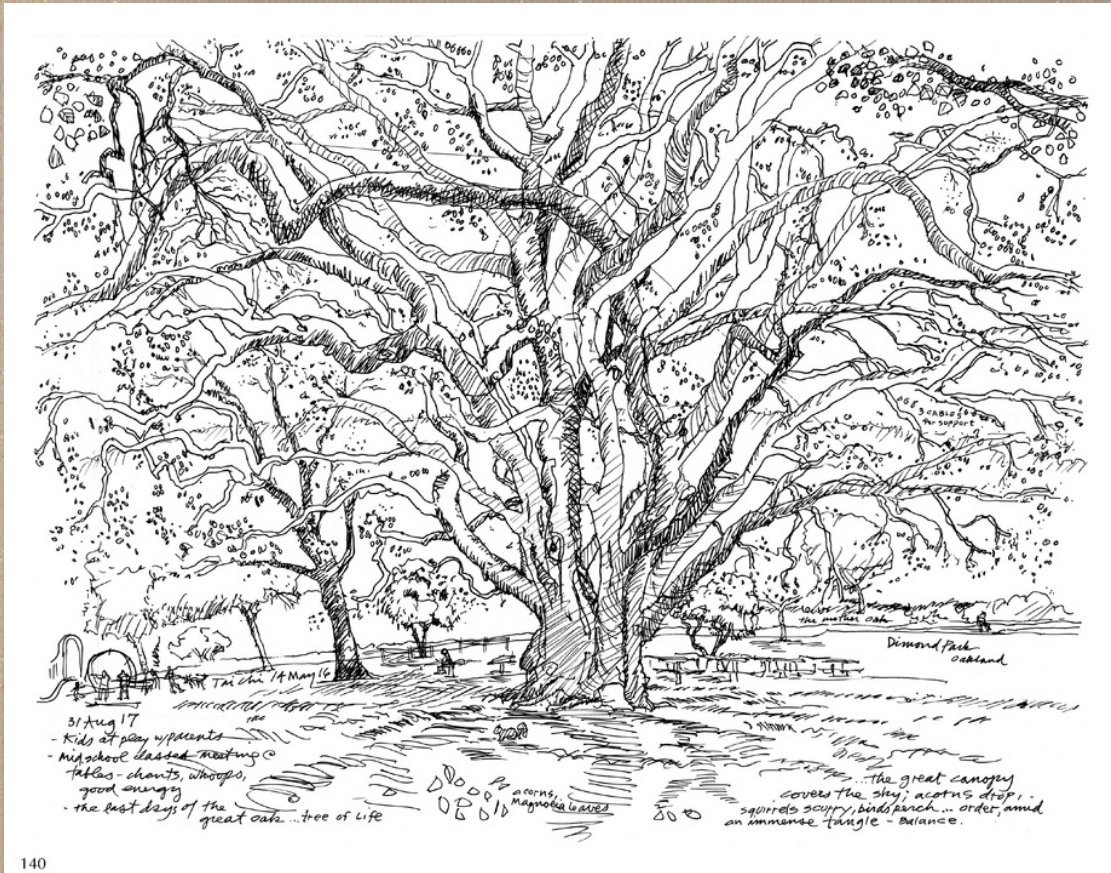


THE GREAT DIMOND OAK



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Thanks to Mark Rauzon's recent story, photo and drawing in the March newsletter, we know more about the historic Dimond Oak. Inspired by Mark's homage, here is a sketch of another epic oak nearby.

We used to walk past the Dimond Oak to practice tai chi on Saturday mornings. Kids and parents arrived at the playground, and other martial artists showed up too. For years we all enjoyed a magnificent tree some of us called the mother oak. You had the feeling its embrace, and shade, would last forever.

Sadly it is no more. A large section of the tree came down during a windstorm, smashing adjacent picnic tables used for family gatherings and birthday parties. Luckily no one was hurt, but it marked the final chapter for the great tree. I wanted to remember it, so I finished a drawing before it was removed in 2017. Its branch structure was apparent, as were the cables crisscrossing the canopy, which had given it more years of service.

The stump, like a rustic outdoor table, is all that's visible above the ground now. (The Oaklandish logo comes to mind, with deep roots below linked to its crown above.) The mother oak is missed and its presence still felt, but new trees are growing there, taking its place in the cycle of life. We continue doing tai chi in the park, wearing hats more often now for shade.

Bill Mastin

17 March 2022

ARTS IN THE WATERSHED