

## Old Town Kern owes its origins to the Southern Pacific Railroad.

In 1874, the Southern Pacific (SP) Railroad extended its tracks south to Bakersfield, linking from the north, the San Francisco-Los Angeles railroad construction project.

Before the railroad reached Bakersfield a feud had developed between the people of Bakersfield and SP. The railroad demanded a strip of land two blocks wide on each side of the track for building its right-of-way. Bakersfield would only permit one block on either side. The railroad by-passed Bakersfield and built its tracks north of the town.

In 1874, SP established the depot and laid out the town of "Sumner", named after Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts. By 1874, regular passenger and freight trains were operating from the station at Sumner. The San Francisco-Los Angeles line was completed on September 5, 1876.

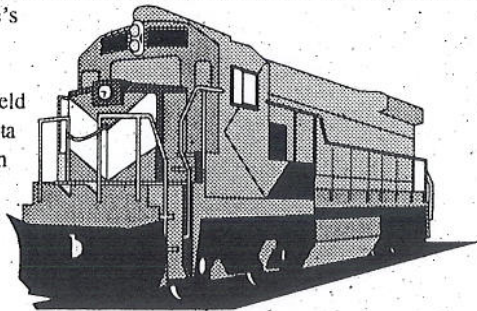
The establishment of the railroad attracted many ethnic groups to Sumner. During the construction of the Tehachapi Loop, 1874-76, many Chinese settled there. The opening of the railroad brought the French. Victor-Louis Amy became associated with an Italian Swiss, Benedetto Ardizzi, and together opened the Amy and Ardizzi Mercantile in 1876. The Basque, primarily ranchers and farmers in the area, also owned hotels and bakeries.

Bakersfield got its railroad when the San Francisco (SF) and San Joaquin Valley (SJV) Railroad brought its tracks from the north in 1898. In 1900, Santa Fe bought the SF and SJV line, known as "The People's Railroad" for \$6,000,000.

Today Bakersfield still retains Santa Fe and Southern Pacific railroads.

The City of Bakersfield Historic

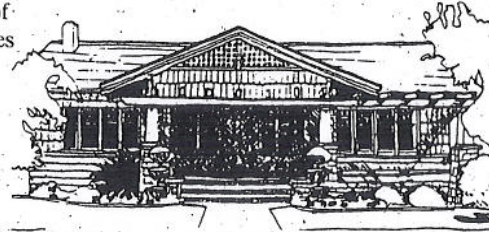
Preservation Commission welcomes you to take a tour of the many remaining historically and architecturally significant structures that contributed to the history of East Bakersfield.



## Bungalows popular in early 1900's

Many houses in the East Bakersfield area are excellent examples of Bungalow and Vernacular architecture. Bungalows are typically one-story structures with a broad, gently-pitched gabled roof. The roof overhangs a front porch which is often supported by battered piers. Materials most often used are brick, stone, shingles, and wood siding. Vernacular describes structures exhibiting a combination of several of types architecture.

Most of the houses were constructed around 1905-1940. Many were used for railroad personnel and owners or employees of area businesses.



*A Bakersfield Residence*

Two excellent examples of Vernacular architecture are located at 1032 and 1033 Kern Street. Both of these structures are suspiciously of the Clarence Cullimore design.

Sumner's east-west streets were named after letters in the alphabet. Sumner later became part of Bakersfield, a city which used the alphabet for its north-south streets. Being a city with two sets of streets with the same names was avoided when Sumner's streets were renamed: "A" Street became Alpine, "B" became Butte, and so forth, with a few exceptions, ending with Oregon, Pacific, and Quincy streets.

## Beale Family influenced street names

Streets in the area are named after the Beale Family. Edward Fitzgerald Beale first came to California as the area's Superintendent of Indian Affairs. He tried to humanely balance the needs of the settlers and the Indians. His son, Truxtun Beale, once served as the United States Ambassador to Spain. Truxtun Beale contributed the Beale Memorial Clock Tower to Bakersfield as a memorial to his mother, Mary Beale. Originally, the tower was placed in the Chester Avenue and 17th Street intersection, but was damaged in the 1952 earthquake. A replica was later built in front of the Kern County Museum.

Design by Carole Richwine

## A STROLL THROUGH THE PAST

Visit historically and architecturally significant sites in

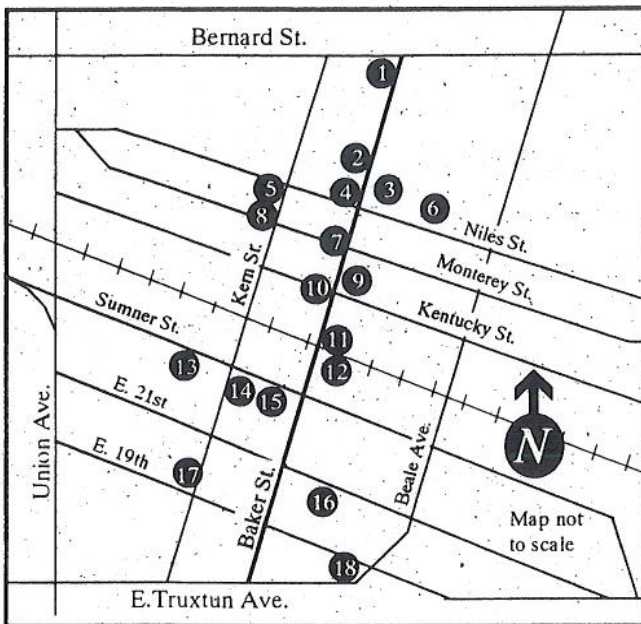
# Old Town Kern



**BAKERSFIELD  
HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION  
COMMISSION**

LOGO DEPICTS  
BAKER STREET  
PUBLIC LIBRARY  
COMPLETED  
JULY 7TH, 1915  
PLACED ON  
NATIONAL  
REGISTER OF  
HISTORIC  
PLACES  
APRIL 1ST, 1981

## Old Town Kern Landmarks



1. **The French Shop** opened at 1820 Baker Street in 1941.

2. **Baker Street Library - 1400 Baker Street** The library, built in 1915, is a classic example of Italian Renaissance version of Greek Revival Federal public building architecture. Architect O. L. Clark was commissioned by the City of Bakersfield to design the library. In the 1980's the building underwent architectural renovation and seismic retrofit. It was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in April 1981.

3. **Noriega House - 1325 Baker Street** Built by Faustino Mier Noriega in the 1890's, this a one and one-half story Queen Anne cottage with a Classical Revival porch and detailing. It is the only one of its kind in Bakersfield. Originally in sheep raising, Noriega went into the hotel business in 1893.

4. **Education Center - 1300 Baker Street** This PWA Moderne-style wing structure with cubist design windows is actually several buildings added to each other. This set of buildings are the last vestige of a 1930's school

complex which had been on site since prior to the turn of the century. The buildings were constructed in the 1930's and early 1940's as part of an upgrade of the school system. Originally having a brick building in the middle, the complex grew into new buildings as time progressed. The original brick building was undoubtedly removed after the 1952 earthquake

5. **Bimat House - 527 Niles Street** Built by Leon J. Bimat in 1910, this house is an excellent example of the California Bungalow style and is designed after the Green Brothers homes. Bimat was from Basse-Pyrenees, France and his wife Malvina Rostain was from Hautes-Alps, France.

6. **Earl Warren's Home - 707 Niles Street** In 1889 Earl Warren's father, Methias Warren, found work as a car repairman and car inspector for the Southern Pacific railroad. He located his family, "in a little row house across from the shopyards." Earl Warren spent his childhood there and later served as the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

7. **The Tejon Theater - 1200 Baker Street**, opened on June 17, 1947. The premiere feature was *The Trouble With Women* which grossed \$193. The building is an example of minimalist art deco architecture and was the last theater built by the Bakersfield Lemucchi family. The theater is now used for the screening of classic, independent, foreign and art films; as well as other special events.

8. **Olcese House - 528 Monterey Street** Louie Olcese built this part Italianate, part Queen Anne and part Victorian home as a wedding gift to his wife in 1892. At one time a screened porch was on the west side. Porches were used for sleeping outside. This house also has a basement.

9. **Snider's Cyclery** in business since 1904, and at its present location at 1011 Baker Street since 1942, has a stamped tin ceiling and vintage photographs.

10. **Brown Building - 630 Kentucky Street** This is a three-story hotel/shop combination building which was common in the 1910-20 era. It is the only multi-story commercial structure to survive intact in East Bakersfield. A good example of Revival architecture, it is finished in brick with clinker bricks in decorative motifs.

11. **Saba's - 915 Baker Street**, carries men's fashions. The store was established in 1934, and makes men's suits to order and uniforms for police and highway patrol officers from around the state.

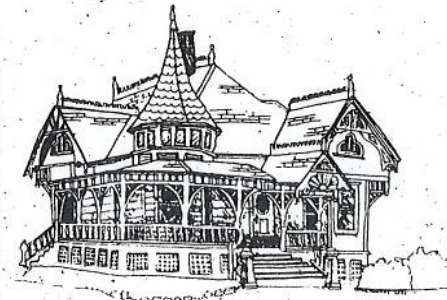
12. **Southern Pacific Railroad Depot - Baker and Sumner Streets** The Southern Pacific Depot (closest to Baker Street) and Hotel was completed in 1889. Separated by a portico promenade on the north (track) side the complex has undergone several remodels and is an architectural disaster. The roofline

and the arcade are the only elements which have original architecture somewhat intact. Brick for the hotel and depot were furnished by Curran and Swan, predecessor to Sandstone Brick, a nearby business which now operates on East Truxtun Avenue. Laid out by Southern Pacific, the town of Sumner was a busy railroad town with the depot, hotel, roundhouse, switching yard, livestock pens, and sheepshearing facilities. The buildings were altered and expanded superficially in 1895 upon the nearing of the completion of the SF and SJV Railroad in 1898.

13. **The Iberia Hotel**, built in 1893 by the Basque community is now named Noriega's, 525 Sumner Street. Basque style boarding house meals are served there today.

14. **Pyrenees Cafe - 601 Sumner Street**, opened in 1935 through a partnership between Incencio "Jack" Juarena and Jeanne "Jenny" Iribarne Dunns. In those days lunch cost \$.50 and dinner \$.75. Drinks were served inside and also through a window to patrons outside, a practice later deemed illegal by local authorities.

15. **Arsene Peter Bernard House - 607 Sumner Street** Destroyed by fire in 1994, the Bernard House was one of few examples of Queen Anne and Eastlake architecture left in Bakersfield. Bernard and his wife came to Sumner in 1875 shortly after Southern Pacific laid out the town. He was the treasurer of Sumner, a stage operator, an accountant and assembled the Bernard Addition to the north of Monterey.



16. **Pyrenees Bakery - 717 East 21st Street**, bakes 7,000 lbs. of sourdough bread daily, and has been in the area for more than 100 years.

17. **Uhalt's Blacksmith & Welding Works - 532 E. 19th Street** This steel sided wood frame building is one of the last of its kind in Bakersfield. It dates from 1920 when blacksmiths still worked iron for agricultural purposes in East Bakersfield. The business was originally purchased from Prosper Paquette by Bernardo Uhalt in 1911, when it was located on Eureka Street. Uhalt was one of the many native Basques who settled in East Bakersfield

18. **Luigi's - 725 East 19th Street**, was first established by Joe Lemucchi when he opened his grocery store in 1910. East 19th Street was then a major route and Italian sandwiches were sold through a storefront window.