

Bill Peer



A permanent home for the Buhne Fence – and you can help

The Eureka Heritage Society has a rare opportunity to purchase the beautiful 134-year-old, cast- and wrought-iron fence that once graced the front of the H.H. Buhne mansion that stood at 719 E St.

When the mansion was demolished in 1955, the fence was moved to R Street and then placed in storage when the property was sold in 1998. It is currently being stored inside, in dry conditions, but will require considerable restoration work after being out in the elements for more than a century.

The Eureka Heritage Society is committed to the acquisition and restoration of this significant part of the city's historic past and plans to install the fence on the E Street side of its Annie B. Ryan House & Gardens property. A restoration project centered at 1000 F St., this endeavor is an ongoing effort to preserve and protect an important part of Eureka's history. The restoration of the 1892 Annie B. Ryan house was started by the College of the Redwoods Historic Preservation and Restoration Technology program. The Society now owns this property and is continuing the work.

Along with the house, the gardens on this large property follow the Society's mission to educate the public about historic preservation and to create a beautiful garden setting for the surrounding historic neighborhood and community. This project has been – and continues to be – an entirely volunteer effort. The house and gardens reflect a unique time in Eureka's history as well as the individuals who maintain them now. The current plan for the gardens is to provide a venue for community events, offer a beautiful place for the community to enjoy, and continue to make available fresh produce for community food banks.

The garden extends from F Street through the block to E Street. The 140-foot-long E Street side originally had a concrete retaining wall and fence that has mostly been lost to erosion and collisions. The Society's intent is to replace the retaining wall and install the Buhne fence to complement the historic nature of this property, enhance the property visually, and provide a boundary to safeguard the gardens.

The Buhne fence will be a perfect fit here. However, the cost to purchase, restore and install it and reconstruct the retaining wall will be approximately \$30,000-\$50,000. The restoration will include paint and rust removal, repair of damaged areas of the fence, casting of missing cast-iron elements from original examples, and repainting or powder coating the restored fence to protect it from the elements.

The result will be a tremendous asset, not only to the Annie B. Ryan House & Gardens but to the neighborhood, the city and the community. It is the only remaining historic iron fence of its kind in the county, besides the one in front of the Carson Mansion, and it deserves preservation.

How can you help? To learn more about this project, visit www.eurekaheritage.com. To assist with project funding, you may use the attached remittance form, visit our website, or contact the Society at eurekaheritagesociety@gmail.com or (707) 445-8775. Any support of labor and in-kind contributions for repairs and installation are most welcome and, most of all, spread the word! Please help us bring this local treasure back to life and ensure that it will be around for another 100 years.

Sincerely,

The Eureka Heritage Society

Thank you!