



THE S.O.H.O. NEWSLETTER

REFLECTIONS

VOL. X NO. 11

NOVEMBER 1978

P.O. BOX 3571

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92103

(714)225-1033

EARTHQUAKE.....!

"EARTHQUAKE" (The Belmont Park Roller Coaster - 1925) is rumbling from current tremors felt throughout the community as a result of the controversy over whether to tear down the roller coaster or save it. The epicenter for all of the activity appears to be located within the San Diego City Administration Building where an all out effort has been mounted to raze the roller coaster.

In September, the California State Historic Resources Commission voted unanimously to nominate the roller coaster to the National Register of Historic Places. Placement on the Register is awaiting final approval in Washington, D. C. However, Jim Gutzmier of the City Manager's office is soliciting the City Council to appeal the nomination in order to stop the official designation. At the same time, he has stopped the planning for the "new" Belmont Park, which has infuriated Mission Beach residents. The Belmont Park Ad Hoc Planning Committee had asked that the planning continue with an alternative to retain the roller coaster. The city prefers to regard the coaster as an obstacle to planning rather than a landmark symbolizing the beginnings of a community and something to plan for.

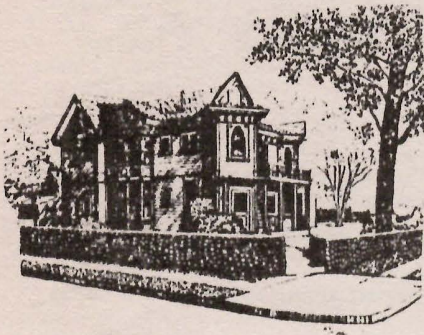
The roller coaster was built by John D. Spreckels in 1925 as part of the Mission Beach Amusement Center to attract people to Mission Beach and to his streetcar line. It is one of the two remaining older generation wooden coasters on the entire West Coast and serves as an excellent example of a historically exhilarating kine-thetic and visual experience.

SOHO has been asked to help save the roller coaster as a San Diego landmark representing the recreational spirit of the development of the Mission Beach community, and as an attraction for all San Diegans and visitors to enjoy. A preservation team is now forming to assist in this effort. If you are interested in taking part in what will probably be a fast and bumpy ride, please contact:

Tony Ciani
P.O. Box 582
La Jolla, CA 92038
or
Call 454-5429

NEWS BRIEFS

SECOND HISTORIC DISTRICT APPROVED IN GOLDEN HILL



The Historic Site Board has approved a proposal, drafted by the City Planning Department, for creation of a Historic District covering a six block area in Greater Golden Hills. This district would extend from Russ Blvd., on the north, 25th St., on the west, State Hwy 94 on the south and 24th St., on the east. (See map). The Site Board is now awaiting approval from the City Council.

The Historic District was " recommended for preservation due to its concentration of architectural styles of the late 1800's and early 1900's. A survey of 112 structures indicated at least 34 percent were candidates for historic sites. While it is important to preserve the outstanding historical structures, groups of surviving structures in their original setting provide an added cultural and historic dimension that individual isolated landmarks cannot."*

This issue is not expected to be up before the City Council for approval until January of 1979. If approved, this would constitute the second Historic District in San Diego, the first being the Gaslamp District downtown.

* Greater Golden Hills Historic District Proposal, Sept. 1978, p. 18

GASLAMP APPROVED

The City Council, acting as the Redevelopment Agency, allocated \$1.01 million this year for improvements in the Gaslamp area for fiscal 1979.

Only about \$640,000 will be used for construction. They envision a \$2 million budget in fiscal 1980.

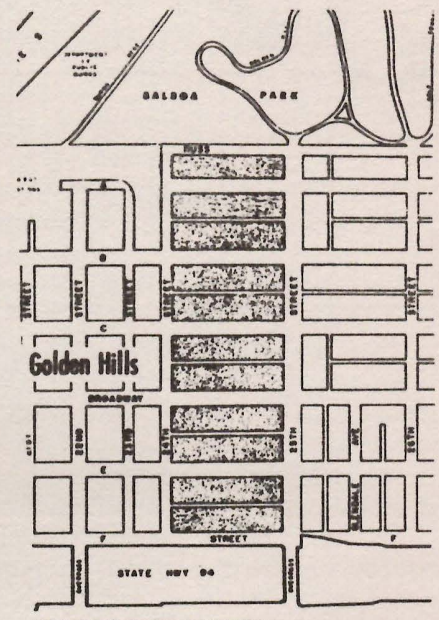
The Gaslamp Project Committee tentatively selected four block faces for initial public improvements where property owners have promised the most private restoration.

The blocks to be treated with wider, textured sidewalks, new street pavement, new lighting and street furniture, are along both sides of Fifth Avenue, from E to F Streets, and from J to K Streets.

The most ambitious private project is the reconstruction of the Brunswick Building at the northeast corner of Fifth and J Street into a myriad of Italian restaurants and lounges. The \$2 million project by Jack McAlister, who is leasing the entire frontage of the block, runs from J st. to K.

--From CCA Bulletin, newsletter of Central City Association of San Diego

MAP



BILL TO CONVERT DEPOT

The governor has signed legislation (SB 1750) by Senate Pro Tem President James R. Mills, which provides for a 4-million project to buy and convert San Diego's Santa Fe depot into a multi-model transportation terminal.

Amendments inserted by the Assembly prohibit use of \$1 million in state funds unless San Diego's Metropolitan Transit Development Board has approved a guideway project by next December 31.

"The Assembly felt the money should not be appropriated for such a project unless MTDB has a guideway project approved, otherwise expenditures from a fund set aside for multi-model projects would not be justified," said Mills.

SB 1879 set up a fund to build projects which provide interchange facilities between transportation modes.

--From CCA Bulletin, newsletter of Central City Association of San Diego

SOHO
Newsletter

REFLECTIONS

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298-2237

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The SOHO Newsletter is published monthly. Letters to the Editor are welcomed. Articles and/or photographs of interest to SOHO members and friends are most enthusiastically encouraged.



PRESIDENT'S VIEWPOINT

THIS MONTH.....

.....there has, as usual, been good news and bad news.....

First, the good news. The keys to the Temple Beth Israel passed to the County as they took possession in September. The temple has been prepared for its journey to Heritage Park and should be on site by the time you receive this Newsletter, but the funds to restore it will not be budgeted by the County and it appears that we will have to go into the community for the necessary monies. The temple must not stand uncared for in the Park (as did the other buildings) for so long a time, but along with our own Senlis cottage, it must progress steadily and efficiently towards occupation. The foundation has been placed under our cottage and the public restrooms will be incorporated into the back portion. SOHO will restore its front two rooms. We urge the County to proceed with these two projects and we insist that it receive a priority equal to its importance. Heritage Park is losing its credibility as a vital preservation example. We need to move forward--faster.

The bad news.... On September 19, 1978, the City Council granted the appeals of the owners of a house in the El Pueblo Ribera complex located in La Jolla. This overthrew the decision made by the Historical Site Board and sets a dangerous precedent in preservation.

The El Pueblo Ribera is a Rudolph Schindler-designed complex. It is a significant architectural site, in that Schindler is one of Southern California's most noteworthy architects and this building reflects some of his unusual techniques in design and material handling. A 25 foot lot within this complex was purchased and the new owner proposed to construct a modern beach cottage, which would have been totally inconsistent with the intent of Schindler's architectural concept. Because the complex had been designated a city historic site, the Site

HERITAGE PARK CONSTRUCTION UPDATE



Heritage Park, in Old Town, is SOHO's birthplace, will be our home, and is our ongoing concern. In this spirit, we will present regular news briefs on the structures of Heritage Park and the issues surrounding them.

Senlis Cottage - The cottage is going down on its foundation. The County has plans for its restrooms and exterior renovations which should be done by late Spring, 1979.

Temple Beth Israel - is being moved. The grading is completed and hopefully it will be down by the time you read this. No funds are set aside for restoration and approximately \$155,000 will be needed.

Sherman-Gilbert House - is going to be available for leasing. The County Park and Recreation people are moving. In the past, the County has advertised for lease proposals. Contact the County Department of Real Property for further information.

Future Funding - we can expect very little in the way of future monies from the County. SOHO members will have to get involved if Heritage Park is to grow and blossom.



WELCOME TO A SMALL MINNICH

Notice to potential baby sitters:

There's a new boy in town and he's looking good. Myke Holloway Minnich was born September 25th, weighed in at 7 lbs. 4-1/2 oz. The happy parents are Pat & Jay Minnich and from all of us SOHO members, hearty congratulations.

Myke Holloway Minnich, we greet you with joy.

C. L. K.

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GENERAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

SOHO's General Meeting was held at noon on Sunday, September 17, at the Hotel del in Coronado and a happy time was had by all. Claire Kaplan remarked that crossing the bridge was a snap, but finding a place to park was another thing!

Marc Tarasuck, SOHO's outgoing president, presided over the ceremonies, and Councilman Jim Bates spoke in support of preservation.

A wide variety of awards, some serious and some just fun were presented to deserving individuals and groups. Among the serious, SOHO's Certificate of Appreciation award went to Beta Sigma Phi Sorority for their continued support of Heritage Park. (They donated money to move the Senlis Cottage). Also awarded a Certificate of Appreciation were Gordon Johnson for his Master's Thesis on the History of Heritage Park, and Alice Crittenden for her continuing volunteer efforts. Alice also received a Life Membership in SOHO.

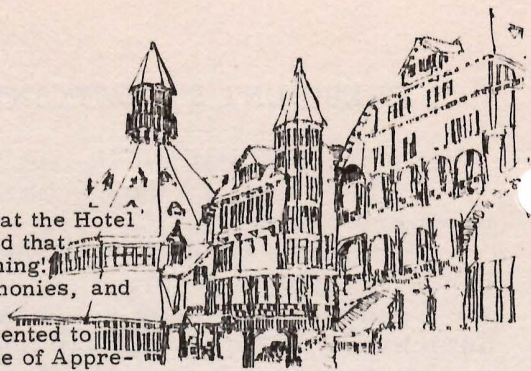
On the lighter side, the Golden Plunger award found its way to Keith (Doc) Evans, along with the President's Award, presented to Doc by Marc Tarasuck, who said it was being given to the person who got him out of the most trouble.

The "lovely" SOHO Lady Award was presented to Rae Berry for her outstanding contributions this past year, by last year's recipient, Cia Barron. (The SOHO Lady, by the way, is an authentic, antique, amazing, outrageous "lamp" of sorts).

Also given a SOHO Certificate of Appreciation Award was Lynn Richards, for her very interesting slide presentation (using 3 screens, 6 projectors and tape recorder) on the history of SOHO. This presentation, screened during the meeting, showed the alternatives between piles of rubble and restored buildings.

Last, but certainly not least, Marc Tarasuck, our fantastic out-going president was given a special gift to remind him nostalgically of all those times he made his pilgrimages to the SOHO post office box--his own p. o. box door, (which now hangs at home on his wall.)

The meeting concluded with the presentation of the slate of officers for 1979 and the election of same. Pat Schaelchlin, elected President, then presided over the remainder of the program.



DESTINATION DISCO



NOVEMBER 17
UNIVERSITY CLUB
1333 7th Ave.

7-11 pm

Join the Friends of the Villa for their first fund-raiser on Nov. 17 to benefit the Neighborhood Outreach Childrens Program at the Villa Montezuma. Call 239-2211 for advance reservations by Nov. 15, \$10. per person, or \$12. at the door. Friends of the Villa is an auxiliary of the San Diego Historical Society.



CHINESE FESTIVAL CONTINUES AT VILLA MONTEZUMA

From September 17 to November 12, the San Diego Historical Society and the Villa Montezuma will honor the unique contributions of Chinese Americans to the cultural and urban development of San Diego.

The Villa's Gallery will exhibit the paintings of four Chinese-American artists, ancient and modern Chinese artifacts and traditional Chinese robes from private collections. Pictures and documents of pioneer families in San Diego will be shown, as well as a special postage stamp exhibit from the People's Republic of China.

Call 239-2211 for further information. The Villa Montezuma is open to the public Tuesday through Friday and Sunday from 1:00 to 4:30 p. m. and is located in Golden Hills at 1925 K St.

NEW MEMBERS

Carter C. Taylor
 Marcia L. Malkus
 Jacqueline M. Pickell
 Robert & Ruth Carley
 M. H. Cunningham
 Mrs. Joseph A. Walsh
 Pete & Judy Nelson
 Harold & Katherine Nelson
 David & Joyce Tharp
 Jeanie Bertolucci
 Sheila A. Mehigan
 Robert & Marilyn Vincent
 Dorothy M. Cleary family
 Fern M. Jackson
 Michelle Lequin
 Dr. Anthony H. Gaussoin
 Balboa Manor, Inc.

President's Viewpoint
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Board had the jurisdiction to approve the design of the proposed building. The owner accepted the terms that the structure be architecturally compatible, that the materials conform to those in the other buildings and that the building be painted to approximate the 55 year-old Schindler structure's coloration, which had weathered. All of these requests were agreed to by the owner/builder.

Unfortunately, the structure was sold upon completion. The new owners, without obtaining a building permit (and professing ignorance of the site designation) and upon the recommendation of its lending institution, put in an aluminum window on the western side of the building, a clear violation of the agreed materials. Had they come to the Site Board (as they would have had to do upon applying for a building permit) the window probably would have been approved, for it was a perfectly acceptable alteration and the Board would have recommended the use of a compatible French-type wooden window. They also refused to paint the building to conform and additionally constructed an illegal six-foot vertical fence. The fence was beyond the jurisdiction of the Board, although it did recommend that it be replaced with a more agreeable horizontal fence. The Site Board, using its jurisdictional powers, requested that the window be replaced and that they paint the building as agreed.

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Despite the mood of budget-cutting in both the Congress and White House, the Historic Preservation Fund will register a dramatic increase next year. Both the House and Senate have agreed to amounts considerably higher than the FY 1978 appropriation of \$45 million - which was also that requested by the President for '79.

The House agrees to \$60 million while the Senate stands at \$100 million, a difference that could cost state programs \$37 million in grant funds. The House is also insisting on restrictive language that would prohibit use of funds for "governmental" buildings and would require that 60% be for "neighborhood preservation in historic districts or for structures that will contribute to community restoration."

At the same time more Federal monies are assured, Heritage Conservation and Recreation Services (HCRS) administrative requirements for grants programs are being restructured to expedite spending and, thus, demonstrate the need for the higher funding levels to Congress. Western State Historic preservation offices are complaining bitterly that process is being sacrificed for product (greater expenditures) and that the new regulations could encourage fiscal irresponsibility. Further, preservation is losing ground to bureaucracy as the new regulations require much increased reporting to Washington at the expense of time spent servicing local preservation needs.

THE GRAND CENTRAL CASE

You are probably aware that the U.S. Supreme Court handed down a crucial decision in the Penn Central Transportation Co. v. City of New York case. At last a preservation case captured the attention of the national media. In general the case upheld the constitutionality of preservation ordinances if the restriction is openly arrived at and reasonably related to the general welfare. Thus, the Court rejected the argument used to attack landmark ordinances: that landmark designation is a "taking" of private property and requires compensation. Restrictions in the New York City ordinance permitted landmark owners a "reasonable return" and "maximum latitude" consistent with preservation goals.

The Court's decision validates existing preservation ordinances and will encourage future expansion to include comprehensive preservation.

--From Californians for Preservation Action, Sept. 1978

SOHO depends upon membership dues, contributions, and fund raising activities to support our restoration/preservation expenses. Members receive the monthly SOHO Newsletter 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:

- Founder \$5,000
- Benefactor \$1,000
- Corporate \$500
- Patron \$100
- Donor \$50
- Organization \$25
- Sustaining \$25
- Contributing \$20
- Family \$12
- Single \$8
- Donation Only \$_____

Please complete and return this membership form to:
 Save Our Heritage Organisation
 Post Office Box 3571
 San Diego, California 92103

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.

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The City Council in its hearing of the owners appeal, not only did not support the Site Board (which was created to advise the Council in these matters) but it also severely admonished the Board for imposing "ridiculous" requirements upon the home owner.

The grave consequences of this decision is that the Council is unaware of the responsibilities of the Site Board --that of recognizing and protecting San Diego's historical resources. A second consequence is that it did not support its designated Board. This particular incident of the El Pueblo Ribera is not earth-shaking but its awarded appeal does set a precedent

for future reversals. It seriously undermines the effectiveness of the Historical Site Board.

The reduction of this act shows us that the Council is uneducated in the intents of preservation and the purposes of the Site Board. But, all is not beyond hope. The Council members are very approachable and future contacts with SOHO members will solicit Council assistance in our practical approaches to preservation. We need them on our side and, whether they know it or not, they really do need us. Preservation is a viable commodity in San Diego today.

-- PAT SCHAECHLIN
 President



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