

THE DAVIS HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PAPERS ON DAVIS HISTORY

Paper Number 3

Nineteenth-Century Davis, California Buildings Standing in 2003

Merrily DuPree

Introduction to the Series

The purposes of this series, *Papers on Davis History*, are to publish article-length original research studies, data compilations and photographic collections on aspects of the history of Davis, California.

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3. Nineteenth-Century Davis, California Buildings Standing in 20003. Merrily DuPree, 2003

Nineteenth-Century Davis, California Buildings Standing in 2003

Merrily DuPree

Biographical Note: Merrily DuPree is Vice-President of the Davis Historical Society. Her interest in social history dates from 1973 when she took the first course on the history of women to be offered by Syracuse University. He has published articles on American literature and culture in journals such as *American Literature*, *American Literary Realism*, and *Asian American Studies*. Her email address is dupree@concentric.net.

Below is a list of Davis, California buildings constructed in the nineteenth century that were still standing as of July of 2003. It was compiled using the earliest complete set of property appraisal forms extant, those for 1933, on which assessors provided a footprint and a valuation for each of the 465 buildings then in Davis and asked owners for the date of construction, materials used, and number of rooms. (The original forms are in Special Collections, Shields Library, University of California, Davis.)

I began by using the “year-built” entries to identify those buildings dating from 1900 or earlier. As might be expected, most owners responded with decades rather than years, with some simply describing their houses as “old” or saying they didn’t know. I decided that any building considered old in 1933 would likely have been built before 1900, and included these in this initial group. When a question mark was recorded, I relied on the assessor’s estimate of depreciation in years. Then in early 2003 I, Colan DuPree, and John Lofland went to the address of each and painstakingly compared the building on the site with the information on the form. Based on these results, I compiled a preliminary list. I then returned to each of these buildings and checked it against its form a second time. This process yielded the finding that in 2003, exactly seventy years after the appraisal forms were completed, Davis had retained twenty-six of its nineteenth-century buildings. In 1900, about 165 buildings stood within the town limits, which means that the rate of survival is approximately 15%.

In the table below, the list is organized by numbered, lettered, and named streets. When two addresses are given, the first is from 1933 and the second from 2003. The number preceding each address is the Lofland serial number of the 1933 property appraisal form. In parentheses following the address are two years (or decades) of construction, the first taken from the appraisal form and the second from the *1996 City of Davis Cultural Resources Inventory*; the letters n.i. in place of the second date indicate the building is not included in the inventory. In the case of 312 D/516 D, I and others discovered through researching the history of the house that the year of construction given on its form (1917) is incorrect; therefore I report the actual year of 1895. Also, no forms exist for 2727 Russell Boulevard and the house now at 240 Los Robles Street because in 1933 they stood outside the town limits. Construction dates for them are taken from the *Cultural Resources Inventory*.

If you have further information about any of these buildings or would like others considered for inclusion on this list, please contact me at the email address given above.

Nineteenth Century Davis Buildings Standing in 2003

1. #213, 604 Second (1882; 1875)
2. #108, 232 Third (“old”; 1870s)
3. #267, 923 Third (1880s; 1890s)
4. #449, 1021 Third (“old”; n.i.)
5. #363, 509 Fourth (“old”; 1874)
6. #128, 619 Fourth (“old”; 1884)
7. #420, 1121 Fourth (1880s; n.i.)
8. #270, 503 Fifth (form entry: ? [50 years depreciation]; 1890s)
9. #275, 337 B (form entry: ? [40 years depreciation]; 1904)
10. #54, 336 C (“old”; n.i.)
11. #441, 113 D (1880s; 1890s)
12. #343, 216 D/222 D (1870; 1874)
13. #189, 312 D/516 D (1895; n.i.)
14. #308, 337 D (form entry: ? [depreciation arbitrary]; 1890s)
15. #457, 129 E (1880s; 1880)
16. #163, 320 I (1880s; late 1870s)
17. #437, 326 I (1880s; n.i.)
18. #23, 327 I (1880s; 1900)
19. #8, 420 I (“old”; 1890-1900)
20. #462, 436 I (1880s; n.i.)
21. #460, 434 J (“old”; n.i.)
22. #266, 437 J (“old”; n.i.)

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- 23. #337, 514 J (1890s; n.i.)
- 24. #145, 404 K (1890s; n.i.)
- 25. 2727 Russell Blvd. (1887)
- 26. 1140 Los Robles (1859)

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