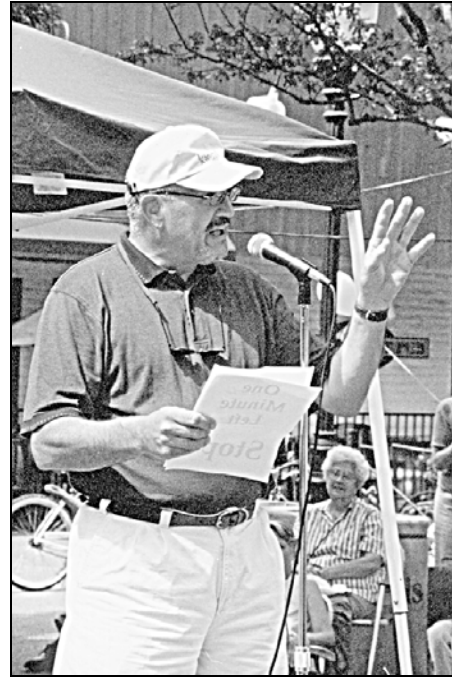


9. 21. "Student Evenings in the Late '70s," Michael Harrington, Davis City Council. (S. Shine.)





9.22. "Ministering at the Aggie Hotel," Rev. John Pamperin, Street Minister. (S. Shine.)

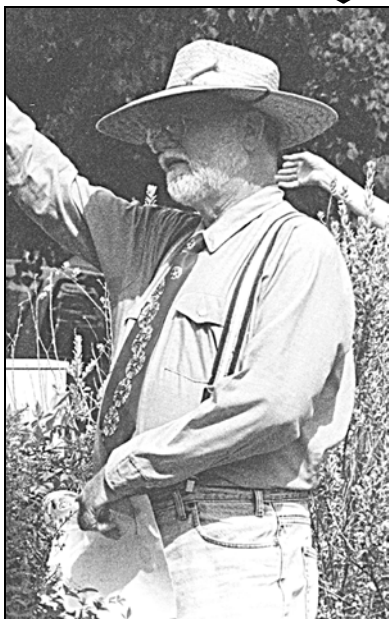


9.23. "Experiences at the Aggie Hotel," Mike White, Historical Resources Management Commission. (S. Shine.)



9.24. "The Building, the Commission, the Council," Wendy Nelson, Chair, Historical Resources Management Commission. (S. Shine.)

9.25. "Rehabilitating the Building," Richard Hastings, State Park Archeologist. (S. Shine.)



9.26. "Environmental Ethics," Julie Partansky, Immediate Past Mayor, City of Davis. (S. Shine.)



9.27. "Preservation," Sue Greenwald, Davis City Council. (S. Shine.)



“My Art Studio at the Aggie Hotel,” Gerald Heffernon’s Remarks at the Celebration of The Terminal Building, Davis G Street Plaza, June 11, 2000

I’m a little upset that memories from my adult life qualify as historic recollections. I don’t think of myself as being that old. But since I need notes in order to make a 3 minute speech about my own memories, I guess I do deserve those AARP mailings.

I first arrived in Davis in 1982, which to me seems like just last week separated by a week’s worth of heavy dreaming. Being an artist, the first thing I needed was a studio. And one of the first possibilities that caught my eye were those familiar tank houses or pump houses, one of which, as you know, is the subject of its own preservation debate.

None of these was available and I started looking around for old warehouses, only to find out that Davis didn’t have warehouses. Eventually, through a realtor I came across this building, the Terminal Hotel—or as I knew it then, the Aggie Hotel. I met with Lee Chen and I rented two adjoining rooms with a bathroom in between.

I really didn’t give any thought to the building one way or the other, historically or aesthetically. Since I came from the Midwest, it simply seemed like a familiar old building.

Tom Deininger had his photo studio on the first floor in the space where Grace Chen now has her hair salon. I had to enter through Tom’s storefront to get upstairs to my studio, which was a nice inconvenience because I was new in town and it gave me someone to say hello to.

One other renter was upstairs doing a small engineering project at odd times, but essentially I was there all by myself in this big empty upstairs.

At the time I was making photovoltaic, or solar-kinetic, sculptures so I did a lot on tinkering with mechanical things and it was a convenient location because I could run downstairs to

Davis Lumber, which had it’s hardware section in the adjacent building at the time, and get little widgets and fasteners or whatever I needed. In fact it was a little too convenient since I think I made six or seven trips a day to the hardware store.

Now and then Lee Chen would pop in and look at this bizarre activity of mine and kindly suggest that maybe I should get my gadgets manufactured somewhere, but I was having so much trouble just getting the prototypes to work that mass-production never happened.

All this tinkering was hungry work so when I wanted something to eat I’d run down to the Natural Food Works and grab a pre-made alfalfa sprout sandwich or a high-density cookie with the minimum daily requirement of everything, and that would sustain me. I’d quickly be hard at work wasting time some more. It seemed like the future was everything and I didn’t think much about the past. I had plenty of time to go looking for widgets and snacks.

While speculating more than working I’d occasionally poke my head out the window and I’d see the train station and the palm trees and I’d realize I wasn’t in the Midwest. It was a kind of wistful realization. And then I’d hear the station master announcing that the train was coming in from Chicago, or leaving for Chicago, and I felt this connection to my past that made it a little easier to make the transition to my new home.

I think those kinds of transitions are important as we go from past to future. I think history can really only be seen in the light of change but change also needs the shadow of history to give it shape.

In fact, I’ve had people tell me I was history myself. But I still seem to be here, give or take a few loose bricks and some unwanted cosmetic changes.

9.28. I thought Gerald Heffernon’s remarks captured the moment well and, with his permission, I present them here. When Heffernon finished, Rosenberg remarked: “Great Job. You know, you really are a great public speaker. I mean that sincerely. If you ever want to give up that column, I think you have a career in public speaking.”



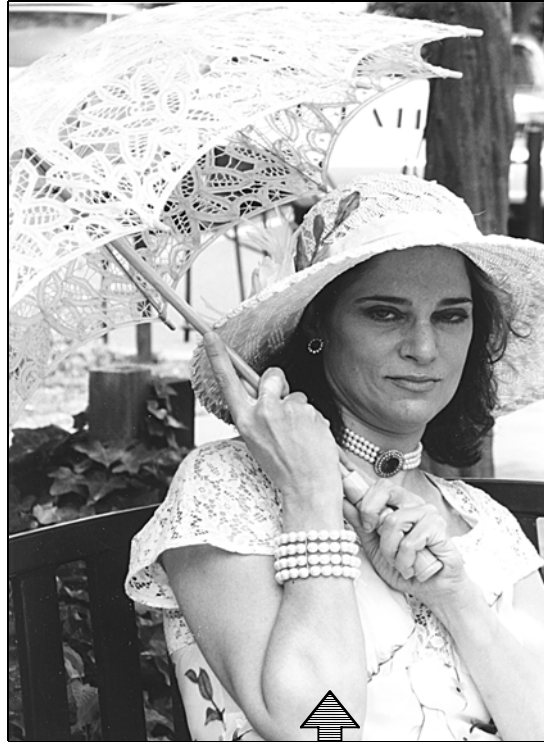
9.29. On the left, Susie Boyd was present at the start of the three-minute talks, acknowledged as a public official, and then departed almost immediately. (L. Druskis.)



9.30. A couple nicely outfitted in 1920s fashion. (S. Shine.)

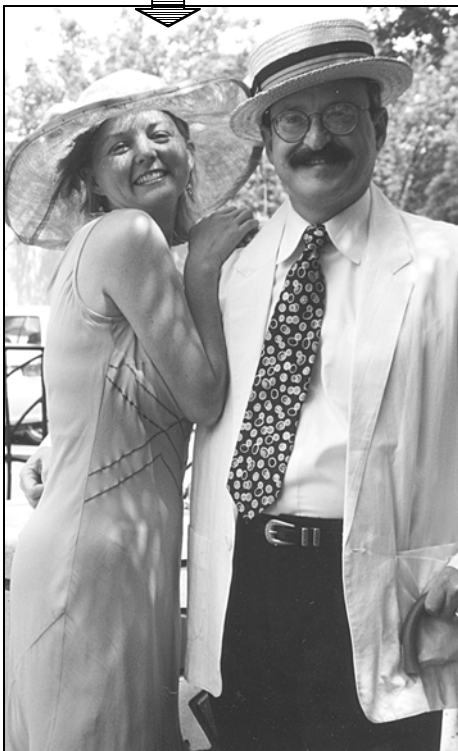


9.31. A couple listening to the three-minute stories. (S. Shine.)



9.32. Dr. Caron Cioffi, who also read poetry. (S. Shine.)

9.33. Heather Caswell and David Rosenberg pose. (S. Shine.)

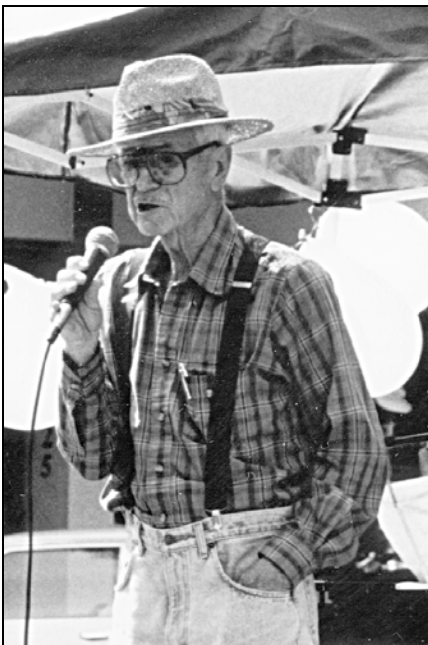
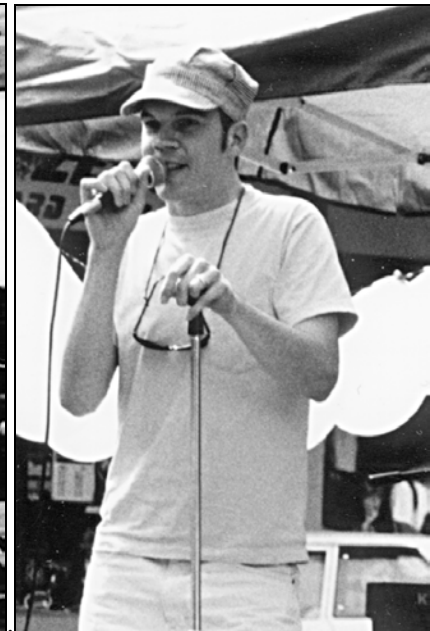


9.34. Rose Anne DeCristoforo, owner of the Natural Food Works, which was evicted from the Terminal Building. (S. Shine.)



8) OPEN-MIKE SPEAKERS

The event became “open-mike” after the scheduled speakers. This period was, to me, the most enlightening and uplifting of the afternoon. No one counted or kept a record of all of them, but perhaps another dozen or more people came to the stage and spoke. I did not know most of them or even know of them. Diverse in age and gender, they recounted moments deeply meaningful in their lives associated with the building. Indeed, a tinge of catharsis of grief over lost places ran through their both accounts and the mood of the crowd. Miriam Montgomery, shown in Fig. 9.35, advocated saving the building and spoke of Del’s Fix-it shop run by her and her husband just to north on G Street in the decades after World War II. The young man in Fig. 9.36 spoke about musical groups associated with the building. The gentleman in Fig. 9.37 is Clarence Berry, the retired long-time postmaster of Davis.



9.35. Open-mike speaker Mrs. Miriam Montgomery. (S. Shine.)

9. 36. Open-mike speaker. (S. Shine.)

9.37. Clarence Berry. (S. Shine.)

9.38. David Rosenberg had his photograph taken in front of the soon-to-be demolished Arch Mural. (S. Shine.)



9.39. As the event broke up, various participants posed in groups before the Arch Mural. (S. Shine.)



