

Every obstacle in life has a **design** solution.

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Historic Jewels

The author Michael Crichton has been quoted saying...“If you don't know history, then you don't know anything. You are a leaf that doesn't know it is part of a tree.” History is important. It matters not if it is your family history, your community's history, your country's history or the world's history. Most of us have recognized the importance of preserving some of our historic buildings. They help anchor a community and give us pause as to who we are, and how we arrived at where we are, and what things that have been important to us as a community.



The Hope Diamond
Photo credit: wikipedia

There are some who argue against landmarking buildings, and some of their concerns are real. I believe that if a building is important to a community, then the community through taxes should assist the owner in the additional costs of the

historic review and restoration of that building. Maybe the community should then share in the profit if the building is sold at a higher price because of the restoration. However, these discussions are for another article. Of course, just because a building becomes a landmarked building, that does not mean that the building cannot ever be changed. There are many reasons for making changes in a landmarked building. The needs of the building's owner may be different than what the building can provide, and the needs of a community may be served by changes in a landmarked building. Sometimes the community or the owner needs to enlarge the building. Sometimes buildings must be upgraded to protect the health, safety and welfare of the people living, working or visiting the building. These can all be accomplished when working with landmarked buildings.

continued on page three

April 2019 contents

Historic Jewels.....	pg 1
Ionic Building of the Month	pg 2
Ask M	pg 3
Archi-fact	pg 1
Archi-quote	pg 2
Arch-speak	pg 3
About	pg 4

Did You Know ?

We are the leading local provider of tools and resources for people planning on adding on to, renovating or building a home.

We have several consumer guilds to help you.

One of our recent publications is...

“The 10 Advantages of Design Build”



Down load it here and share it with

Archi-fact.

Our Iconic Building of the Month is the Woodland Opera House which is a simple, two-story, red brick structure. The structure is approximately 104 feet long by 60 feet wide; and its walls are 20 inches thick. A stage house on top of the north end of the Opera House (destroyed by fire in the 1930s) rose to a height of 60 feet above the street level.

Iconic Building Of The Month

Woodland Opera House: Woodland,CA

The Woodland Opera House, listed on the National Register of Historic Places and a California Historical Landmark, is one of four fully functioning 19th century opera houses in California.

Designed in 1885 by Thomas J. Welsh, a prominent San Francisco architect, it was the first opera house to serve the Sacramento Valley. Several years later in July 1892 a fire that started in Dead Cat Alley behind the Opera House destroyed much of what is now the Downtown Woodland Historic District, including the Opera House. The Opera House was rebuilt between 1895-96. Many of the materials from the original building were used including some of the partially standing walls.

By 1913 over 300 touring companies had appeared on its stage, and the Woodland Opera House was becoming an entertainment center for the region. Nevertheless, the venue closed in that year, after ticket sales declined and the theater lost a lawsuit by an attendee who had mistaken a loading door for an exit and fell three feet, breaking an arm.

The Opera house remained closed and unused for almost sixty years until 1971 when it was purchased by the Yolo County Historical Society. After many local fund drives, restoration of the building began. Declared a state historic park in 1976, the building was later deeded to the State of California in 1980. The Opera House reopened in 1989 after a \$2,000,000 restoration project. The interior restoration effort received an Award of Merit from the California Preservation Foundation and a Citation Award from the League of Historic American Theaters.

Its interior is an example of 19th-century American playhouses. The layout of the stage is a typical proscenium arch. It combines the horseshoe balcony with an uninterrupted semi-circular seating arrangement and large orchestra seating area like the common theme in Italian Renaissance-Revival theaters.

Photo credits:
Design M Group



Archi-Quote

Our quote this month is not from an Architect. He is the Volunteer Docent who gave us a tour of the Woodland Opera House.

"The visionaries from Woodland and UC Davis who led the drive to restore the Opera House to its original splendor and the volunteers who continue to preserve this Jewel of Northern California should be canonized for their tireless efforts."

Gil Sebastian, Volunteer Docent

Historic Jewels

continued from page one

Landmarking helps to retain unique architectural details and protect the special character of a neighborhood which makes an area and a building more desirable and ultimately more valuable. A number of studies have pointed to the increased resale value of buildings in historic districts when compared to similar buildings that are not designated. Many see the benefit of owning a property in a historic district because it is less likely that one's property will be overshadowed by a large, over scale structure or that a new, unattractive building can be built nearby. The goal of landmarking is to ensure that the fabric of the built environment that conveys part of our architectural, social and cultural history and development is protected so that it can be enjoyed by future generations.

Building owners are not free to do whatever they wish with their properties, landmarked or not. All communities have local Department of Buildings and building codes and regulations, zoning laws, the Fire Code and a number of other laws governs the occupancy, use, alteration and demolition of every structure in their community.

It is always a pleasure when we can write about a building which is also a cultural center of a community. Just like the importance of our history, our cultural institutions help bind our communities together and keep us all healthier in mind and spirit. Around the world there are buildings that are historic jewels for their excellent design, craftsmanship or historic significance. Our Iconic Building of the Month usually is about just such a building. This month is a bit different in that although it is an important building to a community and a historic building it is not widely known outside of its community. However, in 1976 it became the Woodland Opera House State Historic Park, the smallest State Park in California.

Archi-Speak

Can you find these words of what's in the oceans?

LANDMARK BALONY OPERA
PROSCENIUM RESTORATION

K	L	T	S	N	W	K	H	K	R	L	Y	X	E	P
Q	T	C	X	X	S	F	T	V	E	O	C	B	D	E
W	C	H	F	K	T	Y	Y	X	S	W	P	Z	L	B
P	N	X	M	X	W	G	P	N	T	R	O	K	O	C
C	Y	U	E	T	I	Q	V	L	O	N	R	K	Z	P
K	R	A	M	D	N	A	L	S	R	C	T	K	O	A
L	Q	P	P	I	W	L	C	V	A	W	L	Y	K	R
I	E	S	D	H	L	E	A	F	T	N	O	A	L	E
S	S	C	T	Q	N	Q	J	Z	I	W	N	F	B	P
F	D	Z	I	I	N	J	Z	M	O	A	J	A	P	O
F	M	U	U	F	U	U	W	E	N	L	K	S	T	W
C	Y	M	N	K	Z	W	D	N	U	G	X	T	A	I
Q	T	P	C	B	U	U	S	B	L	B	K	O	I	Q
M	J	H	X	K	K	V	K	P	E	V	S	Y	L	G
Y	Z	G	K	H	C	Z	G	R	A	Z	G	E	Q	D

Ask M

In the James Bond books and movies the character "M" heads the Secret British Intelligence Service known as MI 6, of which James Bond is Agent 007. When contemplating adding on to your home or building, renovating or building a new home or building you should have someone like "M" on your side. Each month the "Ask M" column will answer a reader's question to place more information at your finger tips. **This month's question is...**

Can shipping containers be used to build a house?

Alison W.

Alison,

The shipping containers could either be installed at your site and then worked on there or be built out including exterior siding and roofing and shipped to the site almost complete. Some communities' building codes do not recognize the structural strength of the containers and will require structural framing inside where ever there are cut through for windows, doors or larger rooms. Research must be done about your community before proceeding with this project like all projects. Best to involve an architect as usual.

Email your questions to info@designMgroup.com ,and in the subject line type in "Ask M". We look forward to hearing from you and hope we can answer the questions to everyone's satisfaction.

Want to speak with the Architect

Do you have questions but do not know where to start?

Do you know the legal consequences of starting a project without approvals?

Are you sure you have completed all of the research necessary so as not to waste your money and time during construction?

Are what you think are your NEEDS and OPTIONS truly the best for you and your future?

Does the contractor really have YOUR best interest in mind when suggesting solutions?

Answering these questions and more are the reason for enlisting a Needs and Options Review.

We can help you on your way to a successful project with less hassles and problems.

Visit: www.designMgroup.com

About

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President



photo credit: Jenna Glatzer

Marcus Marino, RA, AIA, NCARB is a leading architect in New York City. He received a Bachelors of Architecture from the prestigious Pratt Institute and a Masters in the Science of Architecture and Urban Design from Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation. He received his license to practice architecture in New York State in 1981 and is licensed in a number of other States. Marcus Marino has served on numerous Governmental Panels and serves as an expert consultant to other architectural firms and legal firms. He is the former Vice President of Public Advocacy of the New York State American Institute of Architects.

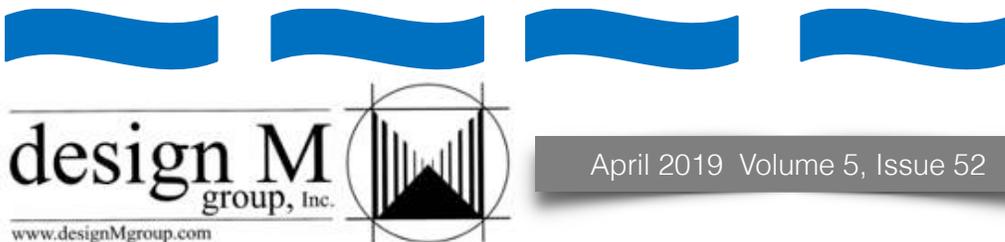
Our core beliefs are ...

Architects have a responsibility to our clients, community and the environment.

Architects should help provide information to our fellow world citizens about their homes, offices and the built environment in general.

Your Home should move you emotionally like your favorite song does.

Let Us Help You Build the Home You Knew Was Always There For You.



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Contact me !

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