



A Century Later and Still Standing

1906 San Francisco Earthquake Failed to Destroy City Landmarks

CLEVELAND (April 5, 2006) – If buildings could talk, some of San Francisco’s historic structures would tell a story about survival and revival. April 18th marks the 100th anniversary of the 1906 earthquake that shook San Francisco and caused catastrophic damage to buildings spanning an area of 490 city blocks. The quake measured upwards of 7.8 on the Richter scale and, although tens of thousands of buildings were destroyed; others either incurred minimal damage or suffered immensely, requiring massive repairs and renovations.

One of the buildings severely damaged was The Emporium Department Store that opened in 1896. After originally surviving the earthquake, the structure, along with its signature glass dome, was destroyed in the fires that raged throughout the city during the following days. Miraculously, its Market Street façade remained standing in the aftermath of the disaster. Today, the Market Street façade of the former Emporium site is being integrated into the redevelopment of Westfield San Francisco Centre scheduled to open in September 2006. The façade has been restored to the way it appeared in the early 1900s, a Beaux-Arts style, creating an elegant retail promenade for visitors.

“Initially surviving the earthquake, The Emporium was obviously a substantial enough structure that it was able to absorb the earthquake forces that hit,” says Michel Kalin, Vice President at Nabih Youssef and Associates, the California-based structural engineering firm for the project.

“It was vital that we orchestrated the right mix of technical and design professionals to work along with the project’s design architect RTKL, through the restoration of this unique structure,” says Al Richner, project manager at Cleveland-based **ka** architecture, the project’s Executive Architect. “We were very cognizant of its historic value and worked diligently to arrive at an outcome that sensibly united the past with the present,” he adds.

The Emporium wasn’t the only landmark to survive the devastation. The Old Mint remained standing due to its strong foundation of solid granite. Thanks to the hard work of its employees, who diverted the fire’s intrusive flames by using one hose hooked up to a well, the Mint suffered little damage aside from the fire’s heat melting the building’s windows. Today, there are plans and discussions focused on restoring the Mint into a world-class museum.

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The Flood Building, with its structure of steel, brick, and sandstone, also remained relatively intact. Today, this well-known landmark is the distinctive home to retail and office tenants.

Designed and built on a steel-framed structure, The Ferry Building withstood not one, but two disastrous earthquakes, those of 1906 and 1989. The building's signature 240-foot tall clock tower maintains its integrity despite a century of redevelopment and renovations. Today, the building hosts a marketplace with an eclectic blend of delectable food items and local fare. It is also home to premium office space. Tourists and locals continue to enjoy the rich history and present-day amenities of this architectural work.

The Palace Hotel, and its opulent Garden Court also survived the quake, but incurred extensive damage from the fires that followed. After undergoing several years of restoration, the hotel re-opened in 1909. Today, tourists and local residents continue to marvel at and enjoy the lavish and luxurious style of the hotel and its fabled Garden Court, which played host to politicians and royalty in the years following its reopening.

The preservation and restoration of the city's cherished historic structures are a testament to the spirit and tenacity of the people of the San Francisco. The buildings also stand as a symbol of the technological advances in building materials and processes that allow the city's rich cultural heritage to live on in the imaginations of new generations of San Franciscans.

About ka architecture:

ka is a national, award-winning design firm that provides architecture, planning, landscape architecture, environmental graphics, and interior design services to commercial developers and corporate clients. For more than 45 years, the firm has brought a holistic, client-centric focus to projects in the built environment, resulting in enduring architecture. To learn more, visit www.kainc.com.

About The Westfield Group:

The Westfield Group (ASX Code: WDC) is an internally managed, vertically integrated, shopping centre group undertaking ownership, development, design, construction, funds/asset management, property management, leasing and marketing activities and employing in excess of 4,000 staff worldwide. It has investment interests in 128 shopping centers in four countries, with a total value in excess of US\$38.5 billion. The Westfield Group is the largest retail property group in the world by equity market capitalization and the eighth largest entity listed on the Australian Stock Exchange.

About Forest City:

Forest City Enterprises, Inc. is an \$8.0 billion NYSE-listed national real estate company. The Company is principally engaged in the ownership, development, management and acquisition of commercial and residential real estate throughout the United States. Forest City's portfolio includes properties located in 19 states and the District of Columbia. The Company is particularly active in its "core" markets including: the New York City/Philadelphia metropolitan area, Boston, Greater Washington, D.C./ Baltimore, Denver, and California. Forest City is also expanding its presence in growing markets including Chicago and Florida. The Company's real estate portfolio includes more than 21.2 million square feet of retail, 10 million square feet of leasable office space, nearly 40,000 apartment units and 7,400 acres held for land development.*

Additional information about Forest City can be found at www.forestcity.net.

*As of January 31, 2005

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