



June 2001
Volume 32, Issue 2

Reflections

SOHO IS THE OLDEST
CONTINUALLY OPERATING HISTORIC
PRESERVATION ORGANIZATION IN CALIFORNIA.

S E R V I N G S A N D I E G O C O U N T Y S I N C E 1 9 6 9

Another Save! San Diego Veterans War Memorial Building

Alexander D. Bevil

Editors Note: Alex is the author of the successful National Register nomination that helped to save this important building. The San Diego Zoological Society has abandoned its attempt to have the building demolished in order to build a parking lot for Zoo patrons. This historic building can now be taken off SOHO's list of endangered historic buildings. Another huge win for the heritage of San Diego and for San Diego's veterans.



Photo by Jim Brady

"No one is ever gone as long as someone still has memories of them." - Charles Edward Worthington (1916-1996), U. S. Army, P.O.W., Burma, 1942-1945.

On the morning of June 24, 2000, a small group of concerned citizens assembled on the brick terrace in front of the San Diego Veterans' War Memorial Building in Balboa Park. They were celebrating the building's 50th anniversary by rededicating a building whose purpose and significance were slowly being eroded by time. In fact, the group, composed mainly of representatives of several local veterans groups, SOHO, along with other local park preservationists and a smattering of public officials, were also celebrating a personal victory.

They had lobbied successfully against the nearby San Diego Zoo from expanding its parking lot out onto the section of Balboa Park where the building now stands. A key part of their campaign was having the building successfully placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Through this action, the Secretary of the Interior officially recognized it as an important local historic resource worthy of preservation.

The building was placed on the National Register because it represents a local interpretation of a "Living Memorial Building," a publicly owned building where veteran and other civic groups could meet, recreate, and socialize so that "patriotism might be renewed and gratitude nourished." Influenced by the nation-wide Living Memorial Movement of the mid to late 1940's, it is a surviving local example of hundreds of other municipal war memorial buildings built nationwide during the post-war period.

Architecturally important, it was one of the first public buildings designed in the Contemporary Modern style in San

(continued from previous page) Diego. Its abstract style, use of modern building materials, and relationship to its site would serve as the prototype for a number of local public facilities, mainly suburban neighborhood schools, libraries, and administration centers built between 1950 and 1970. The building is also an important part of the body of work produced by noted San Diego architects Samuel W. Hamill and John S. Siebert, who, along with its builder, Francis E. Young, have made important contributions to San Diego's architectural heritage.

While the greatest threat to the building, the San Diego Zoological Society's proposed parking lot expansion, appears to have been rescinded, it does not guarantee that the building has been saved.

Why? Nothing is guaranteed. The Zoological Society could change its mind. Deferred maintenance or insensitive repairs on the City's part could also threaten the building's historic integrity.

That is why I would like to initiate the following: Raise funds for the installation of a bronze National Register plaque. Metaphorically, the plaque will say "hands off" to those seeking to demolish it.

For my part, I will incorporate the building as part of my curriculum in teaching a course in Historic Preservation at San Diego's New School of Architecture. Besides introducing the building to a new generation of architectural students, I will have the opportunity to monitor the building's condition.

I would like to invite SOHO members and others to visit the building, especially on its upcoming 51st anniversary. I also invite them to visit it on the anniversaries of other important events where San Diegans have fought and given their lives: Midway, Iwo Jima, Bastogne, Chosin, Khe Sanh, and the Persian Gulf.

By doing so, we will continue to keep the building in our memories, long after those of San Diego's "Greatest Generation" have faded.

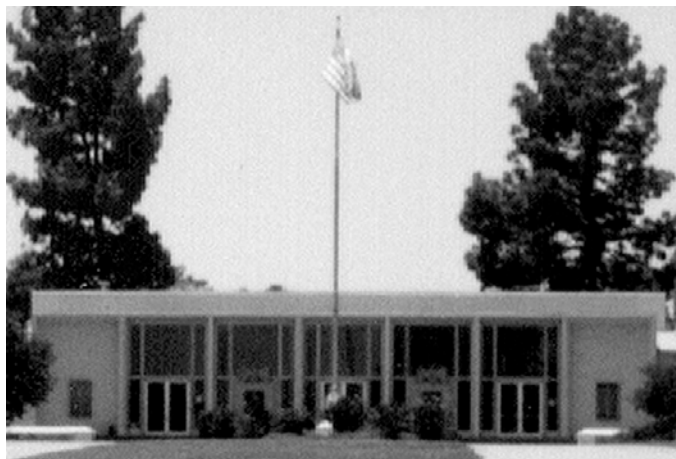


Photo by Alex Bevil

Spotlight On Our Own Robert Miles Parker

DAVID SWARENS

SOHO founder, Miles Parker, is highlighted in the recent March issue of *a&u*, *America's Aids Magazine*. A feature bio, the article is illustrated by five of Miles' recent pen and ink drawings of New York theaters, and includes encounters with the "ghosts of Broadway", raising echoes of SOHO's own recent involvement as stewards of the "haunted" Whaley House. Miles describes incidents in his life and art, including the beginnings of our organization and how he came to found it thirty-two years ago. Miles' interest and art continue to bring focus to the defining impact of our built environment and the effect of its destruction or transformation. The feature will be of interest to Miles' many friends, to those who only know his legend, as well as to those interested in the history of SOHO and the defining presence of our first years.

San Diego Preservationists Reign

When The California Preservation Foundation announced its nineteen winners during National Preservation Week, four San Diego projects were among the honored.

Congratulations to Architect Jim Kelley-Markham for his work on The First Church of Christ, Scientist, designed by Irving Gill, 1909-1910. This meticulously restored building was the site this year for the CPF conference plenary session.

The El Cortez took another bow when the architectural firm of Tanner, Leddy, Maytum, Stacey's efforts to rehabilitate the 1927 Hotel were acknowledged for keeping its beautiful original design intact.

Architect Milford Wayne Donaldson received two awards, one for the design for the San Diego Aerospace Museum's *Pavilions of Flight* covered court, which shows one way to add on to an old building while respecting its original design. His second award was for the Naval Training Center design guidelines for the 1920's historic core in Point Loma. This plan will enable those untrained and unfamiliar with working on historic buildings to properly care for this important site. Congratulations to all. Your fine work gives character and meaning to America's Finest City.

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Robert Miles Parker, 1969

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President's Message

During National Preservation Week

ERIK HANSON

I was preparing my notes for a bus tour of historic sites in Uptown and Bankers Hill, and to keep it current, I went up to see if there were any signs that the demolition of the Bertha Mitchell House was underway. When I arrived I saw four police cars in the back parking lot. The first thought I had was could there be a protest that SOHO was not informed of? No, not likely, so that thought did not last long.

My next thought was, ok, they are going to let the SWAT team practice in there for a couple days just like they did in the Carnation Building, shoot off ordinance and get the plaster all chipped up before the HABS documentation pictures could be taken. Possibly, but not the case.

As it turned out, they were actually training police K-9 dogs there for a few weeks. Before the dogs could be let in each session the team would have to flush out the homeless inside so they wouldn't get bit.

I started to feel depressed about living in a city where architectural treasures are still being demolished and where a developer would try to charge the police a use fee for helping them clear out the loiterers.

But those thoughts didn't last long, I arrived at the opening session of the California Preservation Foundation conference at the amazingly restored First Church of Christ, Scientist to find standing room only with preservationists who had paid to learn more about historic preservation..... Right here in our town..... Things started to look up.

Calendar of Meetings

All members are welcome and encouraged to attend!

SOHO BOARD MEETINGS

Third Monday of each month

PRESERVATION ACTION MEETINGS

First Monday of each month

EVENTS & EDUCATION MEETINGS

Fourth Monday of each month

Message from the Executive Director

Regional Preservation

BRUCE D. COONS

SOHO is beginning the process of putting together a regional coalition of historic preservation and other environmental groups to increase our collective influence, and to more effectively deal with issues that affect us all. These issues include the impacts caused by transportation systems including freeways, the location of the International airport, what will become of Camp Pendleton after the Marines leave, the effects of urban sprawl, the so-called "Smart Growth Initiatives," preservation of our cultural landscapes and preservation across the border. This coalition is initially expected to encompass groups from Santa Barbara South to Ensenada, and East to Yuma.

SOHO is in a unique position to facilitate the formation of such a coalition, both geographically and with our ever-increasing influence. We are now one of the largest preservation groups in the nation, and the second largest historical group in San Diego County.

As historic preservation is gathering momentum, the power of a regional coalition will be highly influential when dealing with public officials and developers. We must also increase our direct political power by electing preservation friendly candidates to political office.

This coalition will also address ways of increasing participation in historic preservation activities with a more ethnically diverse group as the demographics of our region shift and change. To further strengthen this preservation front, SOHO is planning a regional conference to be held in San Diego in 2002.

I believe that SOHO is better prepared than it has ever been to provide the kind of leadership necessary to move San Diego into the future, while preserving the integrity of its past.

Help Save the Coronado Belt Line Right-of-Way

ALEXANDER D. BEVIL

Efforts are underway to save the surviving segment of the historic Coronado Railroad Belt Line from National City to Imperial Beach. An important step toward preservation is having it placed on the California and National Registers of Historic Places.

One of the earliest independent, interurban, short steam rail lines in San Diego County, its original 20.3-mile route provided direct steam freight and limited passenger rail service between the resort community of Coronado and downtown San Diego's business district.

During its period of historic significance from 1888 to 1950, the Coronado Railroad Belt Line was a major contributor to the economic development of Coronado, as well as to other suburban communities along its right-of-way, including National City, Chula Vista, and Imperial Beach.

Through its various corporate lives as the Coronado Railroad, the San Diego Southern, the San Diego & Southeastern, the San Diego & Arizona, and finally the SD & Arizona Eastern Railway, the line provided the means for the transport of bulk agricultural and industrial raw materials from the region to San Diego's harbor and transcontinental rail links.

A section of the line between National City and Chula Vista also shared service with an electric traction, interurban passenger line. The forerunner of today's San Diego Trolley,

the line served as part of an electric trolley commuter route between downtown San Diego and Otay. The line was also a critical hauler of strategic war materiel during both World Wars.

Despite continued use during the postwar years, the line north of Imperial Beach along the Strand to Coronado, was abandoned and the tracks removed. In limited use today, the surviving 7.5-mile of right-of-way from National City south to Imperial Beach continues to retain its historical significance.

Significant for its association with one of San Diego's key, locally owned and operated interurban short lines, the 113-year old right-of-way, including its roadbed, rails, ties, switches, and trestles, represents the type, period and method of late 19th and early 20th century railroad construction techniques and materials.

Once nominated, the next step will be to restore the line for possible use to run tourist trains between National City and Imperial Beach, and perhaps points north.

You can help by sending your tax-deductible donations to:
 Save Our Heritage Organisation
 Attn: Coronado Railroad Belt Line
 P.O. Box 3429
 San Diego, CA 92163-1429
 619-297-9327

California Preservation Foundation

26th Annual Conference 2001

VONN MARIE MAY

It's all over! The statewide preservation conference, which brought 400 or so preservationists to town, is now history. Whew! What an effort, SOHO planners and volunteers went well beyond the call of duty.

Featured this year was keynote speaker, Huell Howser, producer and host of the PBS series, 'California's Gold'. What a treat it was for attendees at the Plenary Session held in the exquisitely restored Irving Gill 1st Church of Christ Scientist in Hillcrest, to listen to a real preservationist share his stories and personal mission with us.

The Opening Reception at the newly reconstructed House of Hospitality was followed with the first ever nighttime Neon/Martini tour. SOHO hosted additional tours; Old Town, Balboa Park, Rancho Santa Fe, Irving Gill, Coronado,

Chautauqua Wrap-up

BETH MONTES

SOHO's first Chautauqua performances were a wonderful success. Thanks to all members who attended one or both of the performances. For the March performance, José Rivera, as Antonio Garra, was wonderful. He not only taught us about Antonio Garra and other Cupeno Indians from the past, but also about them as a tribe still living in San Diego County. He demonstrated how much of our cowboy culture came from the natives, since they had a very evolved method of keeping cattle prior to the arrival of the North Americans from the East. Words like corral, lariat, rodeo, and many others worked their way into our vocabulary as we learned cattle husbandry from the Native Americans. Los Californios performed beautifully before and after each Chautauqua. Thanks to them for donating their time and talents to add to the early California ambiance. Besides the band, there were various other characters wandering the grounds in period costumes. Coupled with the lovely grounds and architecture of the Whaley House, it was truly like stepping back in time.

In April, Governor Pio Pico came to town. Roberto Garza, as Don Pico looking back on his life, presented interesting commentary on Pico as a young man in San Diego, and as an adult in Los Angeles. From learning to play monte, a gambling game, from a priest to his life-long gambling proclivity to being cheated out of his land by his sister's husband, Pio Pico's colorful life played like something out of today's headlines. A favorable article in *The Reader* brought out many interested attendees, and a lively discussion ensued after the monologue portion of the performance.

The California Council for the Humanities sponsored this series of Chautauqua performances. Due to strong interest in more events of this type, SOHO looks forward to working with CCH again to bring other living history performances to the Whaley House Museum.

Gaslamp, La Jolla, Modernism, and California Ranchos. We plan to reprise many of the conference tours in the near future for those who couldn't attend them.

The Three Minute Success Stories event, held on the Berkeley, was raucous and an absolute blast. The skits on how different Californians fought their preservation battles and won, were, at points, hysterical, poignant, and astonishingly similar to what we go through here in San Diego. It truly was a night of bonding for people of like minds who are up against the same odds, and at times....prevail!

Special thanks to the San Diego Historical Society for hosting us at the fundraising sessions and for running the conference bookstore. Another special thanks to the Rancho Santa Fe Historical Society for underwriting our lunch and transportation while escorting us about their wonderful village. The thanks could go on forever and when we have finally debriefed ourselves, and can reflect better, we will list those for you.

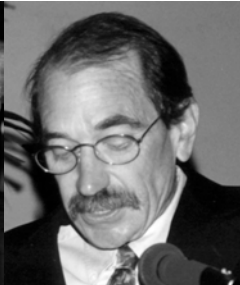
The CES certified educational tracks and sessions were very well received. I was lucky enough to catch a few. My favorites were; Parker Jackson showing films shot by architect Richard Requa of his design preferences; John English's comprehensive look at Tiki Revival architecture; Tony Ciani's history of surfing and Andrew Johnston's cultural landscape documentation of the Colorado Aqueduct. It doesn't get any better than that for great learning experiences.

Drop us a line if you had a chance to attend any or all of the conference and let us know what you thought. We will take your compliments and constructive criticisms to the CPF board for their consideration as they plan the 27th annual conference to be held in Santa Rosa in the middle of California's wine country. Thanks to all.

Arch In The Park

SOHO was a participant in this year's San Diego County Archeological Society's annual event held at the Johnson-Taylor Adobe in the Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Exhibitors from many organizations were there, from the Congress of History to the Sierra Club. Networking among the organizations and visitors made it a successful and eventful day. Tours were given of the turn-of-the-century Monike Adobe, which is not generally open to the public. A restoration of the Monike is in progress with architect Paul Johnson at the helm. Paul gave a short talk beforehand of the evolution of the house and some of the restoration challenges it faces.

The Nineteenth Annual People In Preservation Awards



The People In Preservation awards night was, by all accounts, one of our best ever. Held in the historic El Cortez's Don room, it was an evening of great camaraderie, elegant surroundings and fine dining, where 150 fellow preservationists celebrated this year's winners.

The room was candlelit with elaborate, antiqued silver candelabras, each holding a floral centerpiece consisting of four dozen richly colored roses. These sat atop copper satin covered tables, which highlighted the room's restored gilded finish.

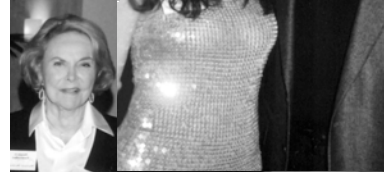
The food was fabulous and plentiful. Positioned on the outer edges of the room were tables creatively decorated with wooden wine crates, stacks of staggered slate and cascading vegetation. Servers generously sliced London broil; portabella mushrooms were stacked with grilled veggies in delicate pools of roasted red pepper and cream caper sauces to present a lovely and delicious dish. A mashed potato bar, with every topping from caviar to capers, was a great favorite as was the chocolate fondue with strawberries; this particular item appears to be becoming a SOHO party tradition.

Everyone was having such a great time it was decided to begin the awards ceremony a half-hour after scheduled. Guests milled about the room in conversation and laughter, at times spilling out onto the terrace to enjoy the weather at dusk.

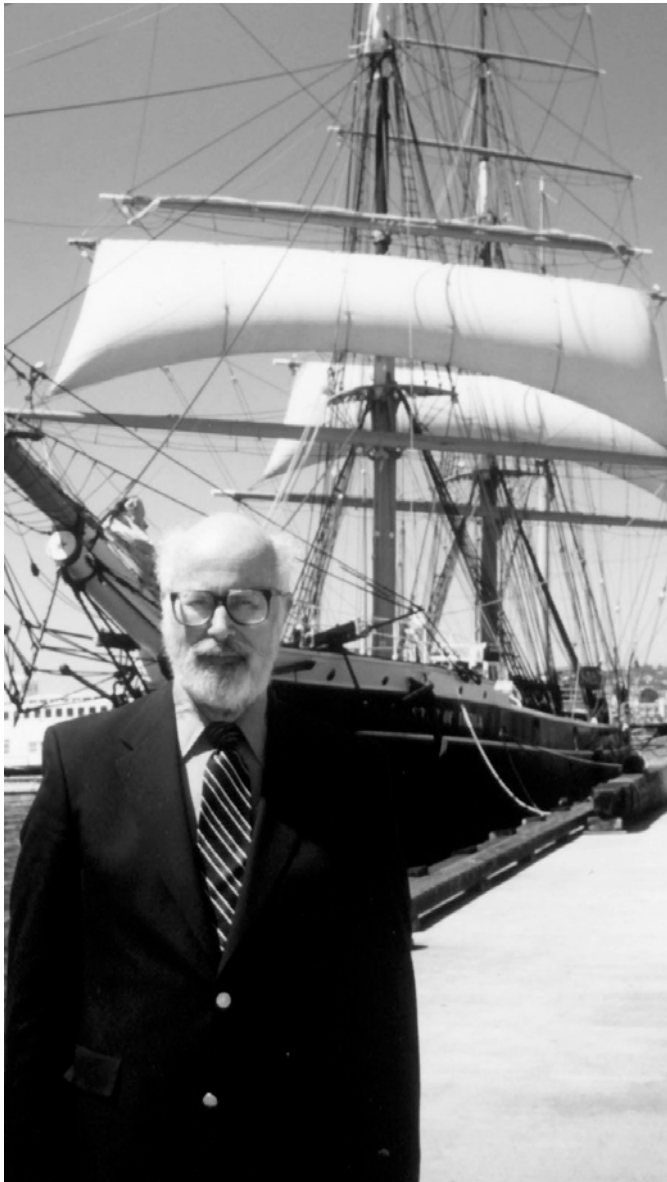
The awards began at 7:00 with the effervescent Geni Cavitt as master of ceremony, presiding with the ease and calm of the professional television personality that she is. The winners took to the podium to accept their awards, at times humbled with the honor and graciously acknowledging others.

Once the awards were presented, the most endangered list was then announced by the irrepressible Vonn Marie May. As an extra parting gift each winner received one of the floral centerpieces.

The evening ended promptly at 8:30 although friends lingered long after. Thanks to all who attended and congratulations to the 2001-2002 Winners.



Photos by Vycki Mende-Gray



Lifetime Achievement Award Senator James Mills has done so much for historic preservation in his career that it would take volumes to recount. Anchoring these achievements are the State Historic Building Code and the appropriately named Mills Act. The State Historic Building Code is an alternative compliance safety code for historically designated sites which both encourages the retention of historic fabric and design elements, and helps shave restoration budgets. The Mills act provides significant property tax reduction for owners of designated properties. Together these measures are directly responsible for preservation of an untold number of sites throughout California, and of course many in San Diego County. These laws are two of the best tools preservationists have. Jim introduced the resolution that created Old Town State Park. He and friend Jerry McMullen initiated the publication of *San Diego Historical Society Quarterly* in 1955. His books *San Diego, Where California Began* and *Historic Landmarks of San Diego County* are still in print after forty years. Senator Mills is passionately involved with maritime and railroad preservation. Since his retirement from the legislature he has concentrated his efforts with the San Diego Maritime Museum and the San Diego Railroad Museum.



Preservationist Of The Year Award The Committee of 100 and Pat DeMarce. For over a third of a century the Committee of 100 has held the line for Balboa Park's El Prado and the revival of Spanish Colonial architecture, which found one of its most significant and influential expressions there. Throughout the years, Patricia DeMarce has been the driving force behind this group of dedicated preservationists. An all volunteer effort of many more than "100", the committee has been, and continues to be, actively involved in projects that restore, protect, and enhance those architectural features of San Diego's "crown jewel". Continuing reconstruction of the El Prado arcades is only the latest effort by this group, whose influence extends far beyond its project expenditures, though at last count that was over three million dollars.



Residential Restoration Award Sandra Tomita and Larry Berkowitz purchased their home in the late 1990's. This 1912 Prairie Style with Craftsman influenced home had fallen to bad remodeling and disrepair. Realizing the potential of the well constructed home, they undertook the complete restoration of the structure, both interior and exterior, and restored it to its original appearance. This house is now a treasure in Burlingame and attests to the commitment of new owners to preserve the neighborhood's architectural integrity.

All photos this page by Jim Brady.



Photo by Jim Brady

Rancho Deluxe Award Barbara and Lee Roper's stewardship for their remarkable 1933 Cliff May designed home didn't stop at their property line. They went on to research and document the site ultimately leading to its listing on local, State and National historic registers. Their home is the first Cliff May to achieve National register status. They have created a Cliff May homeowner's club to share their joy with others so blessed, and have been responsible for promoting interest in this California Architect's work.

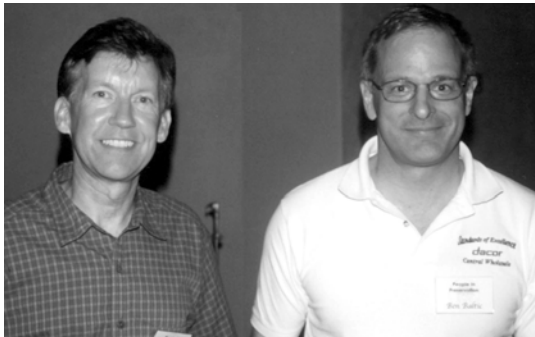


Photo by Vykki Mende-Gray

Less Is More Award Doug Scott and Ben Baltic's restoration of their early Irving Gill cottage, Sunnyslope Lodge, has resulted in a site where historic photographs and contemporary views can only be distinguished by their printing technology. This quaint house "on a ribbon of land" as it was described in the May 1919 Sunset Magazine is one of a small number of experimental cottages designed by Gill, through which he developed his famous vocabulary of flush detailing, slab doors, and thin wall construction. Efficiency, sanitation, and economy served by restrained beauty and elegant simplicity set the progressive ideas of that time, while Ben and Doug's restoration sets preservation standards for our own time.



Photo by Jim Brady

Sweat Equity Award Malcolm Stallings' labor of love and hard personal work has returned this unique 1912 expression of San Diego Sessionist Modernism to its daring original form; a form hidden by Romantic Revival alterations since 1916, a scant three years after completion. Its structural design and Cubist grid are a monument to the high ideals of the Progressive movement. Mr. Stallings' hands-on restoration reaches a similar level of lofty dedication, with many long hours as his own laborer.

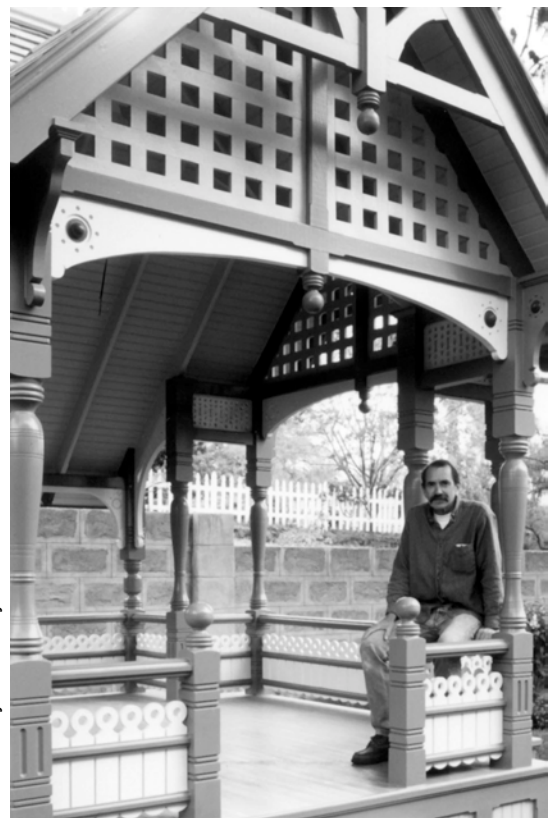


Photo by Jim Brady

Craftsman Award Dennis Will is a carpenter, dedicated to detailed restoration work. He has worked on countless historic homes, his talent in attention to detail is unsurpassed and he receives great joy from the time and effort he puts into each project. Working on homes from the Victorian through the Spanish Revival periods, Dennis demonstrates great ability to grasp and recreate the craftsmanship of a bygone era.



Acting On The Mills Act Award Kathy Romero. When the City of San Diego adopted the Mills Act it became the most expansive and active in the State of California. That program is as successful as it is largely due to the efforts of Kathy Romero of the San Diego County Assessor's Office. Her friendly enthusiasm and professional skill make this important public policy translate into an implementation program, which actively encourages the preservation of cultural resources and especially historic homes.

Photo by Jim Brady



Town Crier Award Logan Jenkins, in his San Diego Union column, covers the San Diego region in an accessible conversational manner. This award specifically recognizes Logan's efforts promoting the History of the coast road Highway 101 in both his writing and public presentations. His interest in the region doesn't stop with 101, of course, Logan writes about our sense of place, and in the recent past has covered the San Diego literary history symposium, and the efforts by the California Women's Club to reprise the El Camino Real Bell Program.



Photo by Jim Brady

Education Award Arguably, Sam Minsker, through his frequent walking tours, introduced downtown San Diego to more people than any other individual. A peoples' artist, who painted with a brush both broad and fine, "Downtown Sam" created pictures for locals and visitors alike. A decade of regular "Walkabouts" helped remind many of us what has been lost and what remains of our city's defining architectural heritage, and why these pieces of history should be passed down to future generations.

Nineteenth Annual People In Preservation Winners - (standing left to right) Lee Roper, Barbara Roper, Senator James Mills, Patricia DeMarce, Dennis Will, Malcolm Stallings III, Larry Berkowitz, Bruce Hermes, Mary Albright, Logan Jenkins, Pat Walker, (kneeling left to right) Doug Scott, Ben Baltic, Kathy Romero, Sandra Tomita

Photo by Vykki Mende-Gray



2001 Eleven Most Endangered



Photo by Jim Brady

OLD POLICE HEADQUARTERS - Located on West Market Street at the bay, this Spanish Colonial Revival masterpiece was designed by renowned architect Albert Traganza and the Quayle Brothers. SOHO envisions this beautiful downtown landmark with its 110,000 square feet used as retail, dining, etc., and serving as a character defining resource for our city. The Port of San Diego, its current owner, is seeking demolition.



Photo by Jim Brady

MITCHELL FAMILY RESIDENCE - This 95-year-old manor has been designated by the City of San Diego as a historic site. Neighborhood planning groups and neighbors, along with SOHO, have objected to the demolition, and have offered other preservation friendly options. Regardless, the Mayor and City Council, citing "Smart Growth", overlooked the voice of this community and its own staff and is allowing demolition and new development that will forever scar this historic neighborhood.



Photo by Maria Castillo-Curry

THE TECATE DEPOT - This important 1914 Prairie Style building is being invaded by expansion of the Tecate Brewery, which owes its existence to the railroad. Please see article in this issue.



Photo by Jim Brady

CORONADO BELT LINE - The only surviving segment of the historic line, it is in danger of being torn up and the land used for a shopping mall development. Please read more about this historic railroad line in this issue.



Photo by Jim Brady

HOTEL SAN DIEGO - Another downtown landmark, the hotel was developed by John D. Spreckles. This Italian Renaissance-Beaux Artes building stands as a tribute to a more elegant time. It is currently threatened by a proposed multi-jurisdictional government Court building.



MARRON ADOBE - One of San Diego's earliest survivors of the Rancho period, located in Oceanside. The proposed new freeway entrance for Route 78 will encroach and threaten the integrity of this adobe, changing its historic landscape after 150 years. Ecological and archeological sites on or near the property will also be destroyed.



SS Catalina - The Great White Steamer is once again in peril. Although much money has been raised and the ship has been donated to the S.S. Catalina Preservation Association by the Mexican Government, setback after setback is now beginning to take its toll. To find out how you can help please read the article in this issue.



RED ROOST & RED REST - Built in 1894, these early bungalows are rare indeed. Listed on the National Register, they are two of the earliest buildings to still exist in La Jolla. The owners are using the demolition by neglect tactic, hoping to build a hotel in their place. SOHO has asked the City of San Diego to implement its new ordinance against this common practice and we are awaiting a response.



TOP GUN COTTAGE - This Victorian era seaside cottage is one of the last best from the great boom of the 1880's that started the city of Oceanside. If moved from its original site it is no longer a seaside cottage, thereby losing its significance as such.



HOTEL DEL ANNEX - These buildings are an integral part of the Hotel Del Complex. The laundry, icehouse, carpentry shop, early garage and power plant are historic assets and enhance the uniqueness of the hotel. The power plant is a part of our American history, it being the largest of its type in the world when it was first built. It retains its original interior with marble switchboard, which still services the Hotel today. The tremendous tunnel from the complex to the hotel is just one of the fascinating aspects of the buildings. These great spaces could be utilized for maximum performance with even the smallest bit of consideration and

AZTEC BREWERY ART & ARTIFACT ENSEMBLE - Retrieved from the Rathskellar tasting room of the Qualye Brothers designed Brewery, prior to unnecessary demolition back in 1989, these items since have been part displayed, part stored, and have frequently been moved from one warehouse to another. SOHO is concerned about the separation of these City owned historical art objects because of their integrity as a visual and culturally bonded collection.

Editor's note: Look for photos and article in the next issue of Reflections in September.

SS Catalina painting and photo by Ken Marschall, all other photos by Jim Brady.

How To Designate Your Historic Home

KATHY FLANIGAN

This is part of SOHO's ongoing educational series. Architectural Historian and SOHO Board Member Kathy Flanigan is a popular speaker for our Mills Act Workshop.

What makes a house or building historic?
National Register criteria:

- It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- it is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- it embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents the work of a master, or that possesses high artistic values, or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- has yielded or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Is your house historic? How do you know?

First - When was it built? Realtors and previous owners may know, and the style can tell you. Check Virginia & Lee McAlester, [A Field Guide to American Houses](#) for further information.

Second - Do a title search at the San Diego County Recorder's Office or pay a mortgage company or historian for the service. You need to know who the owners of the property were, when you obtain the name of the original owner, check for Notice of Completion to determine the builder and/or architect. [The list of owners and Notice of Completion should be included in your report.](#)

Third - Check San Diego City & County Directories 1887-1980 at the San Diego Public Library California Room and San Diego Historical Society to learn who the people associated with your house were, such as: owners, occupants, architect, builder, making note of their professions. [A chronological list starting with earliest owners/occupants associated with your house and their professions should be included in your report.](#)

Fourth - When you have acquired the names of owners/occupants/architect/builder, check the San Diego Historical Society biographical files and computerized index for further information. Search for information in local biographical histories compiled by Smythe, Black, McGrew, Heilbron, and [Who's Who In San Diego](#), 1936. Also check the San Diego Union index at the San Diego Public Library California Room for references. [Mount important biographies and obituaries, etc. on separate pages for inclusion in your report.](#)

Fifth - If you know approximately when your house was built but don't know the architect or builder, search through the San Diego Union on microfilm during that time period, which can be obtained at the San Diego

Public Library Newspaper Room. [Include all articles you find relating to your house in your report.](#)

Sixth - Check the historical photograph collection at the San Diego Historical Society to locate any photo documentation of your house. You may order pertinent photographs for about \$20 or obtain a Xerox copy for \$1. You should check under owners' names, neighborhoods, architectural files, family scrapbooks, or aerial photographs. [All historic photographs should be included in your report with credit given to the San Diego Historical Society Photograph Collection.](#)

Seventh - If a prominent local architect designed your house, check the architectural drawing files at the San Diego Historical Society, where you may purchase copies of the drawings. Also obtain biographical information about the architect in San Diego Architects, 1868-1931, compiled by U.S.D. and available at the San Diego Historical Society. [You may include a copy of the biographical information in your report with credit given to U.S.D., as well as architectural drawings of your house with credit given to the San Diego Historical Society.](#)

Eighth - Check the Sanborn Fire Maps for your community or city, these date back to the 1800's and show your house with additions, etc. over time. Sanborn Fire Maps are available on microfilm in the Newspaper Room at the San Diego Public Library, the librarian has an index. [Include fire map copies in your report.](#)

Ninth - Conduct oral interviews of previous owners and the architect/builder if possible, to obtain further information about your house. Also, the San Diego Historical Society has collected numerous oral interviews of prominent San Diegans, which are on file there.

Tenth - Obtain a copy of the Residential Building Record for your home from the San Diego County Assessor's Office, 5473 Kearny Villa Road, 3rd Floor. The cost is \$2 per page (back to back) and this shows a configuration of your house with changes over time, as well as assessor notations. [You may want to include this in your historic report.](#)

Finally - You may obtain the DPR forms (Primary Record and Building, Structure and Object forms) for the City of San Diego from Angeles Leira, principal planner for the San Diego Historical Resources Board, (619) 235-5213.

I have amassed large files on local architects and architecture, and I may have information in my files that can assist you. You may call me, Kathy Flanigan at (619) 276-4376 and I will be glad to share my information with you.

Owners of Old Homes: Lower Your Property Taxes with the Mills Act

If you own a historic home, or are thinking of buying one, you will want to know about the Mills Act. The Mills Act, named after California State Senator James Mills, is State legislation, which provides incentive to restore and maintain your historic home, and has been adopted by the cities of San Diego, Escondido, La Mesa, Coronado, and most recently the city of Chula Vista. It is a 10-year renewable contract that can lower your property taxes by 50% or more.

- You do not have to live in a historic district, however, your home must be locally designated to qualify for this program. You can do the research and designation yourself, or hire a historian. If you do live in a historic district, your home probably already qualifies. Getting your home designated is the first step to qualifying for the Mills Act.
- The Mills Act property tax reduction is based on a formula the County Assessor's Office uses to calculate the tax savings. It is not based on your income. Multi-unit buildings and commercial buildings may also qualify for this savings.
- Once you enter into a Mills Act contract, you agree to restore and maintain your home's exterior. Your tax savings should be used to help with the restoration and maintenance costs.
- If you should sell your home, the Mills Act contract stays with the house and the new owners can get the same benefits if they agree to the preservation terms. This is a strong selling tool.

For more information, call your local planning department. Lobby your elected officials if your city has not yet adopted the Mills Act.

Our next Mills Act Workshop is scheduled for January 2002. This should give you sufficient opportunity to research and designate your home prior to the workshop in order to use it to your fullest advantage.

Preservation Revolving Fund Off And Running

BARRY E. HAGER

The donation drive for SOHO's Preservation Revolving Fund has kicked into high gear! Only days after Vonn Marie May delivered an announcement about the Fund during her presentation at the People in Preservation Awards, a generous donation was received from Alan Johnson (son of famed architect William Templeton Johnson) and Vivienne Griffin. Other donations have also been received from Doug Scott and Ben Baltic, and Corey Braun. thus the Fund has begun to grow. The new committee for the Preservation Revolving Fund will be coordinating fundraising efforts and hopes to foster rapid growth for the Fund.

The Preservation Revolving Fund is SOHO's newest tool in the battle to preserve San Diego County's historic resources. The Fund will allow SOHO to purchase endangered properties, stabilize them, place restrictive covenants on the properties to prevent their destruction, then re-sell to sympathetic buyers, with the proceeds available for use to save the next building.

If you are interested in making a donation, or have any leads for possible donations, please contact SOHO.

Thank you Corey For All Your Work

Corey Braun's recent promotion to Senior Planner Historian for the City of San Diego led him to resign from the board, due to what some might perceive as a conflict of interest. Corey has served many terms as a SOHO board member throughout the years, and we have always enjoyed his expertise and good company.

Welcome New Board Member

Stepping into the vacancy left by Corey Braun is Vonn Marie May with over 15 years of professional experience in land planning and research with an emphasis on environmental, historical, and cultural studies. Ms. May is a former President of SOHO, and former Chair of the City of San Diego's Historical Site Board. She holds professional certificates in Historic Preservation from the University of Southern California, National Park Service Cultural Landscapes Workshop at the Arnold Arboretum Harvard University, and Paralegal Training at the University of California San Diego.

THANK YOU TO JNE & ASSOCIATES, INC. for converting our computer files from PC to Mac, and for the donation of an outdoor PA System.

Chula Vista Adopts The Mills Act

The Chula Vista City Council formally adopted the Mills Act May 29. The council voiced their support citing the need to preserve historic homes. The successful historic home tour by the Chula Vista Historical Society during National Preservation week, helped to bring more attention to the need for the program. Ok, National City, all eyes are on you now. With more historic homes than any other city in the county, you need to get on board with the Mills Act.

The Tecate Depot: Cultural Heritage of the Californias

MARIA CASTILLO-CURRY

The Tecate Railroad Depot, located in Baja California, may be eligible for inclusion in the US National Register of Historic Places because it bears significance to American history, architecture, engineering, and culture. It already meets some of the criteria as a state monument in Baja California due to its historic significance (more than 50 years old). It is also listed in the Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia catalog of monuments.

The Tecate depot has a distinctive Prairie style Craftsman design, and is the most magnificent example of railroad architecture on the San Diego and Arizona and Tijuana and Tecate lines. It manifests the importance given to Tecate at the beginning of the twentieth century by John D. Spreckels. The line marked the development of business and industry in Baja California and the depot has an enormous potential for providing crucial information on railroad architecture history in the Californias.

According to SOHO board member, historian Kathy Flanagan, architect Eugene Hoffman could have built this beautiful and unique Craftsman style building for John D. Spreckels as part of the original San Diego & Arizona's Mexican section in 1914. The Tijuana-Tecate line, as well as the depot, was built with the same technology as the rest of the SD&A railroad. Both are associated with the historical development of industry, transportation, urban settlements, community life and cultural tourism in the border region.

The 1996 Revision of the National Park Service's Thematic Framework seeks to express the full diversity of American history; one of its eight categories includes the "changing role of the United States in the world community." This theme explores diplomacy, trade, cultural exchange, security and defense, expansionism, and at times, imperialism. The emphasis of this category is on people and institutions, and

border heritage corridors could well fit the theme if we approach preservation with a regional vision.

Architect Wayne Donaldson, in an inspection of the depot performed on March 24, together with SOHO board members, El Colegio de la Frontera Norte and the San Diego Railroad Museum, assessed the level of historical integrity of the building to be as high as it is, due to approximately ninety percent of all the original fabric, although vandalized, is intact. He stated that window sashes, doors, and other wood trim pieces that are missing can easily be reconstructed using extant models throughout the depot.

The depot has been placed again on SOHO's 11 most endangered list for 2001 since the expansion of the Tecate Brewery, which owes its existence to the railroad, has invaded the station yards with the construction of a 10 foot concrete wall blocking the traditional views that characterized the site for almost a century. In addition to this, the Municipality of Tecate is considering a development project. The details of this project have not been disclosed and have not been subjected to any design review by the Instituto de Cultura de Baja California (ICBC), the state institution in charge of protecting cultural resources.

Meanwhile the SDRM, SOHO and COLEF are applying for research grants in order to establish a binational heritage corridor project for the railroad similar to Los Caminos del Rio, El Camino Real Misionero and El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro in an attempt to influence the ICBC to do the right thing in preserving this treasure. In the last SDRM board meeting, the Board of Trustees approved the proposition to adopt the SD&A and the T&T as a binational corridor and promote its preservation.

For more information, please contact SOHO.

La Estación del Ferrocarril en Tecate: Herencia Cultural de las Californias

MARIA CASTILLO-CURRY

La estación del ferrocarril en Tecate, localizada en Baja California, pudiera ser candidata para incluirse en el Registro Nacional de Lugares Históricos de los Estados Unidos por su significado para la historia, la arquitectura, ingeniería y la cultura de Estados Unidos. El edificio cumple con los criterios para ser declarado monumento estatal en Baja California debido a su significado histórico (más de 50 años de antigüedad). También está en la lista del Catálogo de Monumentos del Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia.

La estación de Tecate tiene un diseño en el llamado estilo Prairie y es el ejemplo más significativo de arquitectura ferroviaria de las líneas del San Diego y Arizona y del Tijuana y Tecate. El edificio manifiesta la importancia dada al poblado de Tecate a principio del siglo veinte por John D. Spreckels. La línea marcó el desarrollo de los negocios y la industria en Baja California y la estación tiene un potencial enorme para proveer información crucial para la historia de la arquitectura en las Californias.

(continuado de la página anterior) De acuerdo a la historiadora Kathy Flanagan, miembro de la mesa directiva de SOHO, el arquitecto Eugene Hoffman pudo haber construido este hermoso y único edificio de diseño Craftsman para John D. Spreckels como parte de la sección mexicana original del San Diego y Arizona en 1914. La línea Tijuana-Tecate, al igual que la estación fueron construidos con la misma tecnología que el resto del San Diego & Arizona. Ambos están asociados al desarrollo histórico de la industria, el transporte, los asentamientos urbanos, la vida comunitaria y el turismo cultural en la región fronteriza.

La revisión en 1996 del Marco Temático del National Park Service en los Estados Unidos, busca expresar la completa diversidad de la historia estadounidense; una de sus ocho categorías incluye el "rol cambiante de los Estados Unidos en la comunidad mundial". Este tema explora diplomacia, comercio, intercambio cultural, expansionismo y, en ocasiones imperialismo. El énfasis de esta categoría es en la gente y en las instituciones y los corredores de herencia fronterizos podrían encajar en este tema si vemos a la preservación con una visión regional.

El arquitecto Wayne Donaldson, en una inspección realizada a la estación el 24 de Marzo conjuntamente con miembros de SOHO, El Colegio de la Frontera Norte y El San Diego Railroad Museum, estableció que el nivel de la construcción original, aunque vandalizada, está intacta. Mencionó que los marcos de las ventanas, puertas y otras piezas de madera que

faltan pueden ser fácilmente reconstruidas usando modelos existentes del mismo edificio.

El edificio ha sido puesto en la lista de los edificios más amenazados de SOHO ya que la expansión de la Cervecería Tecate—la cual debe su existencia al ferrocarril—ha invadido los patios con la construcción de una barda de concreto de 10 pies, bloqueando las vistas tradicionales que han caracterizado el lugar por casi un siglo. Además de lo anterior, el municipio de Tecate está considerando un proyecto de desarrollo cuyos detalles no han sido hechos públicos y no se han sometido a ninguna revisión por parte del Instituto de Cultura de Baja California (ICBC), la institución estatal a cargo de proteger los recursos culturales.

Mientras tanto el SDRM, SOHO y COLEF están solicitando becas para investigación para establecer un proyecto de corredor binacional para el ferrocarril, similar a Los Caminos del Río, El Camino Real Misionero y El Camino Real de Tierra en un intento por influir al ICBC para que haga lo necesario para preservar este tesoro. En la última reunión del SDRM, la mesa directiva aprobó la propuesta de adoptar el SD&A y el T&T como un corredor binacional y promover su preservación.

Para más información de como puede ayudar, favor de comunicarse con Maria Castillo-Curry en la dirección de SOHO.

S.S. Catalina Update

PHIL DOCKERY

While the ship itself is still mired in the mud at Ensenada Harbor in Mexico, the efforts to save the famous and historic steamship Catalina continue unabated. Though initial attempts to raise her last year failed due to a lack of sufficient funds and equipment, an extension to continue the work has been granted by the new administration in Mexico City. While awaiting the arrival of the extension's formal documents, S.S. Catalina Preservation Association (SSCPA), an outgrowth of SOHO, has been busy researching grants, investigating potential home ports for the ship, and re-energizing their fundraising and publicity efforts.

SSCPA President Phil Dockery was a featured speaker at the California Preservation Foundation's recent annual conference in the Architectural History - Maritime Resources session. As a component of their Outreach Committee, the Association is currently looking for other lecture, education, and show opportunities to inform groups and the general public about their work and long-term goals.

Fine art prints of renown maritime artist Ken Marshall's portrait of the Catalina are still available for purchase. This print depicts the ship as she appeared in her first year of service in 1924. Solid wood 10" half-hull models of the S.S. Catalina are also available. Carved by a computer-controlled



mill, these models are the result of scans made directly from an original builder's half-hull model. All of the proceeds from these sales go directly to the SSCPAs rescue efforts.

The Association is also working to improve their internet presence. Their site can be found at www.sscatalina.org. More information on their efforts, and opportunities to purchase the above limited edition color print, models, and to make other contributions can be found there, or by calling their office, hosted by CAD Research, at (949) 567-1930.

Events and Education Committee Seeks Dedicated Volunteers

The Events and Education Committee currently has nine members and is seeking a few more good volunteers. The work is varied and includes such activities as planning the restoration and education workshops, which so many members have utilized to restore their old homes and gardens. This committee is also responsible for publishing the *Reflections* newsletter, and all other literature, such as brochures, volunteer manuals, etc. We run the Historic Home tours and other special events SOHO is invited to co-sponsor, such as the California Preservation Foundation Conference held last month, or the South Park Old House Fair which we have co-sponsored since its inception. This committee handles public relations and all project-related promotional work as well. SOHO is currently developing a Regional Preservation Conference, which will take a considerable amount of dedication and attention.

Events and Education plans and executes all the great parties SOHO is so famous for. These includes our People in Preservation Annual Awards, all holiday parties, volunteer appreciation parties, annual membership potluck, the Board of Directors election, and many other special event fundraising parties.

In addition, this committee is now also responsible for all Whaley house complex events in conjunction with the Whaley House Steering Committee.

As you can tell, the volunteers on this committee have their hands full, and would love to have new members. The only requirement is that you have the time and willingness to fully commit to whichever event or projects you volunteer for. SOHO is growing at an accelerated rate right now, and, with your help, we can present a strong front in the ongoing battle to preserve this city's precious historic resources.

As a volunteer you would not be required to be involved in each and every project. You may focus your efforts on one or two events or projects that interest you. When necessary, the group will break into sub-committees for an individual event, although the whole committee will still oversee and guide each event or project.

This is a real fun group of people who serve an invaluable and necessary purpose to further SOHO's goals and to implement its mission, which, in part, is to educate the community to the importance of historic preservation.

The committee is seeking volunteers who are able to make a real commitment to the time and work involved with Events and Education. We meet the fourth Monday of each month at 6:30pm at the SOHO offices in Heritage Park. If you would like to be a part of this exciting, fun, and friendly committee, please call SOHO and leave a message for Chairperson, Alana Coons.

E v e n t s

Volunteer Appreciation Day
July 29th 2:00-5:00
The historic D.K. Horton House

Workshop & Lecture Series
Exterior Color - August 4
Historic Gardens - August 11
Period Kitchens - August 18

Annual Membership Meeting
September 22

Halloween with the Whaleys
October 26, 27, & 31
Whaley House

Holiday Potluck Party
December 8

Mills Act Workshop
January date to be announced
Whaley House

Regional Preservation Conference
Spring 2002 date to be announced

A.J. Croce Benefit Performance
Date to be announced

Arts & Crafts Weekend
March 2002

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We would like to thank Roger Showley, Ann Jarmusch and Deborah Ensor of the San Diego Union for their excellent coverage of preservation activities throughout the county during National Preservation Week. They provide an invaluable service to the community by informing the public at large and by doing so, help to keep preservation and historical awareness high. Thank you Ann, Roger and Deborah.

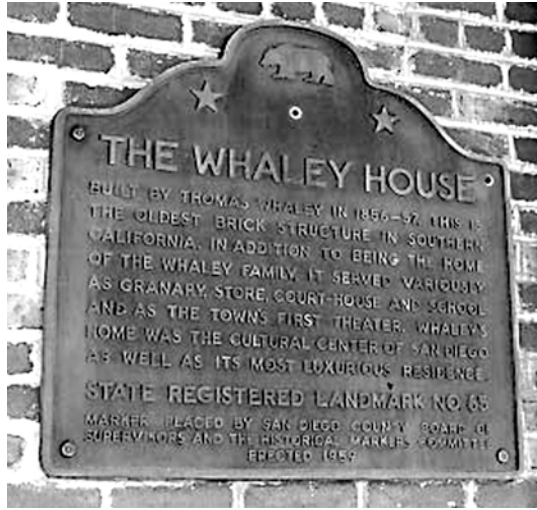
Whaley House Happenings

We are still awaiting the outcome of the county's court case with the previous lessees of the Whaley House. A date to set trial has been scheduled for June 15th. We are hopeful the outcome will be in favor of the citizens of San Diego County, and that the Whaley and other San Diego historic artifacts and furnishings will remain for the public to enjoy and learn from.

Although these delays are holding up much of the curatorial and restoration processes, SOHO has still been able to make some significant progress in the effort to interpret the property more appropriately. Right now, the county has begun exterior maintenance by repainting the Whaley house. Some of the work you can see going on is the removal of the ivy from the northwest side, which was undermining the brick foundation, and the removal of plantings on the southeast side. These plantings aside from being in the way of the painting crew were damaging the house significantly and were non-historic. Water from the irrigation on the southeast side was actually seeping moisture into the house creating both a serious mold and mildew situation along with destroying the structure and its contents. The beautiful and appropriate to the period "Cup of Gold" vine on the northwest side will remain, it has been pruned from the back to protect the house. The house is being repainted both as a part of the normal maintenance required and also as a part of presenting the house in its accurate period color schemes.

The changes are actually slight but will appear dramatic, as is often the case when a historic home wears its proper colors. The stucco coat on part of the exterior brickwork will remain basically the same, with a slight change of color from the dark red-brown it is now to the brick color that it would have been. The stuccoed brick, which covers portions of the house, is original and was a common practice of the 1850's where homeowners were attempting to emulate cut stone. They would cover structures with cement stucco and then score it into blocks. Why the stucco was never completed is part of the ongoing research by SOHO historians. We know the house was never finished in many areas including doors and windows because of primary sources, these being original letters from Judge Ainsworth to Thomas Whaley while Ainsworth was renting the house from the Whaleys when they lived in San Francisco.

The shutters, although not original to the house, will be painted in the period color of dark green. The original shutters were of a moveable louver construction, while the court house section had raised paneled shutters. The trim will stay a bright white, and the verandah itself will be rebuilt although at this time it will not be reconfigured to its original vertically oriented floor boards because of cost restraints. However, it will be painted its original medium slate grey color. The verandah floors were never left the natural varnished wood finish that they are today; this change will also be helpful to the rigorous maintenance required by such a heavily trafficked area. The ceiling of the verandah will be painted sky blue, which is its historic color. This is all part of the



master restoration plan SOHO is in the process of developing.

The Garden Committee has been very busy inventorying the existing plantings. They have developed the criteria that will be followed for the restoration on the grounds. More details on all of this will be given in our next *Reflections* newsletter when Garden Chairperson Jessica McGee will provide her committee's update.

SOHO has also met with *Access San Diego* to discuss making the property wheelchair accessible. The biggest challenge, and luckily the easiest to deal with, is the maze of hedges that enclose

and overtake the property at present. These are quite difficult to maneuver and impossible for those in wheelchairs. They are inappropriate to the period of the house and are actually in the style of an English Victorian garden, not an American frontier homestead, and will be removed as part of the master plan. It is always painful to remove plants from a site, however it is an essential and important aspect of restoring a historic property. We will endeavor to return the Whaley house to as close to its original appearance as possible. Because of the many changes to the site, such as decreased parcel size, and the addition of other buildings, such as the Derby-Pendleton, compromises will be necessary. As a County Park, areas for events, need to be provided, however, SOHO will be able to do quite a bit to bring the Whaley house back to its most significant period, the 1850's to 1870's.

It is SOHO's intention to have the Whaley house and its gardens continue to be a source of beauty and pride for Old Town while allowing a more appropriate historical interpretation of the property and provide greater access to the property and program areas.

These are the beginnings of a long-term restoration. The research, although impeded by the unavailability of the Whaley Family papers, is nevertheless being pieced together. We are most fortunate to have at our disposal some of the finest research historians and restoration authorities both on the SOHO board and in our membership at large.

Bruce Coons recently uncovered the Historic American Buildings Survey report done on the house in 1960 when June Redding was interviewed, at that time some of the original papers were photographed and copied. One of these is a hand drawn map, by Thomas Whaley, done in the 1870's, of the first floor of the house and the grounds. This is an exciting piece of history and is an invaluable resource that can be used in the interpretation of the site. Kathleen Flanigan, who is responsible for the extensive 19 page chronological history of the house and family, used during our volunteer training, continues her in-depth research and has been able to piece many of the puzzling questions together. SOHO looks forward to the day when the historic Whaley papers are, once again, available for public good. Until then our sleuths continue their hard work.

The Convocation of Souls at the Historic Whaley House

DAVID MARSHALL

On a warm May night as the sun sank behind the Pacific, we began our efforts to communicate with the dead. Around a large wooden table sat five renowned haunted house investigators and several curious SOHO board members, like myself. We were sitting quietly in the glow of candlelight waiting for the evening's main event, The Convocation of Souls.

The host was Michael Kouri, paranormal investigator, psychic, author and medium. Kouri and his associates, most of whom are members of the Orange County Society for Psychic Research, had submitted a proposal to SOHO to conduct an investigation of the long rumored ghosts. The co-organizer of the event was Rob Wlodarski. An archeologist for 30 years, Rob and his wife Anne run G-Host Publishing and together they co-authored the popular book [The Haunted Whaley House: A History and Guide to the Most Haunted House in America](#). Their intent was to monitor and record paranormal activity as part of an ongoing investigation.

Also in attendance was a small crew to videotape the event. Television journalist, anchor and thrill-seeker Michelle Garforth, who has done work for The Travel Channel, The Discovery Channel and ESPN, was also there, eager to witness the Whaley spirits.

At the dark table Michael laid out the ground rules (or below-ground rules) for all of us who were new to this, open your mind, don't be scared, hold hands, don't cross your legs and try to think of "yes" or "no" questions that the spirits might want to answer. Michael spoke calmly and noted that we should watch our toes and keep away from the table legs because "the table has been known to raise and lower" during the normal course of events. We were also told to remove all watches and metal jewelry because we could inadvertently get "burned by the energy" of the spirits. If anyone got scared during the event, Michael said they should just leave the room, preferably not screaming.

The table was littered with tape recorders, a digital thermometer, an electromagnetic field meter, a compass, feathers, three candles, and a toy cradle that hopefully would be manipulated by our ghostly guests.

After our orientation Michael spoke directly to the spirits. They were told to communicate by raising or lowering the

flame of the middle candle or by moving the table or other objects in the room. Michael closed his eyes and declared, "there is a lot of presence in this room." It was about 9pm and our Convocation of Souls had officially begun.

One by one we went around the table, each of us asking questions. Many of the initial questions were to determine who among the list of famous dead was joining us. The first 20 minutes were quite uneventful. The center candle barely moved and the room was quiet (except for the Cinco de Mayo clean-up crews out on the street). It's not easy to think of questions to ask of the dead. "How's the weather?" "Do you haunt here often?" Michael warned us not to ask how the ghosts had died because it might upset them since (in true Sixth Sense-speak) "some of these people don't know that they're dead."

In an attempt to broaden our discussion with the spirits I asked, "Did George W. Bush really win the election?" The candle flickered a "yes," but Michael noted, "ghosts can be biased too." Michael's reading of the candle flame fluctuations was far from definitive. He kept asking, "was that a 'yes'?"



Questions then began to get what appeared to be more emphatic answers, in the form of noises and movements from the table. First we heard a rapid tapping sound from the middle of the table. It first sounded like creaking wood, but it was too rhythmic and fast. It was like someone tapping out Morse code with pencils. All of our hands were flat atop the table and in clear view, so the night was starting to get interesting. The table antics then got more dramatic. The tapping seemed to travel around the table and we began to see and feel the table vibrating. One woman said it felt "like an earthquake." Several times we could see the corner of the table nearest Michael lift up and fall back with a bang as the leg hit the floor. The light-hearted nature of our seance suddenly got more serious.

Michael reminded us not to get scared and Mrs. Pat Brian, one of the paranormal investigators on hand, commented that this was pretty tame compared with her past experiences. The tapping and shaking continued. Questions were asked of Thomas and Anna Whaley and "Yankee" Jim Robinson who was reportedly hanged at the site before the house was built. Questions about Violette Whaley, who committed suicide as a young woman, brought aggressive responses. The rattling

(continued from previous page) was loud and quick, the chandelier in the room, which had been still all night, began to swing.

Having been a witness to the evening's events, I must admit that I don't have a logical explanation for what I heard and saw. The candle flame was unconvincing, but the table noises and movements defied easy explanation. Even though the part of the table that raised and dropped was near Michael Kouri, his hands were flat on the table and his legs were not near the corner that lifted.

During a break I looked under the table and sat in Michael's seat. My knee could easily reach the bottom of the table, but I wasn't able to lift the corner like I'd witnessed. At different times there were two non-psychics next to the moving corner and if they were making it move I don't see how. Plus the rapidness of the shaking and tapping would make it near impossible for someone to use their leg without it being obvious.

The spirits apparently wandered off during our intermission because the table rattling didn't resume and the candle remained still. Our night of communicating with the dead was drawing to a close. As Regis might have asked, "Is that your final rattle?"

The evening's drama was not exactly an episode of "The X-Files," but it was still a fascinating experience. Michael, Rob, Pat and the others were enthusiastic and seemed genuinely interested in documenting unexplainable phenomena at the Whaley House. Earlier in the evening I had asked Rob how the Old Town landmark compared to the many other haunted sites he'd investigated and written about. "On a scale of 1 to 10," he told me, "this house is probably a 15."

The Whaley House is open to visitors Monday through Sunday from 10:00 to 4:30. Admission is free to SOHO members.

The Haunted San Diego Ghosts and Gravestones nighttime tours in partnership with San Diego Historical Society and Old Town Trolley may also be purchased at the Whaley House.

*For Two Mary's
A non-believer in ghosts was our Mary
Thought the Whaley house not at all scary,
till one day she went in
and saw Thomas and Kin
and henceforth our Mary is Wary.*

by George Plum
Whaley House Volunteer Docent
who works every Wednesday with
Mary Miller and Mary Wendorf

GHOSTS & GRAVESTONES



Historic Tours of America in cooperation with the San Diego Historical Society, and the Save Our Heritage Organisation, present the latest in "frightseeing" aboard the Old Town Trolley's "Ghosts & Gravestones" night tour of San Diego

This spirited tour will show you the city's darker side as we share local tales and legends that you'll have to hear to believe!

WHERE

The Cruise Ship Terminal
located on Harbor Drive

WHEN

Tours depart Wednesday through
Sunday evenings at dusk.

TOUR LENGTH

2 hours

ADMISSION

\$28



DYING TO TAKE THE TOUR?

CALL (619) 298-8687

As this is a tour of the unexplained and the unexpected, we request that only those aged 13 years and older take part.

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

Tickets may be purchased at The Whaley House



Meet Our Whaley House Docent Staff

MARY WENDORF has been a SOHO member and volunteer for many years, and as Head Docent on Mondays and Wednesdays since we opened in November. Mary's love of history and her desire to preserve our open spaces and the character of San Diego makes her a great spokesperson to the public to get SOHO's message out. Mary and her husband Norm, with their dog Hannibal live in a 1912 California Craftsman Bungalow in University Heights and we congratulate her for receiving the "Plume Award" from the University Heights Community Association for her involvement in their fight for preservation and integrity of the neighborhood.

MARTIN WOLFE is our nighttime Ghosts and Gravestones Head Docent extraordinaire. He has been with us since we began our stewardship of the Whaley House. Martin and Julie, his wife of 26 years, live in La Mesa and have three grown children, Malachi, Micah, and Veloma. Martin's hobbies are deep-sea fishing, scuba diving, reading, and horticulture. Since retiring after 20 years of service with the Department of Defense, Martin says that his work at the Whaley House has given value and new meaning to his life.

VICTOR SANTANA is our Sunday Junior Docent. Born in San Diego in 1983, he was raised in both San Diego and Tijuana as a Chargers and Padres fan. He is a top student at the Lazaro Cardenas High School located in the old Agua Caliente Casino in Tijuana. On weekends, Victor plays in two rock and roll bands. Last summer he worked in Las Vegas where his uncle has a souvenir store, a band and a music studio. Victor also performs in the Baja California Orchestra choir and has given piano recitals in the Tijuana Cultural Center.

JAIMEE JOHNSON has been working as a Head Docent at the Whaley House since May 3, having started out as a volunteer. She has an intense interest in history, an insatiable curiosity to learn the true stories of the past, and a fascination with old buildings and ghost towns. San Diego has been her home for 5 years and she currently lives in Ocean Beach. Jaimee says she has loved the Whaley since she first walked through its doors several years ago and is very excited to be able to care for the house and share its history with others.

LYNN HAMILTON is our newest Head Docent, handling our busy weekends. Lynn says she is excited to join the SOHO staff and share the history and mystery of the Whaley House with our visitors. Her background in marketing and public relations will surely be an asset. Lynn currently works at Spring Valley Middle School as a Community Resource Aid and Volunteer Coordinator. Lynn will also be heading up the Junior Docent Program at the Whaley House. Her daughter Michelle, the history buff of the family, is a regular volunteer docent.

Advertiser Highlight

An Artist's Passion Turns to Preservation

What began as two separate interests, art and old homes, merged into a passion with preservation for local artist, Karen Merry.

Her two interests first met on a Victorian home tour in Northern California where she began sketching and painting while on a short vacation. The homes came to life in her motel room on hand painted post cards she sent to friends to share her experience.

"Victorians make my heart pound, I see all the artistry and detail and beauty, I just want to capture all those tiny details."

Karen returned to San Diego, where she lives in a 1910 Craftsman home in Kensington, and met with her friend Debbie who had received one of the cards in the mail. The two met for coffee and the idea for a new company was born.

Debbie was a marketing specialist and shared her interests in old homes, antiques and art. Together they formed Not Modern Art and developed a line of historic note cards.

Each note card is a reproduction of Karen's work. The backside of the card gives a detailed history of the site, in efforts to

educate and increase awareness of its historic value.

"At Not Modern Art, we see this as not just a business, it also gives us the chance to increase awareness throughout the entire community."

"We hope that someone will not only enjoy the beauty depicted in Karen's work, but will find value in its history and pass that awareness on to others. We both have the chance to use our separate talents to collectively make a difference."

Making these historic places come alive with the use of pen and ink and watercolor is now Karen's passion. Completed San Diego works include The Whaley House, Heritage Park, Balboa Park, and Villa Montezuma.

Works currently in progress are the Red Roost and Red Rest cottages at the La Jolla Cove, The Hotel Del Coronado, and The Cabrillo Light House.

Sold throughout San Diego, you can buy these beautiful note cards at The Whaley House. Your purchase helps to further our work there.

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The Save Our Heritage Organisation is the only countywide organization devoted to protecting the historic resources of San Diego County. Your partnership is vital to our mission to preserve the links to the past that are significant to our history and contribute to the special identity, depth, and character of our region. Please help us meet this year's goal of doubling our membership.

SOHO would like to acknowledge the following for their contributions.
Special thanks to Thomas J. Pollock for his \$2,000 General Fund Grant.
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SOHO Membership Drive

Calling all members to action!

Membership numbers are one of the most powerful tools we, as preservationists, can yield. When SOHO goes before city hall with a membership roster of thousands, Council is fully aware that for every individual on our roster, there are potentially hundreds of persons in the general population with the same viewpoint.

Numbers speak to elected officials, period. Most of our memberships represent households with two or more voters, and, as such, SOHO represents many thousands of San Diegans.

Our city is enjoying economic good times, but as we all know, a good economy is not always great for Preservation. It does not have to be that way, and is not that way, in more sophisticated cities which treasure and respect their heritage *and* their citizens simultaneously.

We can make the difference. Look at our recent saves,

the Ranch House at Warner's and the War Memorial Building, among others. These buildings are important monuments that make San Diego great.

However, we can not ignore the grave losses suffered in San Diego this past year. Major neighborhood-defining architectural gems are gone forever. In their places, empty lots from development deals gone badly or otherwise. Joining forces with SOHO is a real way that we, as citizens, can fight back.

Please join us now in our membership drive. We are asking every SOHO member to recruit one new member by year's end. This would double our membership, greatly enhancing our influence at City Hall.

Give the membership application below to a friend or co-worker and encourage them to join today. Or give a gift membership to a friend or relative and at the same time a gift to San Diego's heritage.

M E M B E R S H I P A P P L I C A T I O N

I want to help preserve the historical resources of San Diego by joining SOHO at the following Membership level.

- \$25 Individual or Family
- \$100 Executive
- \$500 Benefactor
- \$50 Professional
- \$250 Corporate
- \$1000 Lifetime

Please complete this form and send it with your check to
SOHO, PO Box 3429, San Diego CA 92163

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

Please extend my membership for another year.

In addition, I am making a tax-deductible contribution of \$_____ to the Preservation Revolving Fund, to be used to purchase and preserve endangered, historic properties.

Are you interested in helping at SOHO events?

- I WOULD LIKE TO HELP WITH:**
- Office
 - Membership
 - Tours
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 - Whaley House
 - Other Events

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Remember Someone Special with a SOHO Membership

Please send a one-year gift membership to the person named below. A gift card will be sent to your recipient.

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- ◆ 10% discount on Museum Shop items
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- ◆ Participation in volunteer programs

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All advertising is subject to the approval of the Save Our Heritage Organisation.

For more information, please call SOHO at (619)297-9327



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