

25th Anniversary
1969 - 1994

August 1994



Reflections

Save Our Heritage Organisation

1994 SOHO Annual Meeting

At the June 23 annual meeting of the general membership, San Diego native Vonn Marie May was elected president of the 1994-95 SOHO Board of Directors.

The meeting was held at the 1906 Craftsman style home of Ingrid Helton and Erik Hanson in South Park.

An environmental planner by profession, May has long been active in local preservation and environmental causes. In 1987, the Point Loma resident was appointed to the City of San Diego Historical Site Board by then-Mayor Maureen O'Connor. She was named as site board chair in 1992.

In early 1993, May resigned from the board to accept a staff position as council representative for then-city councilman John Hartley. She held this position until Hartley's term in office expired and he opted not to stand for re-election.

In all, the SOHO membership approved a 14-member board that includes six new members and eight current board members. In addition to Vonn Marie May, the other officers are architect Janice Fahey, vice president; Nancy Helsper, innkeeper of the Heritage Park Bed and Breakfast Inn, treasurer, and Ingrid Helton, an Old Globe Theater costume designer, secretary.

Other returning board members are Robert Broms, the immediate past president; Alex Bevil, a historian, architect Paul Johnson; environmental analyst Ronald May; and David Swarens, a

gardener with the City of San Diego.

The other new board members are interior designer Stuart Fromson; community activist Erik Hanson; Ralph Lewin, program officer for the California Council for the Humanities; James Royle, a marine architect who once served on the San Diego County Historic Site Board, and La Jolla Jeffrey Shorn, former dean of the NewSchool of Architecture who also once served on the City of San Diego Historical Site Board.

Al Alferos continues as SOHO executive director. He has held this post since 1989.

At the meeting two retiring board members, Corey Jon Braun and Dr. Nick Fintzelberg, were cited for their contributions to SOHO and historic preservation. Robert Broms presented Braun with a certificate of achievement. Fintzelberg was out of town on business and unable to attend.

And what has become a highlight of these gatherings, Bill Lawrence, standing in for the current holder of the fabled SOHO Lady, Suzanne Lawrence, passed the venerable old lamp to Robert Broms who, in keeping with tradition, must now display the "prize" in his home for the next year. The Lady, of course, is presented to the SOHO person who over the preceding year exhibited an extraordinary and tireless effort on behalf of historic preservation. It is well deserved recognition for Broms who put in two productive years as SOHO president.



Chollas Heights Update: Congressman Bob Filner, San Diego, is shown conferring with members of the Navy Housing Task Force of the City of San Diego's Eastern Area Planning Committee inside the transmitter building at the Naval Radio transmitter Facility (NRTF) in Chollas Heights. The committee wants the Navy to reduce its proposal for a residential development on the site from 498 units to a number below 300. Current plans call for adaptive reuse of the transmitter building but demolition of all other structures on site including the three 600-foot tall towers of the triadic antenna array, landmarks to generations of San Diegans. SOHO has asked the National Park Service to designate the 1917 Chollas Heights facility a national historic landmark. As the last remaining installation of the first worldwide radio communications systems, the facility is a possible United States nominee to the World Heritage List.

Photo and article by Bob Broms

President's Message

By Vonn Marie May

Happy Birthday San Diego! 1769-1994, two hundred and twenty five years. We celebrate what is really the birthday of the European founding of our region, but what about the tens of thousands of years prior to that? Until we can figure out how to commemorate Native Americans 'pre-history' appropriately, we will rally around July 16, 1769 in the meantime.

Yet two and a quarter centuries is a remarkable time span in American heritage. I am often disheartened by people who say unwittingly that there is little history in San Diego. California and the West were quite active and contemporaneous with much of what was occurring in eastern colonial pre-revolution times. At home the Royal Presidio of San Diego at the confluence of the San Diego River and the Pacific Ocean was effectively the 'Plymouth Rock' of the West Coast. San Diego inspired the first church of California (Mission D' Alcala), we were the first County Seat in California, a significant battle for Statehood was fought here (San Pasquale), and we were the 'Kittyhawk' of the West Coast (Torrey Pines and Dutch Flats), to cite but a few claims.

The need, however, is not to out-do another region. That's not what history should be about! Competition in historical firsts is not necessarily the point. There are no Mt. Vernons here and that's OK, indeed, that history happened elsewhere. What we as local preservation advocates care to promote, essentially, is a cultural regionalism...a "Pride of Place". Not an easy task for an historically transient Southern California multi-culture, but the pride we

generate is from this place and the context in which it finds itself.

San Diego, in its early quality of life, was once the anointed Mecca of health and relaxation...the quiet paradise @ 33 degrees Mediterranean latitude. Sidetracked by persons and events that seemed less than noble or aesthetic the region has yet to fulfill its vision of birthright. In a half realized state San Diego can still rely on its physical and historical realities but it continues to be treated with little regard to the higher road of future options. San Diego echoes ancient cultures, innovative technology and has environmental constants of light, water and climate that all remain primary draws for tourism, pilgrimage and relocation. A strong preservation advocacy will ensure a continuum of cultural relevance for this significant American city. After all we deserve the best!

A New Green Dragon

La Jolla's historic Green Dragon site is about to be redeveloped by new owners who have hired architect James Alcorn, AIA, to develop a plan compatible with the coastal development permit conditions. These conditions impose "contextual" restrictions on the property while allowing the removal of the turn-of-the-century Arts and Crafts cottages. SOHO member and architect Paul Johnson, AIA, who is trained in color and paint analysis, will contribute his talents to a color analysis of the original building fabric to facilitate interpretation of the site's history with the new project.

SOHO wishes well to the developer and designer at this sensitive site and hopes that its contribution helps to return something of the Green Dragon to its hill overlooking the Pacific and to interpret the visionary historic La Jolla of the Arts and Crafts Period.

By David Swarens

SOHO

celebrating
25 years of preservation services
in San Diego County.

Board of Directors

President
Vonn Marie May

Vice President
Janice Fahey

Treasurer
Nancy Helsper

Secretary
Ingrid Helton

Directors
Alex Bevil
Robert Broms
Stuart Fromson
Erik Hanson
Paul Johnson
Ralph Lewin
Ronald V. May
James Royle
Jeffrey Shorn
David Swarens

Executive Director
Al Alferos

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P.O. Box 3571
San Diego California 92163
(619) 297-9327

SOHO, a non-profit corporation
dedicated to preservation of
historic and cultural resources,
is a member of:

National Trust For Historic
Preservation
California Preservation Foundation
San Diego Historical Society

Presidio Dig Unearthing San Diego's Past

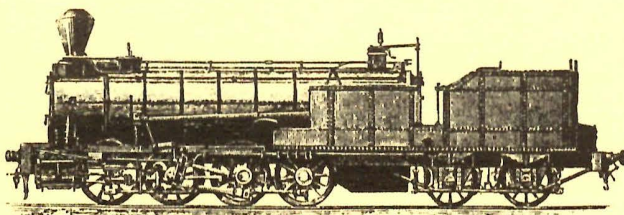
Now is the time to see a portion of San Diego's most historically significant site! Dr. Jack Williams, Executive Director of the Center for Spanish Colonial Archaeology and local volunteers are in the midst of an archeological dig revealing a portion of the San Diego Presidio. The site is the location of the first European colonization on the west coast (1769), the "Plymouth Rock" of the west. What makes this site significant is that it is the most intact Presidio location, in the far west, whereas other sites have suffered from the encroachment of modern urban life.



Dr. Williams and The Center are dedicated to the study, preservation and interpretation of sites dating to the Spanish Colonial and early Independence periods in the New World. The Center has been conducting digs at the San Diego Presidio for several years and welcomes to public to participate. The current excavation is concentrating on the northwest corner which recently unearthed a nearly complete room of floor tile. A two-room apartment, a storehouse, and a backyard area are visible at present. The excavations have unearthed hundred of thousands of artifacts, including pottery, jewelry, firearms parts, animal bones, tiles, and numerous other items used in the daily lives of settlers between 1775 and 1835.

Public interest in this historic "diamond in the rough" seems to be building. The excavators are working with the San Diego Historical Society and the City of San Diego to create a variety of long term management and development options, including possible partial restoration. Is it not time that this jewel be brought forth to gleam?

By Paul Johnson, AIA.



CALENDAR

Aug. 20 and 21

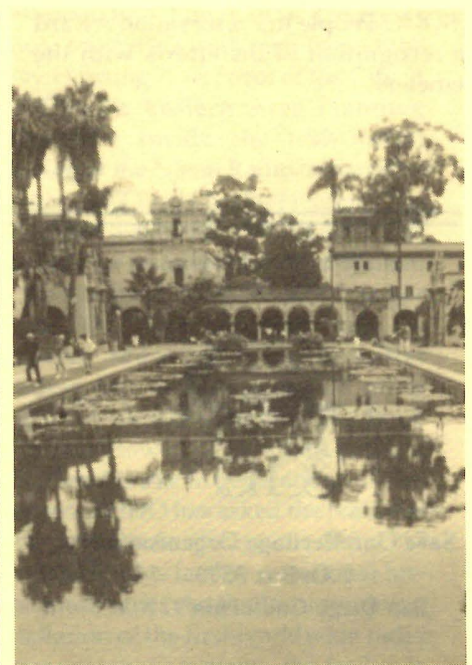
ADOBE DIG VOLUNTEERS NEEDED...A work crew fom SOHO will be going to St. Francis Chapel in Warner Springs to do work and repair. Volunteers are needed. Contact **Vonn Marie May, 223-4420.**

Sept. 15-18

CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY is holding its California History Conference in San Diego. Meetings, tours, and workshops are scheduled. Contact:
Kay Feallock
California Historical Society
2099 Pacific Avenue
San Francisco CA 94109

Sept. 15

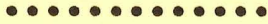
PART II - LA FRONTERA ... the second in a 2-part series of cross-border workshops sponsored by SOHO is tentatively set to be held at the Red Lion Hotel in Mission Valley. For details, Call **SOHO, 297-9327.**



This sparkling photograph by Bob Broms shows Balboa Park's rejuvenated koi and lily ponds. Thanks to a newly-installed filtration system, the water now is much cleaner and clearer.

SOHO Member News

CONGRATULATIONS...Jim and Jerry Ray are recipients of the Pioneer Award from the Greater Golden Hill Community Development Corporation. The Award cited them for their "inexhaustible volunteerism, irrepressible good humor, and commitment to South Park." "We also bestow upon them the title of First Couple of South Park", the Award read. Well deserved, SOHO thinks.



MOVING...Virginia Evans, wife of the late Harry Evans, has moved from Mission Hills to Seattle, Washington where she remains a faithful SOHO member. With her renewal dues, she sent along a big "hello" to her SOHO friends. Call the SOHO office if you would like Virginia's new address.



IN MEMORY...Lawrence Riveroll, the tireless keeper of El Campo cemetery in Old Town, died recently after a long illness. A few years ago Riveroll received a SOHO People In Preservation Award in recognition of his efforts with the cemetery.

RETIRING...Pat Schaelchlin, a former SOHO president and member since 1975, announced her retirement from the City of San Diego Historical Site Board after serving a total of 12 years on the panel.



INTERN...Karen Benjamin, a native of England and graduate student at the University of Vermont, is "doing" a summer internship at SOHO. She is helping with the facade easement inspection process and conducting research into the entire facade easement program.



LONGTIME MEMBERS...On the occasion of reaching membership milestones, SOHO salutes:

5 YEARS

Merilyn S. Howard, ISID
Robert & Jeanne Lossing
Don Wood
Thurston & Renetta Coe
Robi & Dale O'Day Robison
Corey Jon Braun
Janice Fahey, AIA

Barbara Clark Marsh
M.C. McDonald
Vicki Granowitz
William Lees
Loch David Crane
Philip Landale
Alex Bevil
Joanne Gooden

10 YEARS

Howard & Zelda Waxenberg
M. Wayne Donaldson, FAIA
& Nancy Donaldson
Kristen Aliotti

15 YEARS

Judith Swink
Deborah Rahe

20 YEARS

Mr & Mrs Will Rudd

25 YEARS

Clare Crane

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Kirk Hanson
Kristen Hanson
Robert Vacchi
Lauren Vacchi
George Ashby

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P.O. Box 3571
San Diego California 92163

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ANNOUNCING...

UPCOMING CELEBRATION

*SOHO celebrates 25 years of service
to San Diego County!*

The date and place for this big event will be announced soon but we could use your help right now!

WE NEED:

- * To borrow old photographs and memorabilia;
- * Volunteers to help on our planning committee and on the day of the event;
- * Auction items (art, antiques, books, gift certificates, etc.)

Please fill in the form below and return it to:

SOHO
P.O. Box 3571
San Diego CA 92163
Attn: Ingrid Helton, Committee Chair
or call Ingrid at 239-6150

SOHO THANKS YOU.

YES! I can help with SOHO's 25th Anniversary Celebration.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

I would like to help by:

_____ Lending my photographs and/or memorabilia

_____ Volunteering some time

_____ Donating auction items