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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

Agreement Reached with Simplon Corp Three Historic Buildings Incorporated in Cosmopolitan Square

BRUCE COONS

The latest in a series of agreements we have reached in the East Village incorporates more historic resources than any other project since the Ballpark agreement itself. Cosmopolitan Square is a new development across the street from the "Park at the Park" and the Simon-Levy building. It will feature the retention of the 1937 WPA-built Art Deco Fire Station #4 at 8th and J Street, the Bledsoe Company Furniture Warehouse building "Pack Lofts" at 7th and Island, and the front half of the Western Wholesale Drug Company Building "Unicorn Antiques" located at 7th and J Street.

The Preservation Advisory Group (PAG) has been meeting with Simplon Corporation since late last year and we are happy to announce this latest in our continuing efforts to preserve the character-defining features of San Diego's past, while we are building for tomorrow.

The PAG, as you may remember, was set up as a part of our ballpark agreement to oversee development in the Ballpark district, particularly along the J Street corridor where design guidelines



Fire Station #4

were negotiated as part of the settlement. SOHO has three members on the PAG, Bruce Coons, David Swarens and Maureen Steiner. Mike

Bueler from the National Trust and Marsha Sewell representing San Diego's Historical Resources Board round out the preservation interests on the PAG. Also on the PAG are representatives from the City, CCDC, the Padres, and JMI.



Western Wholesale Drug Company building

Photos this article/Bruce Coons

The J Street corridor is the heart of the new warehouse district being pursued by SOHO and is also part of the ballpark agreement. It is felt that the retention of the fire station and the Unicorn building is critical to completing the other buildings along this street. This street will naturally become the next Gaslamp Quarter with its Historic buildings leading east from 5th in the quarter to I-5. David Swarens commented many times in the negotiations that "Fire Station #4
(continued on page 3)

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SOHO Founder

Robert Miles Parker, 1969

Reflections

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The Brown Act Makes Preservationists See Red

President's Message

BETH MONTES

It started with a For Sale sign. Then there was the auction and the windows came out. In almost no time at all, it was gone, to be replaced by an empty lot with another For Sale sign.

And there was not a thing we could do about it.

Churches. In this case the Park Boulevard Methodist Church on Park Boulevard in Hillcrest (the Methodists did not cause the church to be demolished – they sold it to another religious group which destroyed it.) These lovely structures, both architecturally and culturally important, are under threat – particularly in California. In 1994, state legislators passed a law, sponsored by then-Assembly Speaker Willie Brown, giving religious groups a special exemption to demolish noncommercial property that no longer suited their needs or was too costly to maintain. Preservation groups brought suit, but in December 2000, the California Supreme Court, in a 4-to-3 decision, upheld the controversial law.

At the time, a state legal official said that the State was very pleased with the ruling and that the new law would not necessarily mean California churches would be demolished since preservation groups could still bring suit to challenge demolitions after religious leaders had invoked the exemption. What this means is that preservation groups would have to be on constant alert watching for churches to pull demolition permits instead of being able to take the proactive role of designating them landmarks.

Ultimately, this legislation needs to be rescinded. Until that time, SOHO needs your help to take a proactive role in working with church leaders to find alternatives to demolition when a building no longer suits the congregation's needs. Please contact the SOHO office if you learn of a threatened structure.

Of course, the destruction of our Park Boulevard Methodist Church might have been delayed or avoided had there been a law in place denying demolition permits unless there is an approved, viable, and well-financed project in the works. But that is a topic for a future message....

Calendar of Monthly Meetings

at the Whaley House Museum Complex

SOHO BOARD OF DIRECTORS • 5:30pm

2nd Monday upstairs in the Derby Pendleton House

EVENTS & EDUCATION • 6pm

3rd Monday in the kitchen of the Derby Pendleton House

MODERNISM • 6:30pm

3rd Thursday in the kitchen of the Derby Pendleton House

PRESERVATION ACTION • 5:30pm

4th Monday in the study in the Derby Pendleton House

PRESERVATION REVOLVING FUND

Call for meeting time and location



Bledsoe Company Furniture Warehouse building

(continued from front page) and the Unicorn building constitute a complete block of historic fabric along the important "J" street corridor; the station, built a decade later was designed with the other as its neighbor, and the retention of these two landmarks as a "set" will greatly enhance the sense of the past on this core of the warehouse district. They should stay together." The new development in addition to the historic buildings will feature what will probably be downtown's most striking new tower with cascading rooftop water features, a new state-of-the-art two-story fire station, and a ground floor central block courtyard. This project was designed by the world famous architectural firm of Kohn, Pedersen, Fox & Associates PC with offices in London, Tokyo, and New York, in conjunction with local architects Austin, Veum & Robbins Partners. The old fire station will become a restaurant, complete with one of the two original fire poles, well-worn and polished by years of use by firemen rushing out to protect life and property, the other will be relocated to a new station. Pack Lofts will continue to be housing and the Unicorn Building will be retail and housing. This is another example of what can be achieved by working together to preserve our historic character and our sense of place while accommodating growth, assuring that the past will be an important part of the future.

Coronadians Create Conservancy to Save Cottages

A community effort to halt the loss of Coronado's cottages and bungalows and to celebrate their presence in a changing environment was launched on October 12 with the founding of the Coronado Cottage Conservancy at a meeting at the Coronado Public Library's Winn Room which attracted more than 50 residents. The Conservancy, which defines a cottage as being approximately 1500 square feet and 75 years old or older, will work to show property owners that additions and enlargements can be made to a cottage that will accommodate the needs of the twenty-first century family while still retaining its contribution to Coronado's unique architectural character. They will be a non-profit corporation funded by membership dues, fundraising, and donations for the sole purpose of saving these cottages, and are exploring programs such as low-interest loans to those who qualify for financial assistance; assistance in securing exemptions for city codes and regulations for historically sensitive modification of a building; and discounted architectural work, interior design, vendor supply, and landscaping.



First *Cottage Sunday* home, open December 11, 1pm

Coronado's Historic Resource Commission can declare a structure historic and thereby prevent or delay demolition plans if certain criteria, such as a famous architect or resident, are met. Unfortunately, this doesn't always apply to the small bungalows and cottages that have formed the fabric and history of Coronado's community for over 100 years, and as a result, they are disappearing at an alarming rate.

The Conservancy hopes to get owners to cooperate by using incentives. An example of what the Conservancy hopes to accomplish is the preservation of eight post-Victorian cottages in the 700 block of B Avenue.

On December 11 they will present the first in a planned series called *Cottage Sunday*, where a select cottage will be open to the public for two hours. First up is a 1909 bungalow located at 749 C Avenue that will open its doors at 1pm.

For more information please contact at Nancy Cobb at (619) 435-5993 or Sharon Sherman at (619) 437-1628.

Editors note: This is the third preservation related community group to form in the last year. Mission Hills Heritage, La Playa Heritage and now in Coronado. Elected officials and decision makers better wake up and take notice. San Diegans are taking back their neighborhoods.

Message from the Executive Director Historic Designation of Coronado Railroad Upheld by City Council

BRUCE COONS

In San Diego on September 13, 2005 the appeal to the Historic designation of the Coronado Railroad was denied by the City Council by a vote of 4 to 2. This appeal needed 5 votes to pass. Donna Frye and Tony Young voted to deny the appeal and Scott Peters, Brian Maischein, Jim Madaffer and Toni Atkins voted to grant it. City staff again stated that there were still no grounds for granting the appeal, but some on the council chose to ignore this fact again. Luckily for the railroad and the future of all historic designations, Donna and Tony supported following the law.

With the designation now secure an EIR must be prepared to assess any impacts to the historic resource before any project is commenced that will seek to remove or disturb the RR in any meaningful way. This does not mean the railroad is out of danger, what it means is that any negative impact must be reviewed and efforts must be made to avoid any damage to the resource before the project is allowed to go forward. This is, as we have stated before, an important milestone in our efforts to protect historic resources in the City of San Diego.

Before we challenged the council's right to overturn the designation on the Coronado RR the council was routinely and illegally granting all appeals that came before them. The council can only overturn designations if there is new information that negates the initial grounds for designation, errors that invalidate the grounds for designation or information that would show that the Historical Resources Board violated the ordinance by some impropriety. After we filed our suit in this matter all appeals were put on hold by Mayor Murphy and since that time we have worked with five of the nine pending appeals to resolve the issues and have the appeals dropped. We believe we can work out the remaining appeals as well. This is how the process is supposed to work. Every time the council has given the process a chance SOHO and the HRB have been able to reach a mutually agreeable solution. This is what the council had in mind when they adopted the ordinance in the first place. If the process were followed and the HRB and SOHO were allowed to work with the project proponents, the council would rarely if ever have to intervene and make decisions about subjects that they do not have the time or expertise to deal with properly.

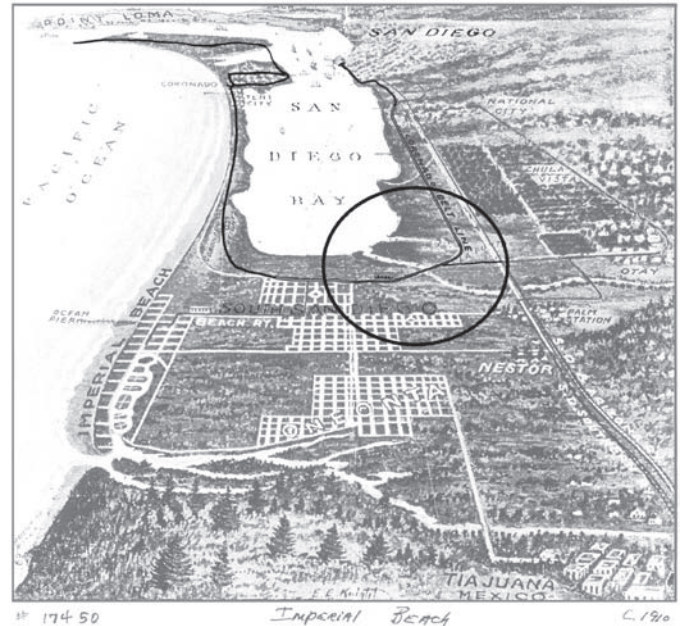
Universally we have heard the developers say that their projects were better than originally contemplated after we came to an agreement about the retention of the Historic resources. The council has appointed experts in this field to the HRB and they should be allowed to do their job. This is what good government is all about, not making some split-the-baby decision that makes no one happy and costs us our heritage. Once it's gone, it's gone forever.

Historic Districts The Gift of Preservation

ALLEN HAZARD & JANET O'DEA

Anyone who has ever purchased a property has heard the real estate mantra location, location, location. When it comes to placing value on a particular parcel real estate professionals will agree that land, walls, roof and the condition of the property across the road and down the street affect the value. That explains why buildings that are protected by historic district designation hold a higher property value. It is the context of the property and the assurances from the surrounding stakeholders in the community that boost values.

Beyond the dollar value to the proud owner, we all benefit from historic districts because these geographically defined areas benefit communities socially, culturally, and economically



Courtesy San Diego Historical Society

The following surveys are either pending or require City of San Diego staff review to identify potential districts. While some of these surveys are old or incomplete they identify the following potential historic districts as listed with the City of San Diego:

La Jolla- Status: findings incomplete and indicate 11 potential districts based upon this survey.

Mid City Survey- Status: 13 potential districts based upon this survey. Shirley Ann Place and Burlingame were adopted, Bankers Hill, Kensington, Marston Hills, South Park and the rest are inactive.

North Park- Status: preliminary findings one potential additional district based upon this survey.

Uptown- Status: survey results have not been reviewed to determine the possible districts.

Warehouse Survey (East Village)- Status: one district in process by city staff. Due to redevelopment pressure and funding by CCDC this district has gotten priority.

African American Thematic Study- Status: one district identified and the Black Historic Society is conducting research.

through revitalization, stabilization, affordable and luxury housing, heritage tourism and educational opportunities. In an April 2005, speech Donovan Rypkema, one of the leading thinkers on the economics of historic preservation, eloquently stated, "It is often through the door of economic impact that decision makers become advocates of historic preservation."¹ Ironically, it may be that the policies that support preservation could be one of the very moves that shift the impoverished mindset, brought on by the financial morass we are facing in the city, to envisioning better days ahead.

Over the last decade of increased real estate prices, our older neighborhoods and historic communities have been limited to the myopic dollar value of the land and the other social benefits have been under recognized. This was due to pressure from developers, short-term thinking land use decision makers and property owners. Recognizing this, in May 2005, SOHO placed the loss of historic neighborhoods on its Most Endangered List. With grassroots efforts by residents, the changes in city hall, the changing tide in the real estate market, this might be the perfect time to establish districts to take advantage of all they have to offer and create win/win policies that support the interests of the city and her citizens.

Over 700 historic buildings have been historically designated by the City of San Diego, fifteen historic districts have been designated and sixteen are pending. Once designated it will be the districts that provide the larger and greater social and economic impact to the identity of our city and our neighborhoods.

In the recent past, the City of San Diego had the funds to survey and research large residential areas to identify the historic structures and potential historic districts so that these benefits could be realized. For example, in 1996, the City commissioned a team of professional researchers to perform the Mid-City Survey and thirteen potential historic districts were identified. Since that initial survey with budget cuts and unclear goals for using the information, the only results yielded from this significant project so far are Shirley Ann Place District² and the Burlingame Voluntary Historic District³

In 2002, the city was aware of its looming budget challenge. Planning department staff encouraged residents in various communities to complete the required research reports to present to the Historic Resources Board. Citizens unsatisfied with leaving our heritage to chance have taken on these roles to protect our historic areas. These actions highlight the extent to which community pride flourishes in many of our older San Diego neighborhoods despite the ongoing changes made by competing financial interests.

The gift of preservation to the city is clearly the research itself. The information in the reports ties to the immediate community, to the city at large, the state and even the events that shaped our nation.

City staff has already provided countless hours of guidance to community members in an attempt to utilize the generous research provided to it from private citizens; however, no planning department staff is assigned to these tasks and goals and timelines for completing unfinished surveys or review of completed district reports are undefined.⁴

Fifteen Historic Districts have been designated in the City of San Diego and sixteen Known Historic Districts in the City of San Diego are pending with the following status:

Islenaire- City Heights: report by city staff is incomplete.

Balboa Park- Report by city staff is incomplete.

Warehouse Thematic East Village- Report by city staff in process.

South Park- Citizen interest not yet listed with city staff records.

La Playa trail- Citizens' report submitted: held for staff review.⁵

Loma Portal- Citizens' report not yet listed with city staff records.

African American Thematic District- East Village African American Study in progress.

Mission Hills 1- "Sunset": Citizens' report held for staff review.⁶

Mission Hills 2- "Trolley line": Citizens' report expected in 2006.

Mission Hills 3- "Arden Way": Arden Way, Hickory, Arquello Streets, Citizens' report initiated.

Mission Hills 4- Witherby: Citizens' report in process.

Mission Hills 5- Hermosa Way: Citizen interests.

David O. Dryden- North Park: Pershing and 28th Street, Citizens' report in process.

North Park Commercial District- Citizens' interest.

North Park Panorama Terrace- Citizen interest.

Kensington Historic District- Citizens' report in process.

Notes

¹ Rypkema, Donovan D., The Economics of Historic Preservation Tennessee Preservation Trust; Chattanooga, Tennessee, April 8, 2005. The entire speech can be found on the web at www.sitemason.com/files/gj4Ckg/Keynote%20Address.pdf

² A small block in University Heights recognizing the work of William B. Melhorn, the son of Master Builder Martin V. Melhorn.

³ Burlingame, currently a Voluntary Historic District, which means that the geographic area identified is not protected as a whole district unless the individual homeowners apply for inclusion into the district, is reaching the critical mass needed to change its status and become a traditional historic district. SOHO recommends traditional districts which include guidelines that provide overall cohesive protection to the historic buildings within the geographic area.

⁴ A general estimate of the staff time to review a completed district report is between 6-10 days. Yet, without dedicated staff assigned to do this work, even a couple of weeks is beyond the reach of getting the reports processed and the benefits realized as the research in the report becomes outdated.

⁵ Completed report submitted in 2004.

⁶ Completed report submitted September 2004 - includes 75 homes on the 1800 block of Sunset Blvd, Sheridan Ave, Lyndon Road and one home on St. James Place.

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Rallying Support for Resources from the Recent Past

JEANNE LAMBIN & ADRIAN SCOTT FINE

The “recent past” is a term commonly used to discuss historic and architectural resources younger than 50 years old. It is estimated that they make up approximately 70 percent of our built environment. The importance of mid-century, post-war, or “underage resources” has been the subject of numerous books and articles and has even reared its head in the mainstream media. Despite increasing interest and enthusiasm for the preservation of the recent past, the preservation of these resources poses significant challenges, ranging from a general lack of appreciation to unsympathetic alterations to demolition.

The decades following WWII witnessed an explosion of architectural innovation, much of it taking place here in the United States. The diverse inventory includes iconic buildings of international architectural significance such as Mies van der Rohe’s Farnworth House as well as the ubiquitous architecture of the ordinary ranch house. The recent past story is certainly about the icons but also needs to be told through the less prominent places that are equally important to a local community and its sense of place. From early fast food restaurants to drive-through branch banks to post-war suburbia, these places have much to tell us about who we are today, who we were, and the ways we lived during the past half century.

The National Park Service’s Recent Past Initiative website (www2.cr.nps.gov/tps/recentpast) describes the great variety of 20th-century resources, and their cultural importance, this way: “From futuristic coffee shops and soaring airport terminals to the homes of the postwar suburbs, 20th century architecture embodies the aspirations, priorities, challenges and successes of our recent history. They include the libraries and community centers constructed by New Deal agencies to contend with the Great Depression, factories where the World War II generation assembled tanks and planes, schools built for the postwar baby boom and glass-walled office parks that symbolized American business. Such properties reflect the varied lives that unfolded within them, and contribute to a diverse and dynamic 20th century landscape ranging from bridges to public buildings.”

Preserving and appreciating what remains of the recent past will be extremely important for telling the story of America after WWII. Unfortunately, many of these places are now seen as dated or unfashionable – and rarely valued as “historic.” Far too often, structures from the recent past, whether simple or sublime, are perceived as expendable, unattractive, or unworthy of preservation. But these resources cannot be overlooked, dismissed, or devalued simply because of how they look or because they no longer meet today’s tastes or preferences.

Threats to Recent Past Resources

It was the great wave of suburbanization and urban renewal that helped bring about the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Vast swaths of farmland disappeared beneath suburban-style ranch houses, new roads, and shopping malls. From the rubble of urban centers devastated by the Great Depression rose glass-and-steel skyscrapers, housing projects, and modern municipal buildings. “Progress” was often

synonymous with destruction of historic architecture, which fell to make way for new schools, homes, strip malls, and factories. Ironically, over four decades later, once again in the name of “progress” we are now confronted with the preservation of those once “new” buildings.

These “replacement” structures are now facing many of the same problems that condemned the buildings that came before – lack of public appreciation, perceived obsolescence, development pressures, and insensitive alterations and additions. They also face threats that their prewar counterparts did not face. Many were constructed with fragile, experimental, or short-lived materials. In addition, because they are not yet 50 years old, many of the buildings constructed during this post-war period are often mistakenly not yet considered eligible for historic designation which would give them more credibility in the eyes of the preservation movement and public.

Lack of Appreciation

Every generation has a style of architecture that it considers expendable. Today many consider the architecture of the recent past to be as expendable as its Victorian counterparts once were. Although “famous maker homes,” such as those designed by noted architect Joe Eichler or by Charles and Ray Eames, may be featured in glossy architecture magazines and in the *New York Times* and *Newsweek*, appreciation does not always translate to preservation. The 1962 Maslon House (aka Rancho Mirage) by Richard Neutra, considered one of the world’s most influential architects, was recently auctioned by Sotheby’s and acquired for \$2.45 million. Unfortunately the house was not protected by any local landmark programs (the city of Rancho Mirage has no historic preservation ordinance), and despite the efforts of local advocates to save the house, the new owners demolished it.

Preservationists aren’t necessarily immune to a bite by the style bug either. Within the preservation ranks, considerable debate exists on the preservation worthiness of the recent past. Some preservationists don’t consider the resources of the recent past to merit much concern, while others question the need for a new approach to encourage preservation.

It is easy enough to understand why preservationists would be ambivalent about preserving the architecture of the recent past, for it was the construction of many of these buildings that caused them to stand in front of the wrecking ball in the first place. One example is Pittsburgh’s space age-style Civic Arena which bisected a historic neighborhood and left part of it cut off from downtown. The Arena, the largest retractable dome-roofed structure in the world, is threatened with demolition and replacement with a new structure. Another is the 30-acre Capitol Park development in Washington, D.C., which dates to the 1950s and ’60s, and is considered one of the first and largest urban renewal projects in the area. It was named to the D.C. Preservation League’s Ten Most Endangered List in 2003 and is currently threatened by demolition and private development. These resources bear the stigma of an era that wiped out thousands and thousands of historic buildings. Yet the unwillingness to acknowledge the potential significance of these sites conflicts with one of the major goals of the preservation movement – to preserve our built heritage.

To complicate matters, in addition to its contextual baggage, much architecture of the recent past carries aesthetic baggage as well. For many, it is difficult to understand and appreciate, and the simplicity of much post-war architecture can make it hard to distinguish a “good”

or “bad” example of a building. This can make the critical process of survey, documentation, and evaluation subjective and challenging.

Alteration and Development Pressure

The United States is experiencing a building boom which rivals that of the years following WWII. Just as homes, apartment blocks, factories, and office buildings that had weathered the Great Depression and World War II faced obsolescence after the war, so too do an increasing number of resources built in the postwar period. It seems that the faster the rate of development increases, the faster the expected life span of a building decreases. Traditionally, it was believed that the useful life span was 30 years for a house and 25 years for commercial property. Many properties are now reaching or have already reached the age when they will be candidates for cosmetic changes, substantial alterations, or even demolition.

Probably the greatest problem surrounding the recent past is the public’s lack of appreciation for and understanding of mid-century architecture.

The resources that do escape demolition often can’t avoid alteration. As architecture critic David Dunlap noted, “not all of these losses involve outright demolition, subtle changes are constantly erasing post war design.” Depending on the scale of the building this could have a profound impact on the property’s appearance. Original materials are often removed or replaced because they are either difficult to repair, dated looking, or both.

Such was the case with the Florsheim Building in Chicago, designed by the firm of Shaw, Metz and Dolio and completed in 1949. It was one of the first buildings constructed in downtown Chicago following World War II and was described in the *ALA Guide to Chicago* as “the first major Chicago structure to emphatically embrace the design elements of European modernism.” The building was converted to residential use in 1997 and dramatically, irrevocably, and unsympathetically altered.

The 50-Year Rule

In 1966, when the first list of properties in the National Register was established, it contained a total of 868 resources, and of those, 24 met Criteria Consideration “G,” which states that a property achieving significance within the past 50 years is eligible if it is of exceptional importance. Thus when the National Register was first established, less than 3 percent of the resources were “underage.” Almost 40 years later, this percentage remains nearly the same. According to the Recent Past Preservation Network, “as of January 2003, 2,332 of the nearly 76,000 listings in the National Register have been nominated under Criteria Consideration G.”

Because the National Register allows for buildings to be nominated for their national, state or local significance, it greatly expands the category of what can be considered exceptionally significant. Yet, despite this provision for underage resources, many people mistakenly believe a building must be 50 years old to be listed in the National Register. In other instances, neither the local community nor the state historic preservation office consider resources younger than 50 years old to be even worthy of consideration, and so they are likely to show bias in evaluating them or to reject the nomination outright.

The National Register is a valuable preservation tool, but in large part it is essentially a voluntary program for the private citizen and can do little to prevent demolition or alteration by private individuals. Generally, the only way to prevent demolition resulting from a nonfederal action is

through a local landmark designation program or zoning overlay program that has the authority to prevent demolition.

But while the National Register allows for properties less than 50 years old to be listed, many local governments impose a 50-year rule without exceptions. Thus, a property could be listed in the *National Register* but not be eligible for local landmark designation. Consequently, the biggest problem that many of these resources face is that they lack real protection at the local level.

Gaining historic designation, whether at the national, state, or local level, provides credibility — a key tool for building public support. Without this, advocating for an underage resource is far more challenging.

Efforts to Examine and Preserve the Recent Past

Preservation of the recent past is by no means a new topic. Indeed since the preservation movement began, “underage resources” have always been threatened, the most notable example being Pennsylvania Station in New York. The neo-classical masterpiece designed by McKim, Mead and White was demolished in 1966, just shy of its 50th birthday. Its demolition helped galvanize the American preservation movement. In the decades following the passage of the Historic Preservation Act in 1966, there has been a steadily increasing interest in preserving underage resources, beginning with the establishment in 1977 of the Society for Commercial Archaeology, a national organization devoted to the buildings, artifacts, structures, signs, and symbols of the 20th-century commercial landscape.

In a 1978 article, “Remember Our Not So Distant Past,” which appeared in *Preservation* magazine, professor emeritus of history and founder of the historic preservation program at the University of Vermont, Chester Liebs, asked, “Will historic preservation be able to accept and selectively conserve the architectural species of the modern era?” In 1979, only 13 years after the National Historic Preservation Act was passed, the Department of the Interior issued *How-To Guide No.2: How to Evaluate and Nominate Potential National Register Properties that Have Achieved Significance Within the Last Fifty Years*. The guide was written to “inform those who need to make recommendations of exceptional significance.”

Action Steps

As said before, threats to postwar resources are not unlike those facing other historic resources, whether they are endangered by outright demolition, alteration, redevelopment, or neglect. What is different perhaps is the approach needed to encourage preservation of the recent past.

Engage New Audiences

Probably the greatest problem surrounding the recent past is the public’s lack of appreciation for and understanding of mid-century architecture. In some instances the threat and loss are acknowledged, perhaps even lamented. But in others, the loss is largely unnoticed as the public may not know the value of these places or how to advocate for a preservation alternative. The most important thing that can be done to preserve the architecture of the recent past is to educate the public about its importance and unite the emerging popular interest in preserving the recent past with proper preservation practices.

Jeanne Lambin is the field representative in the National Trust’s Wisconsin Field Office. Adrian Scott Fine is the director of the National Trust Northeast Field Office.

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Hipsters Agree

The Third Annual Modernism Weekend Was the Most!

DEAN GLASS

September 17 and 18 saw SOHO's Third Annual San Diego Modernism Weekend headquartered at the 1961 former Abbey Rents building on El Cajon Boulevard, which was designed by Tucker Sadler & Bennett, a local architecture firm still in business since the 1950s. We knew the location was the perfect venue for our Modernism event when we discovered the owner's name was **Tod Swank**. The long, narrow showroom in the front was ideal for the SOHO Museum Shop, the Hampton Collection Post-War Art Exhibition, and registration, along with a seating area for visitors with period furnishings donated for the event and set up by Jeff Spence of Mid-Century and Sergio & Martha Innocenzi of Antiques & Stuff.

The SOHO Museum Shop, which can regularly be found at 2476 San Diego Avenue in Old Town, carries a wide assortment of Modernism books and collectibles, which were moved temporarily to the weekend location. The cash register was ably manned by **Mary Jones**, who had a busy time selling a large collection of books with subjects as diverse as Herman Miller, Charles Phoenix's explorations of Kodachrome photography in mid-century America: Southern Californialand and Southern California in the '50s, a coffee table book all about coffee tables: The Coffee Table Coffee Table Book; futuristic toys and games such as Space Elevator, Space Robots, the Steel Builder erector set; retro Barbie magnets; kitchen towels featuring anthropomorphized cabbages and coffee pots; and a profusion of other Modernism-related books and items.

For the first time, an exhibition of visual art was added to the Modernism Weekend program with the Hampton Collection: Modernism in San Diego Post-War Art. Eighty-seven pieces from the collection of **Dave Hampton**, a San Diego native who has been collecting mid-century art for eight years, were on display, featuring curios by local mid-century artists such as Sheldon Kirby, Wayne Chapman, Russell Baldwin, and Marg Loring. The pieces, which ranged in flavor from the beautiful to the bizarre, illustrated the diverse talents of San Diego's mid-century artistic community. One piece in particular caught the eye of SOHO Board Member **Christopher Pro**: *Second Hand Ed* by Althea Cochrane (Brimm). For this collage, Mrs. Brimm used a reproduction of an issue of the San Diego Herald from 1852 detailing the capture of the notorious outlaw Yankee Jim Robinson. This same Yankee Jim has long been a part of the folklore surrounding the Whaley House, the Old Town house museum operated by SOHO. Special thanks to SOHO member Carolyn Kuzke for providing the gallery pedestals.

Registration, will call, and volunteer check-in were manned by **Autumn Acker, Dimitri Callian, Alana Coons, Dean Glass, Sandé Lollis, Jessica McGee, Maureen McLellan, and Beth Montes**. The crew of forty volunteer docents arrived to pick up their nametags and SOHO Modernism Mugs before going to their assigned houses for Sunday's Home Tour.





The warehouse behind the showroom was the perfect place for the Saturday lectures. First up, Dave Hampton moderated the Modern Art Forum, “a discussion of San Diego’s dynamic art scene during the 1950s and 1960s.” The two special guest artists were **Joe Nyiri**, a San Diegan since 1962 who is best known for his wrought and forged construction techniques with found objects, and **Richard Allen Morris**, a local since 1956 who has received major awards in exhibitions at the San Diego Fine Arts Gallery, the Los Angeles County Museum, the Art Center in La Jolla, and the Palace of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco. After the forum, guests of the exhibition were able to socialize with the artists, who each had some of their work exhibited.

SOHO Modernism Committee member **Todd Pitman** gave an hour long lecture called “Lloyd Ruocco: Architecture, Garden Villas & Supercities.” With over five years of independent research on the work of Ruocco under his belt, Todd’s expansive knowledge of all things Ruocco made him the ideal lecturer on the subject, and his lecture received glowing reviews by the attendees.

The final offering in the lecture series was the Modern Masters Forum. **Keith York**, who is not only a member of the Modernism Committee, but also maintains SOHO’s database of mid-century architecture, moderated this slideshow presentation and engaging conversation with mid-century architects **Loch Crane**, **Leonard Veitzer FAIA**, and **Eugene Weston III**.

Keith York and girlfriend **Jessica Hanson** very graciously opened up “the Bobertz Residence,” York’s 1955 Craig Ellwood-designed home, for the Saturday evening Cocktail Party. Christopher Pro and Modernism Committee Chairman **Bill Lawrence** tended bar all evening, serving up vodka martinis with a twist, while the buffet was a wide array of delectable meats and cheeses, shrimp, South African peppers that were handstuffed with goat cheese by the Modernism committee party prep crew, chocolates, and much more. Nobody left hungry, and everybody agreed the bash was a smash.

Publicity such as the featured article in the previous Sunday’s *San Diego Union-Tribune* brought more than 150 people to the venue to purchase tickets for the Sunday Historic Home Tour, which added to the 350 who had pre-registered. Shuttling over 500 people around Mt. Helix proved challenging for our shuttle drivers Bill Lawrence, Sandé Lollis and Christopher Pro; SOHO President Beth Montes and registration volunteer Dimitri Callian were pressed into service to help out. They performed admirably under pressure and aside from a few complainers, the majority of participants were thrilled with the opportunity to view five mid-century architectural masterpieces and many marveled at how well SOHO had organized the event. The homes featured were three Lloyd Ruocco houses and a Ronald K. Davis house in Mt. Helix and a Henry Hester house in the College area. Special thanks go to homeowners **Vincent Ursillo** and **Jeffrey Kleeve**, **Edie Smith**, **Margaret** and **Vincent O’Hara**, **Todd Pitman** and **Carmen Pauli**, and **Lynn Schwartz** and **Neil Greenstein** who opened their amazing homes for the tour.

SOHO’s Third Annual San Diego Modernism Weekend was the most successful yet, far exceeding the expected number of participants. As exposure to and appreciation of Modern architecture grows, so too will our Modernism events grow. Thanks go to SOHO’s Modernism Committee, volunteers, homeowners, and everyone else who made the Modernism Weekend a resounding success!

English Heritage

A Building in Use is a Building Saved

SHARON GEHL

You might think that historic conservation is about keeping things the same, but ideas about conservation have continually changed over the years in this country and around the world. This reality was illustrated in a talk given by Sir Neil Cossons, the Chairman of English Heritage, at the Getty Conservation Institute on March 19th, as part of their 2004-2005 lecture series.

English Heritage, Scottish Heritage and Welsh Heritage are the three government agencies in charge of heritage issues in Britain. English Heritage has responsibility for well-known historic properties such as Stonehenge, Hadrian's Wall and Queen Victoria's summer palace. They also decide which private properties will be certified historic and who can display one of their famous "Blue Plaques", provide most of the funding for archeological research in England, and survey properties to decide which should be preserved. A recent example of the latter proactive approach was a study of thousands of old cinemas that resulted in the listing of about 30 of the most important ones.

The preservation movement that started in Britain in the 19th Century didn't envision preserving cinemas; it reflected the thinking of its time about what should be preserved. Now English Heritage is working to preserve important parts of English history from the 19th century through World War II, a remarkable period of time that saw the country go from the world's first industrial country to a post industrial service economy, build the world's largest Imperial Empire and then lose it.

The country sees a need now to pull together things that tell about that period, such as the world's first iron bridge, built in 1779, and a group of the world's earliest surviving water powered mills north of Darby on the river Derwent. When these mills were new, people came from all over the world to learn about revolutionary new technologies for making iron or weaving cloth. How best to preserve a mill, ideally by keeping it in operation. Rolled and wrought iron is still being made in some early factories, and the last English stream powered weaving mill is still in operation.

Cossons also talked about efforts to preserve the historic jewelry district in Birmingham. He said that people recognize places, not buildings. So to save buildings you need to think of the whole area. Beginning with a few workshops in the 1820s, a large district of small interconnected workshops developed that produced large quantities of jewelry and silverware. Each workshop would do one part of the manufacturing process and then pass the work on to the next shop. What had been a residential section became an area of workshops full of benches next to windows that let in light to work by. As economic conditions changed, the number of shops declined, until 5 years ago only 2,000 people worked in the district, hardly enough to make the local industry viable. English Heritage worked to consolidate the quarter, so that it could prosper again. There are 3,000 workers in the area now, the public can buy from craftsmen at local shops, and one factory has been turned into a school to teach art and train new craftsmen. Saving the jewelry industry made it possible to save the buildings that they used.

Cossons said that the early philosophy of preservation developed by Ruskin and William Morris advocated doing the minimal restoration necessary and saving all of the fabric. Changing preservation needs have resulted in new ideas about how best to preserve the historic environment



Sir Neil Cossons, Chairman of English Heritage, with hi-tech laser scanning equipment. Photo courtesy Chester Amphitheatre Project.

in England. Preservationists have found that a building in use is a building saved, while a building not in use is on the way to destruction. The approach now is to ask what the essence of a building is, what is important to save. He said that the fabric of a building needs to be understood so that it can be made fire safe and modern systems added to make the building useful. This new approach to preservation is reflected in a set of new preservation standards being developed by English Heritage as part of its 2005-2010 long-range plan. Cossons anticipates that the result will be very controversial when it is finally published in a few months.

You can learn more about English Heritage by visiting their web site, www.english-heritage.org.uk. Look under "Latest News" for the June press release of the English Heritage Strategy 2005-2010. If you're a real preservation junky, you can also read the speeches that accompany the short strategy paper. The whole site is full of information and pictures; you're bound to pick up some useful ideas on preservation. Looking at their experiences and new approaches can show us the future of preserving our past.

Conservator's Corner

SHARON GEHL

What do you do with wonderful old books and magazines, when their musty smell makes you want to throw them away? Faced with that problem last year, I searched the web without success, and then started phoning libraries. Finally a preservationist at the Huntington Library recommended "ONE DROP", a household deodorizer. It comes in a little green bottle and can be found in some groceries stores; the Vons in Mission Hills carries it.

Put a drop or two on a cotton ball, put a few balls in a cardboard box or plastic bag filled with whatever you are trying to deodorize, and close it up. It takes a day or two to work. If there isn't enough of a change the first time, repeat the process. Putting cotton balls behind books on a shelf or in a drawer seems to also work. The effect is permanent, or else I've gotten used to the smell of musty old books!

North Park Theatre

WELTON JONES

A renovated theatre is always splendid news for the city, the audiences and the artists who will occupy it. However, the reopening of the North Park Theatre in October will be especially heartening because it is one of a dying breed.

For theatre-lovers, the most thrilling aspect of the 1929 building's exterior is not the neon, the marquee or even the large parking lot just next door... It's the distinctive multi-story bulge over the backstage area that represents a scenery loft.

Such a loft allows tall backdrops and other scenery pieces to be hoisted out of the audience view when they're not needed. Any fully rigged theatre, capable of accommodating a Broadway-type show, must have such a loft.

There are only seven theatres left in San Diego County with fly lofts. The North Park is one of them, the only one, in fact, outside the downtown San Diego area. The major expense of unsupported interior space makes new fly loft construction prohibitively expensive.

Various institutional theatres around the county have some room for flying scenery. The outdoor Starlight Bowl, the Old Globe Theatre's main stage, the Mandell Weiss Theatre at UCSD and the Don Powell Theatre at San Diego State University are examples. But none of these can hide a full-sized drop directly above the stage. Only Copley



Symphony Hall and the Civic, Spreckels, Balboa, California, Horton Grand and North Park theatres are so endowed.

The North Park was among the last of its kind, a "combination" theatre with both a professional stage for live shows and a professional projection booth for movies, when it opened at University and 29th Street in January 1929. Just a few months later, the stock market crashed, launching the Great Depression and changing movie theatres forever.

There were other movie houses built in the 1920s along University Avenue: the Academy at 38th, the Fairmont (later the Crest) at Fairmont, the Ramona right down the street at 30th, and the Vista at 40th, but they were intended to be just neighborhood film houses.

The North Park had always been marked for higher uses. Alas, these rarely came. As the decades flashed by and popular entertainment embraced motion pictures, the North Park's stage potential was largely ignored. By the time the national Fox Theatre empire was dissolved in the 1970s, the North Park had developed a reputation as just another slightly seedy older film house in an out-of-the-way neighborhood.

The house closed in 1975 and became home to a series of church groups until the 1980s when the late Martin Gregg, a theatrical impresario, took over the lease and briefly restored live performances.

In 1990, the City of San Diego, urged on by Councilwoman Gloria McCall, purchased the property and began long negotiations to restore the theatre. Eventually, downtown developer Bud Fischer took on the project, buying the house for \$1 and undertaking a restoration, in association with the Lyric Opera of San Diego, which eventually may cost over \$8 million.

The Lyric Opera, which will reopen the theatre Oct. 14 with "The Mikado," is the principal tenant and manager of the building, which also will have street-level coffee house and restaurant businesses.

The interior has an enlarged stage and orchestra pit; reduced seating (from 1,100 to 787 seats) on original chairs reupholstered by Bill's Furniture Upholstery in the neighborhood; and original chandeliers restored by Gibson and Gibson of Chula Vista.

The exterior is being repainted to match the yellow color found underneath many brown coats. Historic photographs were consulted in recreating the missing finials on the roof. A new marquee blossomed above the sidewalk along University Avenue but the box office itself was moved around the corner to 29th Street, making room for a new restaurant along the avenue.

But the distinctive contour of the fly loft is right where it always has been.



Join Friends & Fellow Preservationists
for the 2005 Holiday Party!

Sunday, December 11

3:00-7:00pm

700 S. Juniper Street

Corner of 7th & Juniper

The party has been planned for early in the afternoon to accommodate those driving from San Diego.

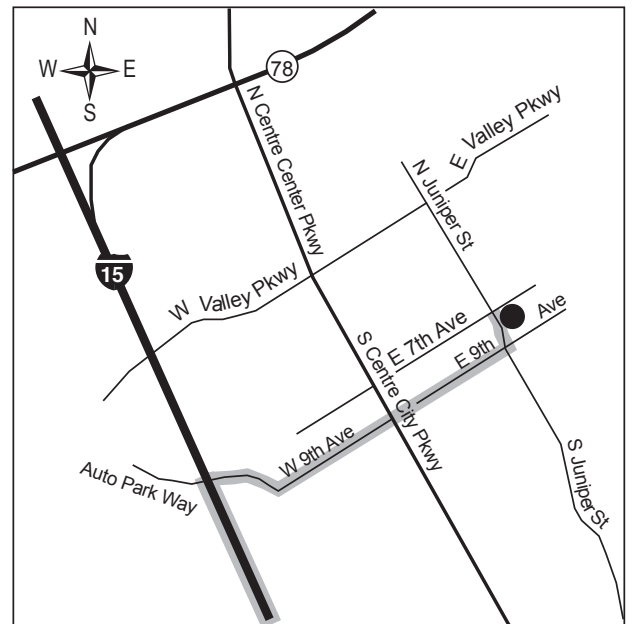
As always
SOHO provides the ham, turkey and beverages;
you bring a favorite dish to share.
The Holiday Party is a benefit of membership.

We are thankful to our gracious hosts
Harry and Leticia Parashis
for their generosity
in sharing their remarkable home with us.

This year's party is being held at a magnificent 1896 Queen Anne Victorian in Old Escondido, which is on the National Register. Built by real estate developer Albert Beach on speculation, the house was purchased by Henry Timken, the roller-bearing inventor who owned a ranch in Escondido and a home in San Diego, as a wedding gift for his daughter, Amelia Bridges. The meticulously restored home has received multiple awards, been featured in local and national newspapers and magazines and was the subject of the PBS TV show "Restore America." The high-end restoration reflects the aesthetic of the 1880s and '90s art movement and the owner's collection of early California art in itself is not to be missed. This will be a most memorable Holiday Party.

Directions: Escondido is approximately 33 miles north of San Diego. From freeway I-15 take the Auto Park Way/W. 9th Avenue exit and turn right. Follow 9th Avenue for approximately a mile and a half. Turn left on Juniper. House is on the southeast corner of 7th and Juniper.

Call (619) 297-9327 to RSVP



It Makes Sense To do Your Holiday Shopping at SOHO

Where can you do your holiday shopping in a historic setting, avoid the overcrowded malls, and get a 10% discount on everything you buy? Why, the SOHO Museum Shop of course!

Youngsters of all ages will love our huge selection of historic toys. Create an heirloom to be passed on with our beautiful wooden ABC Nursery Blocks, Kolor Dot Dominoes, and Marbles & Blocks. Surprise a child with the delight that can only come from playing with an old fashioned, no-batteries-required toy like the 1876 Centennial Baseball Game, nineteenth century style dolls, the Game of Graces, or a 13-piece Fiesta style pottery Children's Tea Set. Baby Boomers will get a kick out of our line of replica tin robots and race cars, as well as the ultimate collectors toy, an exact replica of the first teddy bear made by the original maker, Stieff.

Delight your friends and family with favorite toys of the past: clay marbles, pewter jacks, even paddle balls, and we have a great assortment of tin box games, such as Fish Pond, the Great Railroad Game, and the Woods Are Full of Them. The finest card games are available too, such as F.G. & Co.'s reproduction card games, including Ship's Cargo, the Cinderella Game, the Cottage of Content, and the Maid of Orleans. These smaller games make great stocking stuffers, and if you are looking for terrific stockings, we have those too.

In addition to special Christmas books like the *Artful Christmas* and *A Christmas Carol*, we carry the complete collections of Andrew Lang's colorful Fairy Books and L. Frank Baum's ever popular Oz Books, sure to bring hours of enjoyment to readers young and old. Our book room is jam-packed with titles covering a variety of subject matter. Of course the SOHO Museum Shop is the best place in San Diego to find your historic architecture and home restoration books, we also have wonderful books on early San Diego and California history. You can always find a few classics by Mark Twain or Jane Austen, or pick up back issues of magazines, such as *True West*, *American Bungalow*, and *Atomic Ranch*, which make great stocking stuffers. SOHO's is the only shop that does not charge extra for these collectible back issues.

Fans of Modernism will appreciate our kitschy mid-century style ornaments, but if it's Victoriana you're after, we can outfit your nineteenth century tree as well. We even have "Bah Humbug" stocking ornaments complete with a lump of coal for the Scrooge on your list. And this year the Mexicana ornaments will be hard to resist for display year round.

Ladies on your list always love jewelry, and we've got it: Victorian, Art Nouveau, Arts and Crafts, and Spanish Colonial. For the man, flask, tie tacks, shaving brushes, mugs, and soap are just a few items that he would enjoy receiving this holiday season.

The SOHO Museum Shop always carries a gallery-full of framed art prints. From classic Gibson and Erté to regional 40's travel advertisements, you can find something to suit any room and design theme, these make a particularly nice gift.

For those gift-giving occasions that require only a fine bottle of wine or other spirits we have bottle and other gift bags that are so lovely they are a gift in themselves.

So, why shop elsewhere this season? At the SOHO Museum Shop you will find a unique and quality gift and at the same time know that money spent goes toward one of your favorite causes, historic preservation of your own community. It makes sense to do your holiday shopping at SOHO. Remember to bring your membership card to take advantage of your member discount.

SAVE the PAST BUY a PRESENT



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LA PASTORELA

Save Our Heritage Organisation PRESENTS a traditional & bilingual holiday play

December 15-23

Two Performances Nightly - 6 & 8pm



At the Old Adobe Chapel - 3950 Conde Street

Admission: Adults \$15, Children under 12 and seniors over 65 \$10

**Tickets available at the SOHO Museum Shop at the Whaley House
2476 San Diego Avenue in Old Town San Diego**

Call 619-297-7511 or visit www.sohosandiego.org for more information

This project funded in part by the City of San Diego Commission for Arts & Culture

La Pastorela at the Adobe Chapel

WELTON JONES

The moment I entered the Old Adobe Chapel, I knew we had to do a show there.

On December 15 a new version of the traditional Mexican Christmas play *La Pastorela* begins a nine-day, 18-performance run.

I only hope there will be room for everybody who is going to fall in love with this ancient folk musical celebration in this nearly ideal setting, which dates back to 1850.

I had a similar feeling the first time I went upstairs in the Whaley House. And again the first time Bruce Coons looked at the yard outside and said "What about 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'?"

Since I retired from the *Union-Tribune* in 2001 and joined the SOHO board, one of my main preservation interests has been to recreate some of the city's rich 19th century theatrical culture. Both *The Gift of the Magi* that year and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in the summer of 2002 were successful one-time projects.

With the Adobe Chapel, however, SOHO has a chance to move much further towards my goal by restoring an old tradition and repeating it annually.

There is concrete evidence that a Pastorela was performed in the Mission San Diego de Alcalá as early as 1829. Probably there were presentations even in the 18th century, since the play came to the New World with Cortez. Certainly, the tradition is appropriate for a place like Old Town, a monument to a shared Latino-Anglo-Native American heritage.

La Pastorela is part play and part ritual, a version of the biblical story of the shepherds' journey to Bethlehem after Jesus Christ's birth. The speeches, the music, even the cast of characters have varied widely over the centuries and across the Americas. But always, the main language has been Spanish.

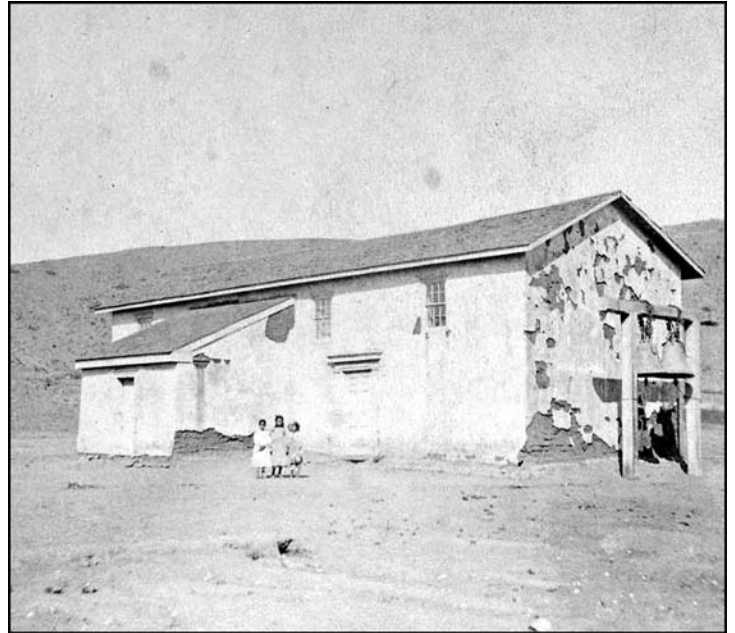
For *La Pastorela* at the Old Adobe Chapel, a special script has been developed by Luis Torner, a Mexican actor and director of long experience with pastorelas, that combines both Spanish and English in a version that will be comfortably understood by everybody.

Torner and I will direct the show with a paid cast augmented by volunteers. Detailed plans are still in the works but the idea is to make the entire experience as authentic and magical as possible, with acoustic music, traditional sets and costumes and even candlelight.

There will be two performances each evening December 15-23, at 6 and 8pm. Since the chapel seats only 50 persons comfortably, this means that only 900 tickets will be available.

I certainly hope that all SOHO members and their families will be among the first to make reservations. Because, while I'm confident that *La Pastorela* will become an annual seasonal event, I am very afraid that we'll be turning people away by the end of this year's debut run.

Tickets are on sale now. For reservations and tickets call (619) 297-7511 or (619) 297-9327, or stop by the SOHO Museum Shop at 2476 San Diego Avenue in Old Town. Admission is \$15 for adults, and \$10 for children and seniors over 65. Seating is very limited; advance reservations are strongly encouraged.



Adobe Chapel exterior, circa 1872. Photo courtesy Coons Collection.

We would like to thank our sponsors who are helping to underwrite our production: Café Coyote and Historic Old Town Community Foundation, and a very special thank you goes to the cast and crew.

Cast

Chris Fonseca-Archangel Michael
Frankie Moran-Lucifer
Monica Mendoza-Belial
Gerard (Gerry) Maxwell-Moloc
Vincent (Vince) Baca-Hermit
Caleb Alvarez-Bato
Terence J. Burke-Martin
Leti Carranza-Gila
Patricia (Patty) Elmore Costa-Julia
Joyelle Cabato-Maria (understudy)
Jose-TBA

Crew

Welton Jones, Producer/Director
Luis Torner, Author/Director
Tony Wood, Stage Manager
Linda Matlock, ASM
Hollace Jones, Music Director
Susan Scharpf, Set Design
Kate Stallons, Costumer
Roger Henderson, Lighting
Serafin Paredes, Guitar

Ensemble

Delia/DeDe Casillas

Historic Old Town Courtyard Ideal Setting for Keister Book Signing

JULIE KOLB

Old Town's historic Seeley Stables provided the intimate setting for a recent lecture and presentation by author and photographer Doug Keister. Held on the evening of Saturday, September 17, the event celebrated the release of Keister's 26th book, *Courtyards: Intimate Outdoor Spaces*.

For many SOHO members, Keister's name is well-known for the books he has photographed in collaboration with authors, designers, and experts, as well as the books he produced in his own right as author and photographer. SOHO Executive Director **Bruce Coons** introduced Keister noting that past books have covered such diverse subjects as bungalows, trailers, and mausoleums, among others. With historic architecture as the broad unifying theme of his past work, his latest book about courtyards continues that theme.

The presentation offered the chance to preview many of the photos included in the new book as well as the unique opportunity to hear Keister elaborate on his inspirations for it, how he selected sites to photograph, and why specific courtyards had been included. He recalled the challenges of finding private courtyards to photograph, pointing out that by their very nature as private havens they are hidden from public view.

Naturally, San Diego featured prominently in both Keister's lecture and the photographs included in the book. Photos of Balboa Park as well as several private houses illustrated our region's own significant contribution to both the diversity of style and popularity of courtyards, providing audience members with the opportunity to view our city's familiar public spaces from a new perspective.

Joining San Diego as one of the regions in the United States that boasts a large stock of lovely courtyards, New Orleans has also been amply represented in the book. As photos of courtyards in New Orleans illuminated the screen, Keister gave voice to the poignancy of seeing these lovely spaces in the aftermath of the devastation of Hurricane Katrina. As he identified specific features illustrated in each of these photos he wondered what might have become of each of them.

Following the lecture, attendees took the short walk from the Seeley Stables to the courtyard of the historic 1825 Estudillo House, an image of which is included in Keister's book. The Estudillo House is rarely open to the public at night, but was made available to SOHO because of the special relationship we have with the Old Town San Diego State Historic Park. As Keister answered questions and signed copies of his new book, guests mingled under the cover of the courtyard veranda enjoying the catered reception which included a sumptuous medley of hors d'oeuvres and wine. Lit only by lantern light and starlight, the nocturnal beauty of the Estudillo House truly showed the attraction of courtyard living.

Joining SOHO staff in making this special event possible were SOHO members **Janet** and **Kevin Conway** who applied their creativity to the lovely set up of the reception and who helped at the conclusion of the event. Appreciation is also expressed to Old Town San Diego State Historic Park's **Elizabeth Allancortt** and **Bob Wohl** who opened the venues for the event.



Doug Keister & Sandé Lollis



Lena & Jeff Lollis



Kevin Conway & Beth Montes



Christopher Pro



Allen Hazard & Martha Jordan



Todd Gohsler & Christina Simonick



Beth Montes & Alana Coons



Autumn Acker & Jason Kurnow



Dean Glass & Janet Conway



Doug Keister signing books.

35th Annual Meeting and Election

BETH MONTES

A special thanks to the members who attended the Annual Meeting at my home on September 24th. It was a great turnout with lots of delicious food and delightful conversation with old and new SOHO friends.

We held our election of board members and officers per the slate proposed by the nominating committee, approved by the board, and mailed to the entire membership. A special thanks to outgoing board members Susan Hector and Tim Rudolph. Taking their places are two new and one returning directors. Jim Shibano and John Eisenhart will be bringing their fresh perspectives to the board, while Bonnie Poppe returns after several years on hiatus (from the board that is, not from other SOHO activities!). Peter Janopaul remains on the Board as an alternate.

Barry Hager will be taking over the Vice President slot from Peter Janopaul, who in turn will remain as an alternate; the other officers remain the same: Jessica McGee, Treasurer; Lori Peoples, Secretary; Erik Hanson, Ex Officio; and myself as President.

The Annual Meeting is one of my favorite events. It is a chance for us all to come together for a visit not related to any other activity; a time to get to know one another beyond our common preservation bond. This year's meeting certainly upheld these fond feelings; thanks again for another memorable year.



Stan & Laurel Schwartz, Jay Neal, Janet O'Dea, Erik Hanson, Carin Howard, Sharon Gehl, Jaime Gomez & Welton Jones



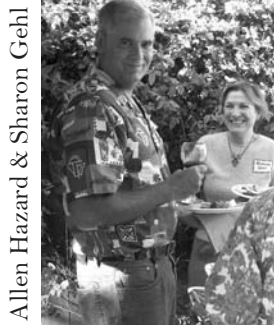
Julie & Hannah Kolb



Jeff Lollis



Jessica McGee



Allen Hazard & Sharon Gehl



Misty & Curt Drake



Susan Hector & Barry Hager

Alana Coons was awarded the SOHO Lady from last year's recipient, Jessica McGee



Stan & Laurel Schwartz



Christopher Pro, Dean Glass & Lori Peoples



David Swarens, Holly & Welton Jones

Contributors To Success

SOHO thanks the generous contributions of new and renewing members of our Family & Individuals, Professional, Executive, Benefactor and Lifetime groups from August through October, 2005.

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Kathryn Willetts

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JW August
John Bade
Vivian Bangs
Elena Bartzat
Walter Bartzat
Priscilla Ann Berge
Karlene K. Bergold
Lucy Berk
Margaret Bézy
Raymond Borrás
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Ann Breslauer
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Lorraine Moore
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J. William Naish
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Ann Senterfitt
Sandra Sharp
Al Shenk
Genie Shenk
Patricia Shushan
Kathleen Steinley
Martin Steinley
Nancy J. Turecek
Victor Walsh
Lucy Warren
Karna Webster
Barbara Wells
Donald Wood
Keith York

New Members

Benefactor

Jim Balogh

Executive

Tom & Tarey Gerardy

Professional

Jerry Linney

Individual or Family

Cheri Anaclerio
Paul Arenson

Penny Arenson
Joyce Bentley
Joan Bockman
Kevin Bockman
Harold "Mack" Brenner
Laurie Brindle
Suzan M. Cervantes
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Jim Chase
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Chaco Clotfelter
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Greg Truesdale
Matt Wells
Bill Worley

Student

Douglas Lee Dennis Jr.
Anne Johnston
Abigail Migala
Sarah Poblete
Jodi Schaefer
Lesley Strong
Jack Wilson
Kimberly Yackel

SOHO Welcomes New Directors to the Board

JOHN EISENHART was born in Highland Park, Michigan in 1963. He spent his formative years in Detroit, Michigan and was influenced by the architecture and people of that city. John received a Bachelor of Science and Master of Architecture from the University of Michigan. From 1989 to 1998 he lived in various Western American cities, including Portland, Seattle, San Jose and San Diego. Since 1998 John has resided in San Diego and founded his architecture firm UNION in 2003. The firm works in contemporary residential, multifamily and historical renovation/restoration fields. He resides and works in Five Points and enjoys running, music, art, film, literature, and the magical light of San Diego.

BONNIE POPPE is a staunch preservationist whose hands-on approach to restoration and preservation projects is well known. She has restored several homes in the South Park area. Bonnie sits on the Golden Hill planning group as a prominent voice for historic and environmental preservation of the community and is actively involved with saving the canyons and native habitat and plants as well. Bonnie has served on the SOHO board twice before in the late 1980s and again in the 1990s, and she received SOHO's People In Preservation 2005 Preservationist of the Year last May.

JIM SCHIBANOFF, MD, was born in New Jersey and studied medicine at Princeton University and the University of Southern California School of Medicine, and received postgraduate training as a Pulmonary Intensivist at the University of California, San Diego. He has served as Chief Medical Officer of a San Diego healthcare system and as Chief Executive Officer of two San Diego hospitals. He is the co-author of *Milliman Care Guidelines—Inpatient and Surgical Care, Home Care, and Recovery Facility Care*, and is Editor in Chief for *Milliman Care Guidelines*, A Division of Milliman, Inc. He has been passionate about history, architecture, and historic preservation for more than 30 years, and shares his 1912 Dell Harris-designed English Craftsman home in Del Mar with his wife Nancy.

Thank You's

- Michelle Hamilton - Donation of the cost of full restoration, fabric and reupholstery of the Whaley house circa 1880 rocker originally owned by the family and donated last year by Delia Faley
- Margaret Diehl - 1904 phonograph and cylinders
- Rachel Merrill - 4 drawer legal-sized file cabinet and desk
- Mark Bihm & Humberto Villegas - Hose and hose caddy for grounds keeping
- Veronica McGowan - Books, a variety of vintage books
- Shirley Lindemann - Lucite display cabinet
- Rick Sweeney - Use of video camera for oral history of Rurik Kallis

VISIT www.sohosandiego.org for the online version of *Reflections Quarterly*, to review and search past issues, click on photographs to view larger version, and all images originally in color appear in color online.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 11, 3-7pm
Annual Holiday Potluck

December 15-23
La Pastorela at the Adobe Chapel

March 10-12, 2006
Craftsman & Spanish Revival Weekend

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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

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Please complete this form and send it with your payment to SOHO, 2476 San Diego Avenue, San Diego CA 92110

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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.

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Address: _____

City, State Zip _____

Membership Includes

- ◆ Free admission to Whaley House Museum
- ◆ Free admission to Adobe Chapel
- ◆ *Reflections* Newsletter Quarterly subscription
- ◆ 10% discount on Museum Shop items
- ◆ Advance notice & discounts to lectures, special events, & tours
- ◆ Invitations to special receptions & events
- ◆ Participation in volunteer programs

Save Our Heritage Organisation is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization

“The Ghosts at the Whaley House get all the Publicity.”

DEAN GLASS

October is always a busy month at the Whaley House, the 1856-57 historic house museum in Old Town operated for the County of San Diego by SOHO. As Halloween approaches, thousands of tourists and ghost-hunters head for what famed paranormal investigator Hans Holzer has described as “one of the most actively haunted mansions in the world today.” While the Whaley House probably does not need any more publicity than it has received in its first 45 years as a house museum, it seems that this year everybody was talking about the Whaley House.

In September we were visited by Kevin Cooley, a photographer for *Life Magazine*. Three of his stunning photographs were published in *Life*'s October 21 issue, accompanied by a story by Johnny Dwyer entitled “The Most Haunted House in America: The Whaley House is haunted top to bottom, dawn to dusk—not just on Halloween but 365 days a year.” The article detailed reports of “shadowy figures, the sounds of an organ, unexplained chilly air, cigar smoke...” which have kept the museum's haunted reputation going strong since it first opened to the public in 1960.

On the October 20 edition of “Live with Regis and Kelly,” Regis Philbin and Kelly Ripa discussed the night in 1964 when Philbin stayed after hours at the Whaley House and witnessed the apparition of Anna Whaley's ghost. Philbin is known for not wanting to talk about the episode, but evidently it was the article in *Life Magazine*, a copy of which Philbin displayed on air, that brought the subject up. Ripa expressed her desire to spend the night in the house, and Regis replied that if they were ever in the San Diego area, he'd consider it. We promptly sent a formal invitation; no word yet.

Rod “The Scout” Deutschmann, who writes a column for the Camp Pendleton Marine Base website recommending activities for Marines in San Diego, reprinted our “Ghostly Legends of the Whaley House” information sheet for the Halloween season.

On KOGO radio's “Rockin' With Roger” music contest, host and former San Diego Mayor Roger Hedgecock awarded eleven winners each a pair of passes to the Whaley House and dinner for two at the New Orleans Creole Café. Winners were required to identify by title and artist a snippet of a song from the 1960s, 70s, or 80s. Over on the FM dial, Star 94.1 radio personalities Laura Cain and Randy Hoag of the “Jeff and Jer Showgram,” spent the night of October 26 in the Whaley House, after dining at the New Orleans Creole Café. The event was highly publicized, including two on-air interviews with SOHO staff on October 25 and 26.

The following evening, October 27, Dan Sachoff and Christine Blackburn hosted the “Ready for the Weekend Movie” on the USA Network, appearing in nine segments videotaped inside and outside of the Whaley House in August.

Finally, on Sunday, October 30, the *San Diego Union* printed an article by Peter Rowe, *Old Town's less familiar haunt: Is he jealous of Whaley's ghost, or just trying to scare up business?*, in which staff at Old

Town's Plaza del Pasado and frustrated part-time ghost hunter Michael Brown lamented that the spirits who haunt the State Park's many historic buildings are virtually unknown compared to those at the Whaley House. “The ghosts at the Whaley House get all the publicity,” said Jonathan Heller of Southwest Strategies, a San Diego public relations firm. Pointing out that both *Life Magazine* and the USA Network were featuring the Whaley House this year, Rowe states that the Whaley House getting extra publicity “is the equivalent of Richie Rich winning the Lotto.”

The extra publicity seems to have paid off. During the four-day “Halloween Weekend,” October 28-31, in which the museum's doors remained open until midnight, the museum had a total of 2618 paid visitors (not counting eight trolley-loads of visitors each night on the Old Town Trolley's now-defunct Ghost & Gravestones Tour), bringing in \$19,076.00 which will be added to the \$35,000.00 grant received from County Supervisor Ron Roberts for the restoration of the Whaley House kitchen in 2006.

We would like to thank the following SOHO staff members and volunteers who pulled together to make the Halloween Weekend tours of the Whaley House a pleasant experience for over three thousand visitors: James Anderson, Evan Bonavita, DeDe Casillas, Ron Casillas, Alana Coons, William Doyle, Deirdre Gilmartin, Dean Glass, Morgana Gordon, Vykki Mende Gray, Alan Hazard, Jeff Hughes, Mary Jones, Stuart Kalbrofsky, Pat Moore, Janet O'Dea, Casey O'Hanlon-Howie, Linda Petersen, Pat Petersen, Marie Pleasant, George Plum, Chris Pro, Victor Santana, Sean Shiraishi, Cassi Spindler, Deborah Spindler, Scott Spindler, David Swarens, Hillary Sweeney, Jokie Tolentino and her husband James, Justin West; Maritza Skandunas and Karen Ridens of the San Diego Ghost Hunters; and Jeff and Chris of Black Hawk Security. We would also like to remind you that as a SOHO member, your admission to the Whaley House is always free, and we hope you will consider volunteering to help out next Halloween.

Haunted Houses Preservation Help or Horror?

BYRD WOOD

Ask a child to draw a haunted house and chances are you'll get turrets, gothic arches, and a steep pointy roof. Go to see a scary movie and you can be sure that when the climactic stabbing, choking, or hanging finally occurs, it takes place in an older house, most likely a Victorian mansion or gothic castle. The House of Horrors at the state fair? An old decrepit house.

Almost a year ago, I read an article in the *Minnesota Preservationist*, published by the Preservation Alliance of Minnesota, about haunted houses in movies. The author, Ann Miller, wondered if so-called haunted houses are a boon or bane to historic preservation. She writes: “The people-interesting

Casey O'Hanlon-Howie

Ready With a Smile

DEAN GLASS

Casey O'Hanlon-Howie is one of our longtime docents at the Whaley House. Casey originally worked in the museum with June Reading and the Historical Shrine Foundation for about eight years in the 1980s, making this her second tour of duty here.

One of seven children, she was born in Camden, South Carolina. Her father was a lieutenant colonel in the Army who served in the Second World War under General MacArthur and also in the Korean War. Casey was born and lived most of her young life on military bases. Her love of mission history was fostered by spending the eighth grade at the school on the grounds of Mission San Juan Capistrano and she continues to go to retreats at Mission San Luis Rey.

Casey traveled to Japan as a child, and continues to enjoy traveling today. She recently took a cross-country trip with her husband, Bill, sister, and brother-in-law to Mt. Rushmore, Gutzon Borglum's presidential monument in South Dakota, and to the historic 1874 Fort Robinson Museum in Crawford, Nebraska, where her delightful personality attracted the museum curator to the extent that he offered her a job on the spot.

In addition to working at the Whaley House, the Old Adobe Chapel, and the SOHO Museum Shop, where she is a fabulous salesperson, Casey works one day a week at Summers Past Farms in Flinn Springs. She also finds time for swimming and yoga five days a week at the Salvation Army Kroc Center, hiking in Yosemite, and mountain biking in Colorado.

Casey lives in a 1941 home in the historic neighborhood of Rolando, and is one of the most popular members of our staff, always ready with a smile and a hug for everyone. She likes people, which, she says, is why she loves working at the Whaley House Museum Complex, where she meets people from all over the world. She is always busy doing something, whether it be cleaning, answering questions about the Whaley family or Adobe Chapel history, or making a big sale at the Museum Shop.



mansion in *The Haunting* and the horrifying hovel at the end of the *Blair Witch Project* do old houses a grave disservice: Such movies give filmgoers the impression that old houses tend to serve as repositories for evil spirits."

After listing other historic houses seen in horror movies, such as the creepy New York apartment building of *Rosemary's Baby* (1968) and the opulent Louisiana plantation of *Hush, Hush, Sweet Charlotte* (1964), she adds: "A good example of how historic architecture can serve vividly as a walking, talking character is Norman Bates' Victorian monstrosity in *Psycho* (1960). Could the movie have been half as effective if his residence had been a tract house?"

Yet, Miller points out, so-called haunted houses can subtly encourage historic preservation. In fact, rumors of a ghostly presence can bring a certain distinction to a historic house. Even if a visitor, generally of the younger variety, is bored to tears by the lecture of the tour leader at a historic site, he or she will perk up at stories of sightings of a previous resident who came to a ghastly end, of sounds of weeping from a vacant bedroom or music playing in the empty ballroom, or of candles blowing out on a calm evening.

Visitors to the hotels that are members of the National Trust Historic Hotels of America, a collection of 140 historically

significant hotels, are usually intrigued by stories of some of the more unusual hotel "guests". For example you check into room 3502 at the Hotel Del Coronado in Coronado, California, you might share a room with Kate Morgan, a young woman who died mysteriously at the hotel in 1892 while waiting to reunite with her estranged husband. Since her tragic end, witnesses have been puzzled by odd noises, spirited breezes, strange faces and the ghostly figure of a young lady in a black lace dress.

Old buildings come with a past. That past may be an important event found in history books or it may be just a rumor fueled by late night ghost stories. But either way, hearing such stories can help us feel more personally connected to a building's history and to the people who were a part of it. Preservationists are accustomed to being "haunted" by the past. We should celebrate any ghosts that make that past more vivid and compelling for others.

Editor's note: We first reprinted this article in the March, 2001 issue of Reflections with permission of National Trust Forum, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036, (202)588-6053, www.nationaltrust.org. With all of the attention and growing popularity of historic sites thought to be haunted, we thought it bared repeating five years later for those who may have missed it.

New Orleans Creole Café Celebrating One Year Anniversary

DEAN GLASS

SOHO members who have ventured to Old Town lately to take advantage of free admission to the Whaley House Museum or their 10% discount on books and merchandise at the SOHO Museum Shop have probably noticed some recent changes our friends at the New Orleans Creole Café have made.

Both of the 1870s-era false-front store buildings that are believed to have originally stood on pilings in San Diego's harbor and which have occupied their current location on the Whaley House grounds since the 1960s, are now home to the New Orleans Creole Café. Owners Humberto Villegas and Mark Bihm recently took over the former Drug Store Museum, the easternmost of the two structures, in order to add an indoor dining room to their restaurant operation. Originally, the café occupied only one of the buildings, which they use as their kitchen and walk-up service.

Another noticeable addition is the new fence, an exact replica of a fence that surrounded the Whaley property a century ago, which has been added around the perimeter of the outdoor dining area, as required by California law, to enable the café to serve beer and wine to its outdoor diners. The café was only recently permitted to begin selling beer and wine, and already it has made a positive difference in business. Among the southern-themed beers available are Abita Amber, Turbo Dog, and Purple Haze, while O'Douls is available for the less-adventurous imbibers. For the wine connoisseur, there is a selection of Napa Valley wines, as well as the house wines, which include Pascual Toso Cabernet Sauvignon from Argentina and Montes Chardonnay and Merlot from Chile. There is also Louisiana-style sweet tea for those who prefer a traditional non-alcoholic beverage.

Whether you prefer dining al fresco under gas lights and pepper trees or in the quaint, rustic indoor dining room, you'll find the menu, which Frank Sabatini, Jr., food critic for the *San Diego Gay and Lesbian Times* calls "abnormally inexpensive," has a nice



variety of spicy recipes straight out of the Big Easy. Mark was raised in Louisiana, where he learned to prepare everything Cajun from jambalaya to alligator sausage po-boys. For dessert, there is red velvet cake, pecan pie, or bread pudding, and vanilla lattes.

The Creole Café celebrates its one-year anniversary this October, so be sure to stop by and wish Mark and Humberto continued success and take advantage of the 10% discount they extend to all SOHO members. If you are in the mood for a bowl of chicken and sausage gumbo followed by a sublime crawfish etouffée, you don't need to look any further than Thomas and Anna Whaley's backyard.

The New Orleans Creole Café is open 7 days a week from 11:30am-9pm.

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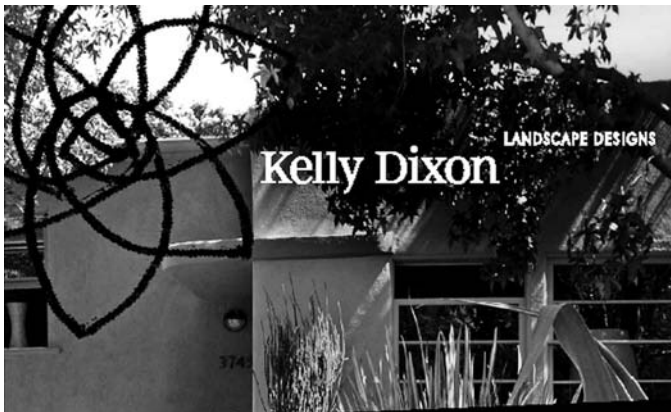
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Historic photos c. 1920, courtesy Coons Collection

The romantic Mission Olive Works building was replaced in the late 1950's by this, an attempt of the State Highway Department (now Caltrans) to compliment and contrast with the historic "Old San Diego Architecture" in Old Town.



Current photos by Bruce Coons

