

REFLECTIONS

July 1977

Vol. IX, No. 7

Newsletter of the
Save Our Heritage
Organisation



Quartermass - Wilde House

SOHO'S MIDSUMMER SOIREE

A gala champagne reception for members and guests will highlight SOHO's month long membership drive now underway.

The magnificent Quartermass/Wilde mansion in Golden Hills will be the setting for the festive event, to be held on Saturday, August 13, from 7:00 until 11:00 pm. The owners, Attorneys Jose Otero and Milton Silverman, have generously offered SOHO the use of the building for this special midsummer soiree.

The stately structure, overlooking the city and harbor, resembles a majestic grand dame of a by-gone era, formal, yet warm and gracious, standing at attention at Broadway at 24th Street.

It is one of the few Victorian houses of the last century still remaining intact in San Diego. The wood paneling, brass fixtures and stained glass windows add an air of elegance to the spacious interior.

Originally built for Ruben Quartermass, owner of a local department store, it later became the home of one of San Diego's most flamboyant mayors, Louis J. Wilde. Wilde donated the Plaza Fountain to the city, and had the shape repeated in the dining room chandelier.

SOHO members are invited to share the evening of tours and entertainment with prospective members, and to acquaint them with the community service, cultural and social activities of Save Our Heritage Organisation.

Champagne and hors d'oeuvres will be served for the modest contribution of \$2.00 per person. Door prizes will be awarded. Victorian dress is optional.

Tickets will be available at the door. Volunteers are needed as waiters, waitresses and hostesses. If you wish to participate, or have fresh flowers to volunteer please leave a message with the SOHO answering service, 225-1033.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As the restoration of the Christian, Burton and Bushyhead houses nears completion in Heritage Park, there is increasing interest in the ultimate lease arrangements for these structures. SOHO was the guiding force behind the original development of the park, and we should therefore maintain an active interest in all of its current and future developments.

At the present time the big question seems to be, who is going to become the master lessee? The two contenders are Robert Payne and the Thomas-Fletcher-Nicol Co., and there is a considerable difference between the two proposals. This difference is the same old argument of whether or not new construction (in the form of shops) should be allowed in the park.

Heritage Park was intended to be a preserve--not unlike an animal sanctuary--for a local endangered species . . . the Victorian house. Only carefully selected examples were to be allowed in the park to insure interest and variety. The concept of having a dozen Victorian house--type museums was not at all practical, so it was decided that the structures would be leased out for many different uses. Thus the area would become a vital living community rather than a lot of over-stuffed chairs.

Somewhere along the line, someone got the brilliant idea that, since there were only a limited number of authentic Victorians around, new Victorian-type shops could be built to produce more leasable space (\$! \$! \$!). Naturally this brought down a cry of outrage from the preservationists, and the idea was tabled with the provision that only authentic storefronts could be used if any shops were to be constructed.

After a while, it was presumed that the "replica" idea was dead and buried, but money-making schemes are more durable than vampires. The Thomas-Fletcher-Nicol plan once again calls for the construction of a Victorian Squibob Square in Heritage Park. And (will wonders never cease?) the County staff, going against the recommendation of the Cultural Heritage Committee, endorsed the proposal!

Fortunately, the County Board of Supervisors rejected the Thomas-Fletcher-Nicol proposal at their June 28th meeting. They also instructed County staff to review

the original HUD Open Space Land Grant requirements which specifically say, "The project will not be developed for commercial purposes." The HUD grant helped provide funding for the early development of the park which included the acquisition and landscaping of the land and the restoration of the Sherman/Gilbert house.

I am pleased with the ability of the County Board of Supervisors to see the far-reaching effects that over-commercialization could produce in Heritage Park. We need to protect the concept of the park as a preserve for important endangered structures, not amusement park gimmicks. The decision between profit and integrity is often a difficult one. I sincerely hope that integrity will win out in the end.

Bruce Kamerling



NEW POLICY ON MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

In the past all SOHO membership renewals became due on January 1. However, since new members' dues were not pro-rated, the payment policy was inequitable for those who joined late in the year.

Therefore, we have initiated a new policy whereby renewals become due on the anniversary of the date a member joined SOHO. You will note your mailing label now indicates the month and the year you became a member. Your annual dues will be payable each year in the month indicated on the label. Honorary lifetime members are coded HL and do not pay dues.

Due to the fact our membership has increased considerably through the years we now have all mailings handled by a professional service. With the additional cost it will be impossible to carry names on the mailing list who do not renew.

If a renewal is delinquent for more than three months past the due date the name will automatically be deleted from the mailing list. We regret the necessity for this policy change, but as a non-profit organization, feel we have no alternative.

We need you all! Your continued support will be appreciated. We hope you choose to remain an active member of SOHO and participate in our many community, cultural and social events.



HORTON PLAZA UPDATE

by Mike Jones

The process of restoration is in full gear in Horton Plaza:

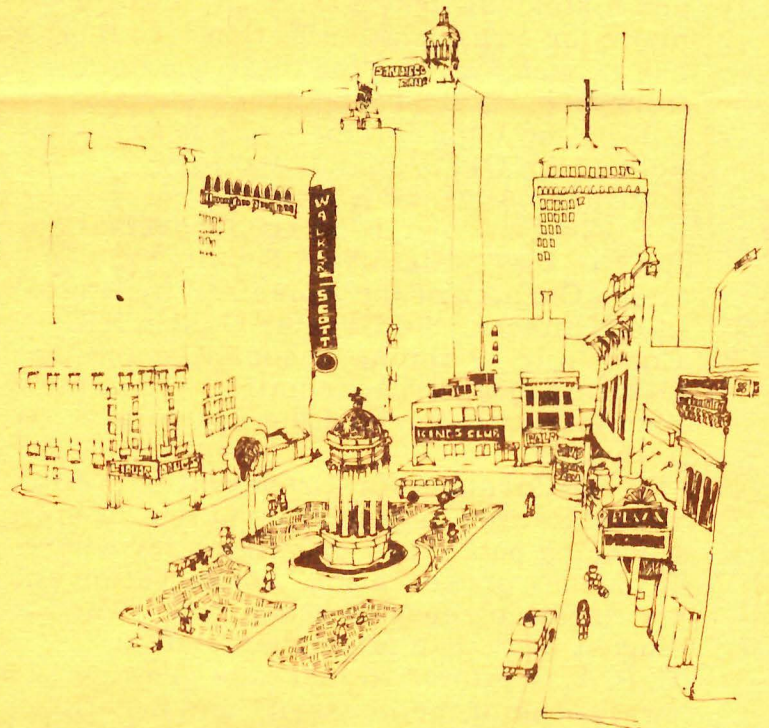
1. Sidewalks are being cleared of "non-historic" trees, benches and recruiting posters.
2. Donated concrete benches are being placed within the Plaza.
3. The chairs will be welded to the cast iron posts and painted in the next few weeks.
4. Some bus traffic has been rerouted to relieve the congestion.
5. Where should information booth activities be located? That problem is now under intense study. In its present Plaza location, the information booth is unsightly, has no historic value and contributes to unnecessary pedestrian traffic.
6. Specifications are being drafted to re-sod the grass and restore the fountain.

The fountain will involve more work and expense than originally imagined. Its plumbing and electrical workings are in a sad state. Pipes have totally rusted away. Electrical wires are exposed. Some of the pumps that shoot water inside the marble columns out over the fountain top are missing; they will have to be replaced. The fountain's restoration is, of course, a top priority item in the Plaza.

Imperative to the continued success of the restoration effort is a new maintenance contract which will increase the level of care for the Plaza.

Bob Mosher, the architect who made the paving proposal, appears to be a sore loser. Mr. Mosher appeared before the Centre City Development Committee, (C. C. D. C.), complaining that the "restored" Horton Plaza does not work with Hahn's current shopping center design. The C. C. D. C., who is certainly no friend of preservation, instructed Mr. Trimble to arrange a joint meeting with the City Council to reconsider the Horton Plaza issue.

Mr. Mosher and the C. C. D. C. must take the City Council for a group of fools to bring up the Horton Plaza issue again. The Council was well aware of the issues and Mr. Hahn's nebulous plays earlier when they chose to restore the Plaza for the people of San Diego. The City Manager's office assures us that the restoration is continuing as directed by the Council. Most insiders feel this action by the C. C. D. C. will only result in its embarrassment. The Council has already acted on this issue and does not enjoy hearing items already decided, especially controversial items.



Horton Plaza

A LETTER TO SOHO

Dear Friends:

Thanks for your kind words in the June 1977 edition of Reflections for my support of the restoration of Horton Plaza.

The real "pat on the back" should go to SOHO and its members who contributed their time, talents and energies in not giving up. While the Council provided the votes, it was your organization which provided the enthusiasm and determination that compelled the Council to reconsider its action.

Again, my thanks for your hard work and dedication to San Diego.

Sincerely,

/s/ Leon L. Williams

Councilman, Fourth District

CALIFORNIANS FOR PRESERVATION ACTION QUARTERLY MEETING

Saturday, August 27, 1977

The Old Spaghetti Factory, 275 Fifth Avenue (at K Street), San Diego

Neighborhood Revitalization:

San Diego Workshop

SO MUCH IS GONE--

SO MUCH DESTROYED

ISN'T IT TIME WE ACT?

With San Diego residents becoming more concerned with their architectural and historical link to the past, Californians for Preservation Action, (C. P. A.), has chosen our city for their quarterly workshop. Neighborhood revitalization will be the topic for the conference to be held at the Old Spaghetti Factory, Saturday, August 27, 1977.

The Save Our Heritage Organisation, the San Diego Historical Society, the San Diego Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, the Greater Golden Hill Community Planning Association and the Gaslamp Quarter Association will combine talents to co-host the day-long activities.

Californians for Preservation Action is a statewide organization active in influencing public and private policy where it touches preservation, conservation and the creative reuse of resources. The August workshop is another step in C. P. A.'s efforts to increase growing awareness of the necessity and benefits of preserving our neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Revitalization: San Diego will look at how our neighborhoods can define and revitalize themselves in juxtaposition to one another and still retain the desired function and aesthetic continuity in our cities.

John Henderson, A. I. A., will open the morning session with some insight on the State Historic Building Code Advisory Board's continued effort to save the inventory of qualified historical buildings,

giving full consideration to both authenticity and safety. Richard Reed, former Executive Director of the Saint Paul Historic Hill District Planning Program and author of the urban restoration book, Building The Future From Our Past, will have a two-screen slide-audio presentation. Mr. Reed will describe the process necessary to achieve a comprehensive interdisciplinary community-based urban revitalization. The Gaslamp Quarter Historic District's potential as a living, changing neighborhood will be discussed by San Diego Senior City Planner Mike Stepmner and SOHO's Matt Potter. Bruce Dammon, A. I. A., will evaluate the problems and successes of the Golden Hill Community revitalization.

The Old Spaghetti Factory at Fifth and K Streets in San Diego's Historic Gaslamp Quarter is a perfect setting for the conference. Lunch will be served amidst the antiques and stained glass windows of the recycled printing company building-- designed in part by the famous Southern California architect Irving Gill in 1898. C. P. A. members will update conference participants on legislative actions pertaining to preservation, restoration and revitalization during the early afternoon business session.

SOHO will conduct tours of the Gaslamp Quarter with an emphasis on the viability and growing pains of one of San Diego's first, real neighborhoods. Wine and cheese at the fascinating 1887 Villa Montezuma will follow the tour. The wine and cheese party at the Villa will give participants a chance to experience yet another old San Diego neighborhood, Golden Hill, and the impact that restoration and community involvement is having upon it.

9:00 - 9:30 a. m.

9:30 - 12:30 p. m.

12:30 - 1:30 p. m.

1:30 - 3:30 p. m.

3:30 - 5:00 p. m.

5:00 p. m.

Registration

Workshop - "Neighborhood Revitalization: San Diego"

Luncheon - Old Spaghetti Factory

Business Meeting, including legislative update

Tour-Gaslamp Quarter

Wine and Cheese - The Villa Montezuma

BE A WINNER!

SOHO's membership drive is underway. The person who refers the greatest number of new members will be the recipient of an outstanding prize. The winner will be announced at the annual Election Meeting in September. Membership applications and brochures are available by calling the SOHO answering service at 225-1033.



S.O.H.O.
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

New _____ Renewal _____ Date _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP CODE _____

TELEPHONE (home) _____ (office) _____

REFERRED BY _____

ADD MY NAME TO YOUR VOLUNTEER LIST _____ I PREFER THE FOLLOWING JOB _____

Tax Exempt Status

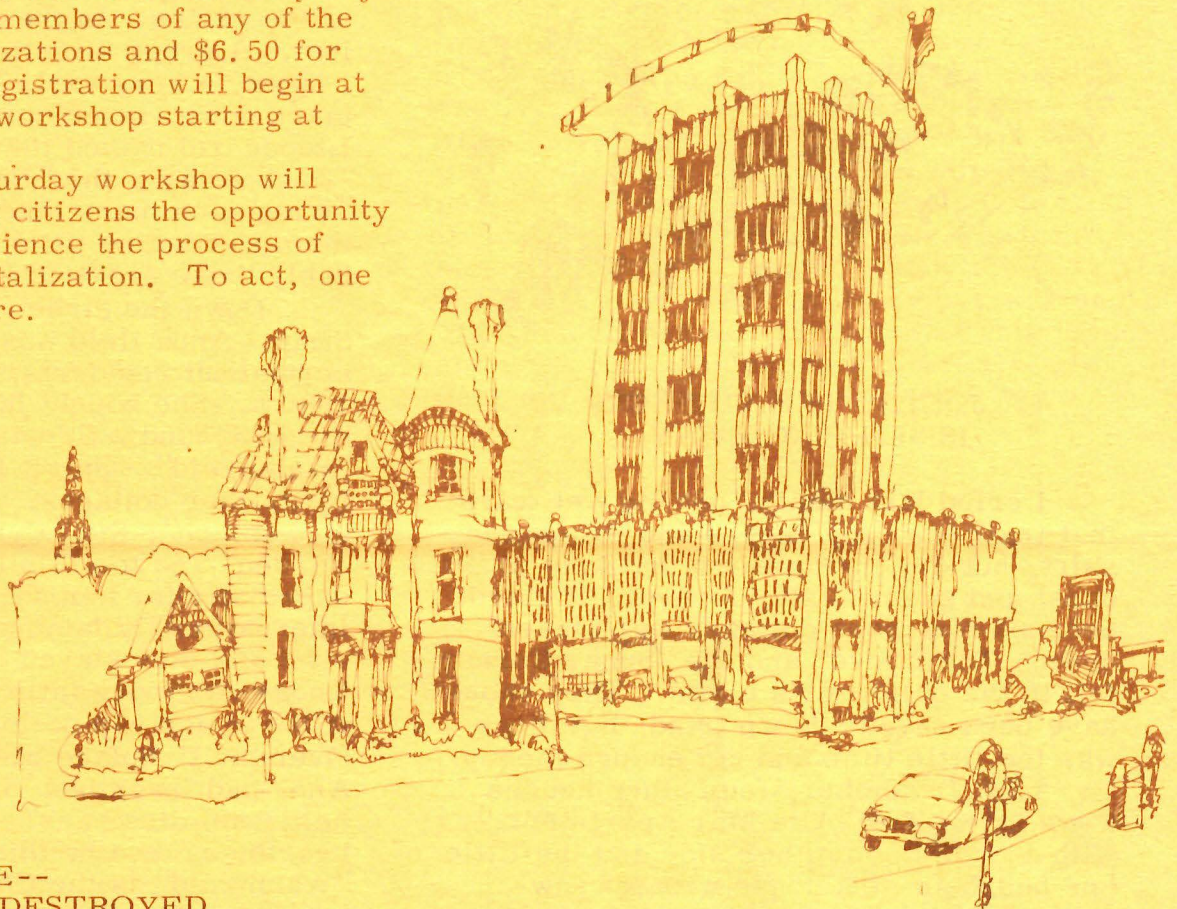
SOHO is exempt from Federal Income Tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and has been classified by the I.R.S. as a charitable, educational organization. Your cancelled check is your receipt for contributions to SOHO.

Box 3571, San Diego, 92103
225-1033

The total cost of the conference, luncheon, tour and wine and cheese party will be \$5.50 for members of any of the sponsoring organizations and \$6.50 for nonmembers. Registration will begin at 9 a. m., with the workshop starting at 9:30.

C. P. A. 's Saturday workshop will give all interested citizens the opportunity to learn and experience the process of neighborhood revitalization. To act, one must first be aware.

--Marc Tarasuck



SO MUCH IS GONE--
SO MUCH DESTROYED
ISN'T IT TIME WE ACT?
- - - -

Reservation Form

Please reserve _____ tickets for

NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION: SAN DIEGO, Saturday, August 27, 1977
9 a. m., The Old Spaghetti Factory

Member of sponsoring or co-sponsoring organization at \$5.50/person
Californians for Preservation Action (The Sponsor)
Gaslamp Quarter Association
Greater Golden Hill Community Planning Association
San Diego Chapter American Institute of Architects
San Diego Historical Society
Save Our Heritage Organisation

Non-member at \$6.50/person
Reservations are Limited

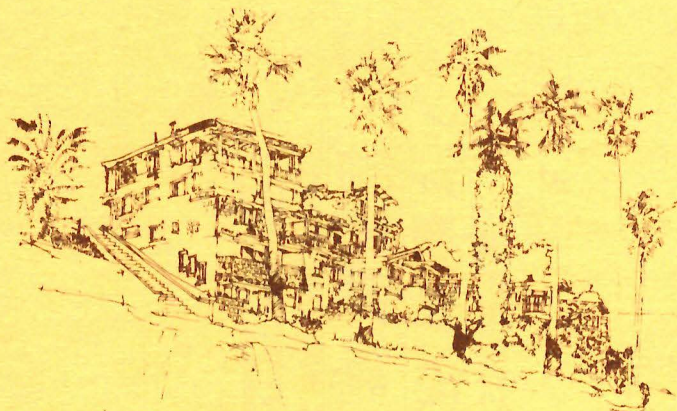
Send check or money order by August 20 to:
SOHO, Attn: Marc Tarasuck
Box 3571
San Diego, CA 92103

Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____



LA JOLLA, THE VILLAGE, IS SLIPPING AWAY

I cried last month, not big wet tears that trail down my cheeks and dampen my shirt, but dry inside tears that knot in the chest and seem to stay forever. I cried because two more cottages were taken down. The "Dove" and the "Sunny Corner" fell to the bulldozer's claim. They should have been saved and we tried, but there was too little time and not enough money.

Last December, four other houses were lost. The "Alta Mar Apartments" with a cottage on either side and the little one bedroom pink house with its saw-toothed freize board and its white picket fence, are gone. In December, too, the "Idylwild", the last home of Anson P. Mills and his wife, Nellie, burned and a small piece of history was lost. Mills was not the father of La Jolla but certainly they were aunt and uncle for the cottages they built and rented began the tourist industry here.

In 1976, the Tyrollean Terrace was lost. The cluster of odd houses which included the "Matterhorn" and the "Lucerne", the "Interlaken", the "Tyrol" and the "Geneva" were taken down. The historic sited land was dug out and carried away. In 1974, the La Jolla Bank built its headquarters at Prospect and Ivanhoe and four more cottages were swept away. The just after the turn of the century "Sunnycrest", the "House That Jack Built", and the "Blarney Castle" ("it sure isn't a castle and that's the blarney of it"), and the "Humpty Dumpty" (it was a "demountable" house and its owner was never quite sure that it wouldn't tumble down), are gone. In the La Jolla Bank complex, the Old Botsford's Place Restaurant was built; but Botsford's house was never located there-- it was across the street and was taken down in the 30's.

Taking down cottages isn't a plague of the 1970's. In the 1960's, many were lost. A group of cottages built by Walter Lieber, a very early La Jollan, were taken down, some carted to Mexico. Lieber had named them the "Seagull", the "Tuck Away", the "Nestle Down" the "Wing" and many others. He advertised them in concise little booklets and probably these booklets had national fame.

Down the street is the Green Dragon Strip. Anna Held was one of the first permanent residents, coming in the mid 1890's. She bought land and built her house around a fireplace and called it "Wahnfreid" - Spirit Peace, and then she built other cottages, the "Ark", the "Jack O' Lantern", the "Eyrie", the "Dolly Varden" and the "Doll's House" built especially for her doll collection. Her internationally famous friends came to visit and they stayed in her little cottages. Today, they are latticed together and filled in and can no longer be discerned. Over the fireplace of her "Wahnfreid", Anna had inscribed "Heilig sei dies herd heilig sei dies haus" - "Sacred be this hearth, sacred be this house"; today, "Wahnfreid" is the Chart House Restaurant. The little sign had been taken away.

La Jolla began in 1887, a tiny community which had only its isolated sea-coast beauty. Many came to admire and some stayed. Cottages were built along Prospect Street and fingered out into the neighboring streets and the mystique of the village grew; it encompassed the buildings and the rare personality of the La Jollan began. The cottages matured, more substantial houses were built and the little cottages were displaced from the prime property, moving back toward the mountain. Today, there is no more room for displaced cottages. To the developer, they are simply old, delapidated structures having no merit to warrant existence. They wait for the housewrecker's ball.

At the present rate of destruction, the La Jolla village will soon be gone. The cute-shingled-lane shops that are replacing the cottages try to emulate that mystique but it doesn't work. The wood is too new - it has no memories; people didn't live there. The La Jolla village is slipping away.

CAN ANYTHING BE DONE?

Yes. Three things:

(1) The preservationist must relinquish his self-mandated right to dictate the saving of old buildings at any cost. It is simplistic to believe that all old structures are worthy of preservation and that the owners must be compelled to retain them. This philosophy is an infringement upon the basic American right to own and control property. It leads to emotion packed confrontations and the ultimate loss of vintage structures.

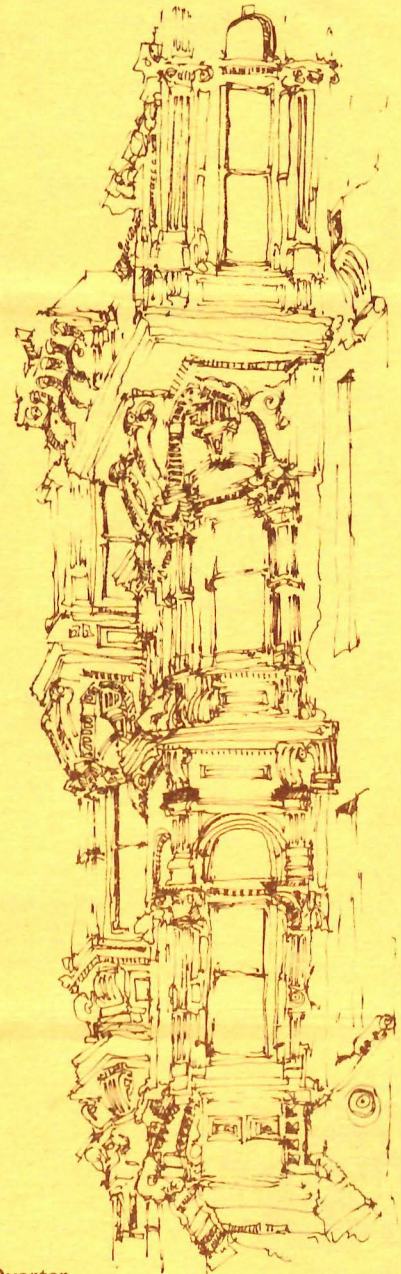
(2) It must be proven that cottages have economic worth. In La Jolla, the "Columbine" on Fay and Kline is functioning well in its alternative use. The "Geranium" behind it is stable. A cottage on Pearl Street is today a fresh vegetable market and the owners are doing well. John Cole's Book Store has flourished for years in the "Wisteria Cottage". The "Windemere" cottage, as well as many other ones, is highly rentable. Many people are willing to pay La Jolla prices for the privilege of working and living in these history-permeated buildings.

(3) The owners of La Jolla cottages must look beyond their dollar worth and see the buildings as a part of La Jolla's heritage; they must question their right to destroy this heritage.

It is true that today La Jolla is slipping away. But it doesn't have to. Many excellent cottages remain. There is the Mannix house, the "Sea Cliff" where the first Catholic mass was held. And there is the "Afterthought", the "Brockton Villa," "El Faredon", the home of Josephine Seaman who rivaled Ellen Browning Scripps in her contributions to La Jolla. There is the "Old Noah House" and "Surf Thrills" and the "La Crosse". Today (but maybe not tomorrow), there is the "Red Rest" and "Neptune" (Red Roost). These and many more cottages still stand.

It is too late to save yesterday's bulldozed buildings, the little houses with sagging walls, peeling paint, unsure floors and overgrown vegetation. They are gone. But let's get together and work out the future of what is left. Don't let's lose the magic of La Jolla. Don't let's become just a northern subdivision of San Diego.

--Pat Schaelchlin



Gaslamp Quarter

SOHO

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NEW MEMBERS
THROUGH JUNE 30, 1977

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Emily Trapp
Jeannette M. Wasson

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



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