

# REFLECTIONS

May 1977  
Vol. IX, No. 5

Newsletter of the  
Save Our Heritage Organisation

## Gaslamp Quarter - 1<sup>st</sup> Historic District

S.O.H.O. members, on your next free Sunday afternoon, plan to take a stroll through San Diego's first Historic District, The Gaslamp Quarter. After an April 11th public hearing, The San Diego Historical Site Board named the Gaslamp Quarter an Historic District. Such recognition should encourage the area to grow as a viable neighborhood while it maintains its Victorian flavor.

The Gaslamp Quarter is a 16 block section of the downtown area bordered by Broadway on the north, Fourth Avenue on the west, Pacific Highway on the south and Sixth Avenue on the east. An assorted collection of buildings constructed there between 1880 and 1910 display such architectural features as continuous facades, closely set bay windows and twenty foot-high ceilings. Twelve buildings in this area already hold individual historic site designations.

Historical designation is the first step in providing certain tax benefits and relaxed building codes for the 76 buildings in the Gaslamp Quarter. These benefits will be realized after the District is placed on the National Register of Historic Places; the Board has already taken action to apply for that additional designation.

We hope that the new advantages resulting from designation will stimulate building renovation. Gaslamp property owners indicate plans to apply for Federal block grants for restoration assistance. They are also considering assessment districts for possible trolley or landscaping improvements.

Walking down Gaslamp's Fifth Avenue, one can see the neighborhood's past beauty and visualize its potential vitality. Declaring the Gaslamp Quarter an Historic District is a major step in giving this area new life.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

There still seems to be a certain amount of debate over the best location for a SOHO office/headquarters. Our office committee, headed by Marc Tarasuck, has already done a great deal of legwork looking for suitable structures in both the Gaslamp and Golden Hill areas. It is, of course, a difficult task, and one that will not be resolved overnight. To understand the problems involved, we must look at SOHO's role as an organization in the community. How best can we serve our members and the public?

SOHO has grown to such proportions that it is no longer feasible to operate out of the homes of our committee members. Some of you have wondered why it takes so long to get your checks back from the bank. When you mail a check to SOHO, it may sit in the post office box for several days before the mailing list chairman has a chance to pick it up. He then makes any additions or corrections to the mailing list and turns it over to the membership chairman. She processes the memberships and sends out the membership cards. After they have been processed, the checks then go to the treasurer who deposits them. Since each of these volunteers have their own lives and businesses to run, it can take six or more weeks before a check gets deposited. Imagine how much more simple the process could be if each of these people could go to one location to perform these duties instead of shuffling things all over town.

Another point to consider is SOHO's rapidly growing preservation library--the only one of its kind in Southern California. We need to make this material available to people interested in restoring older structures. Eventually, the library could become one of our most important community services.

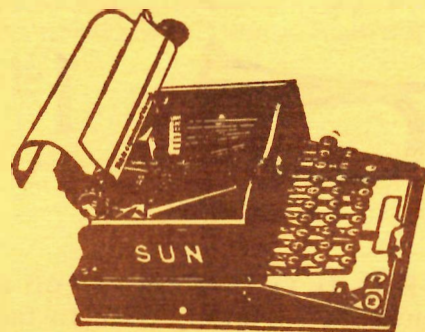
Several of our members have spoken of buying a "real showplace" that might become an historic house type museum. Personally, I don't believe that SOHO should get into the museum business. The problems involved with this kind of project are immense. A museum is a little like a showgirl... you can't be one unless you have something to show, and historic collections are a tremendous responsibility (and a tremendous headache). Besides, we would be duplicating the efforts of the

Historical Society. SOHO is better off sticking to displays and workshops dealing with historic preservation, and this can be accomplished just as well in an old warehouse as in an old mansion.

Perhaps the most important consideration of all is financial. What can we afford? Since our income from memberships and tours is so irregular, it is most important that we find a building with some kind of rental income. It may be possible to find a building that could eventually support other preservation projects.

I have only scratched the surface of the problems that our office committee is trying to face. It is a tough job and one that requires a great deal of dedication. The decision to purchase a building will probably be the most important that SOHO will ever make. Our Board of Directors has authorized the office committee to open escrow on any structure it feels suitable, pending final approval by the general membership. I am confident that they will find just what we are looking for.

Bruce Kamerling



## ALICE HONORED

SOHO typist, Alice "Nimble Fingers" Crittenden, was honored at the May 1st General Meeting with a bouquet of roses and a set of SOHO coffee mugs. Alice has had to put up with our spelling errors, poor handwriting and shaky deadlines since 1975, and the SOHO Board thought it was time to show our appreciation. Thanks Alice, and keep up the good work!

Alice wishes to say "thank you" and deeply appreciates your thoughtfulness.

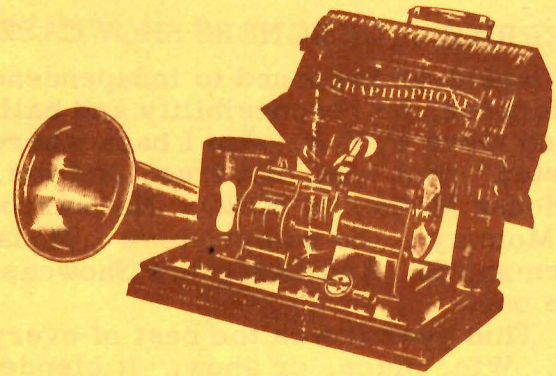
## SCRIPPS LAB MAKES IT THROUGH ROUND #1

Irving Gill's Biological Station (1909), the original building of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, was approved as an Historical Site by the Site Board at their May 6th meeting. U.C.S.D. is planning to demolish the structure, even though they have no plans for the site.

According to architectural historian Esther McCoy, who discussed the building in her book *Five California Architects* and also in the April, 1972, issue of *Historic Preservation*, this was Gill's first work in monolithic concrete--a prototype for the well-lighted factory of the thirties. It was also a major turning point in Gill's career, predicting his later stripped down style. Historically, it is the oldest marine science building in the Western Hemisphere.

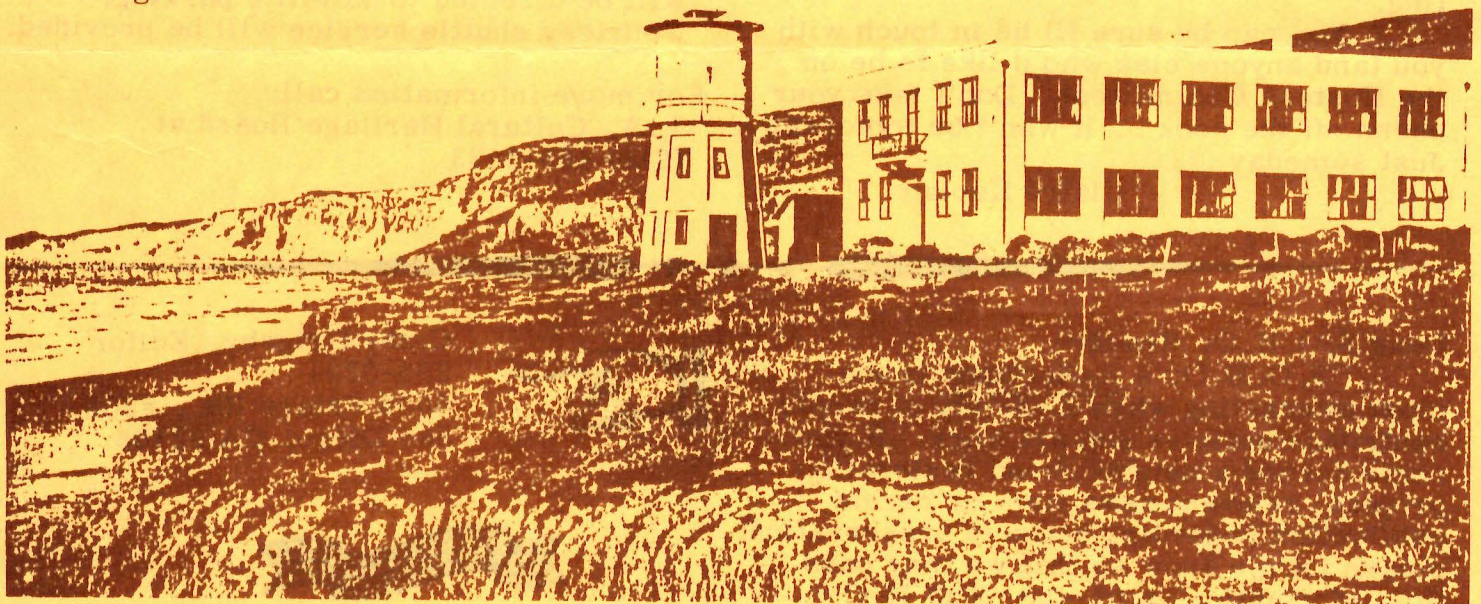
A recent structural report on the building stated that it did not have the proper amount of reinforcement, and was therefore a seismic risk. This report, however, was written without reference to the original blueprints which have since been obtained for study. It is interesting to note that Gill's Laughlin Theater in Long Beach, built at about the same time as the Scripps building using similar construction methods, was one of the few early buildings to survive the Long Beach earthquake.

The next step will be to try to stop the demolition permit, which will go before the Coastal Commission at their next meeting.



### RECORDS AVAILABLE

SOHO has finally obtained fifty copies of the album *BLOCK BUSTER* that was recorded at SOHO's Block Party back in 1973. The record features Buddy Collette and the West Coast Jazz Quintette, and was taped by San Diego City College's all jazz radio station, KSDS FM. The album cover displays early photos of the now-demolished Land Title Building and also the Spreckels Theatre, as well as a big write-up about SOHO. Don't miss the opportunity to own one of these historic albums---only \$5. Contact SOHO at 225-1033, and we'll see that you get one!



SCRIPPS BIOLOGICAL STATION

## REPRISE... DESIGNERS SHOWCASE

So .. whatever happened to independence, indifference, no responsibility and hallelujah, no more P.T.A. Am I back where I started? Not true, not true! Not me. Not House Mother to SOHO. Not surrogate Mommy .. So compromise .. House Chairman, Si! And Designers Showcase is the one.

This year it was the best of everything. Win, place, or show. It blended, it coordinated, it merged. AND SOHO DID IT AGAIN. Our Hosts and Hostesses were the greatest .. The best informed, the most attractive, and definitely the most reliable .. (love that last one .. remember it for next time).

All this is the big lead in to say THANKS to all of you who helped me so much. It was appreciated and enjoyed. It was fun being with you and I do mean you, Cia Barron, Ann Breslauer, Peter Bailey, Marcie Buckley, Marilyn Crehore, Lorraine Costa, Ann Dring, Pauline Evans, Harry Evans, Virginia Evans, Carolyn Foushee, Gini Garrison, Dorothy Griner, Cathy Grigsby, Joe Jones, Pat Kettler, Marion Kutchins, Ted Krauss, Kathy Lehtola, Karen Ledterman, Gwen McFarland, Pat Minnich, Judy McCutcheon, Dorothy Muth, Judy Newcomer, Zenda Norte, Janet Pickle, Kristi Quam, Donna Regan, Eleanor Ratner, Pat Schaelchlin, Derdra Smothers, Ellen Smothers, Carolyn Turner, Jean Thomas, Sunny Tarasuck, Marc Tarasuck, Arlene Watters, Carol Wolcott, and our President, Bruce Kamering.

You can be sure Ill be in touch with you (and anyone else who'd like to be on the Hostess Committee). Don't take your phone off the hook .. it won't be tomorrow. Just someday ...

Claire Kaplan

## TURN OF THE CENTURY FAIR

Pasadena's Heritage Square has received a grant from Mobil Oil to hold its first major event--a "Turn of Century" Fair on June 4th and 5th. The fair will publicize the restoration of Heritage Square's four Victorian houses: The Hale House, the Valley Knudsen House, the Mt. Pleasant House and the Beaudry Street House.

From one to seven p.m., you may indulge in such fare as antique shows, arts & crafts booths, continuous entertainment, an antique classic auto show and, of course, open house. Proceeds from admission will go toward the restoration of Heritage Square's Victorian Houses. Gates will open at noon to accommodate large attendance.

Time: 1 - 7 p.m., on Saturday & Sunday.

Admission costs:

Adults - \$3.00      Senior citizens - \$1.00  
Children under 12 - \$.50

Entertainment:

Aman Folk Ensemble  
John Phillips Sousa Band  
Burch Mann Americana Dance Theatre  
Marriachie Band  
Mimes, Clowns, Banjos

Directions: Travel north on Pasadena Freeway. Exit at Figueroa and travel north. At Figueroa and Avenue 43 you will be directed to Satellite parking. Courtesy shuttle service will be provided.

For more information call:

L.A. Cultural Heritage Board at  
(213) 485-2433

Dear S.O.H.O. Readers:

S.O.H.O.'s Reflections is the most interesting when a variety of people contribute articles and art work. If you come across a neighborhood restoration project, relevant news item or recent publication regarding historic preservation, please let me know so that we may pass this information on to other S.O.H.O. readers.



Cathy Grigsby, Editor  
295-0204  
6506 Friars Rd., #206  
San Diego, CA 92108





FOR SALE

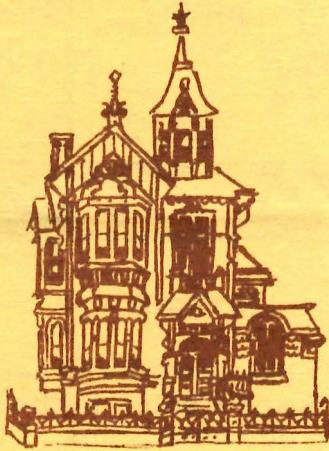
The American Institute of Architects is holding its National Convention in San Diego during the first week of June. SOHO volunteers are serving as guides for tours of the San Diego area during different days of that week. Those of you interested in being guides and mini-bus drivers for the tours contact Pat Minnich at 284-0293.

Claw footed bathtub, cast iron, in great shape. \$65.00.

Marc Tarasuck at 565-5837 (bus) 474-5467 (res)

MEMBERSHIP IN SOHO

SOHO depends upon membership dues, contributions, and fund raising activities to support our restoration/preservation expenses. Members receive the monthly SOHO Newsletter, "Reflections", and invitations to special events. Gift memberships are available and we will send the recipient a card in your name announcing the gift. Memberships and donations are tax deductible. Please join us!



Membership categories:

Table with membership categories and prices: Founder (\$5,000), Benefactor (\$1,000), Corporate (\$500), Patron (\$100), Donor (\$50), Organization (\$25), Sustaining (\$25), Contributing (\$20), Family (\$12), Single (\$8), Donation Only (\$).

Californians for Preservation Action will hold its summer quarterly workshop in San Diego on August 27th. "Neighborhood Revitalization" is the topic of the daylong conference consisting of morning presentations by Dick Reed and Bruce Dammon, lunch at the Spaghetti Factory, an afternoon business meeting, a wine and cheese party at the Villa Montezuma and a walking tour of the Gaslamp Quarter. Cost is \$1.00 for S.O.H.O members and \$2.00 for guests. Mark your calendars now!

Save Our Heritage Organisation Box 3571, San Diego, CA 92103 (714) 225-1033

Membership

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in joining an action group. Please contact me !

Tax Exempt Status

SOHO is exempt from Federal Income Tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and has been classified by the I.R.S. as a charitable, educational organization.

SOHO

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Bruce Kamerling  
President  
Pat Minnich  
Vice-President  
Donna Regan  
Secretary  
Cia Barron  
Treasurer  
Bill Cartwright  
Corinne Johnson  
Mike Jones  
Ted Krauss  
Matt Potter  
Pat Schaelchlin  
Marc Tarasuck

Alternates:  
Ray Cadena  
Keith Evans  
Cathy Grigsby  
Claire Kaplan

Historian:  
Mary Ward

La Jolla Sub-committee  
Tony Ciani

SOHO, Member:

National Trust for Historic Preservation

Californians for Preservation Action

Congress of History, San Diego County

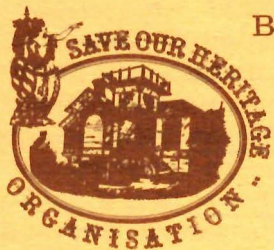


NOTICE

SOHO has rented storage space at the Lincoln Space Center in the hope of consolidating our sale items, files, artifacts and miscellaneous junk. If you have a box of stuff that belongs to SOHO, here is your chance to get rid of it. Leave a message with the answering service (225-1033) and we'll send someone out to pick it up.

DEADLINE

Items to be included in a specific issue of "Reflections" must be turned in by the 15th of the preceding month.



Box 3571, San Diego, 92103  
225-1033

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U. S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
SAN DIEGO, CALIF.  
PERMIT NO. 984

( address correction requested  
( return postage guaranteed