



# REFLECTIONS

VOLUME XIX, NUMBER 3, MARCH, 1987

## PRESERVATION ACROSS THE U.S.A.

By: Ann W. MacCullough

"Issue: Development vs. Preservation. Future Direction of Silver Spring Hangs in Balance."

As a boardmember of SOHO, this headline in the Montgomery County (Maryland) Record caught my attention. Reading on, "...Moore's proposal would require the demolition of the Silver Theatre and the Silver Spring Shopping Center--structures vilified by much of the Silver Spring business community and praised by preservationists and many civic groups and private citizens in the neighborhoods surrounding Silver Spring."

Except for the names of the developer and sites-in-question, it could have been an article written about a struggle for preservation in San Diego or any other city. But, Silver Spring is of particular interest to me because it holds memories of Saturday afternoon movies, shopping sprees with my family and, as I grew up, dates with special friends during high school and college--pleasant memories of growing up in Washington's suburbs during the 1950's.

The Silver Theatre and Shopping Center, built in 1938 (and Taste Diner, down the street) are superior examples of Art Deco architecture. The center and theatre were designed by John Eberson of New York, an art deco giant and "dean" of American theatre architects. According to Richard Striner, President of the Art Deco Society of Washington, the

Silver Spring examples constitute "one of the most significant art deco centers. It's an incredibly detailed commercial ensemble of more than local importance." It came as no surprise when I learned that these priceless landmarks are being threatened by a "super block."

After reading that the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission was having a second night of hearings on this matter, I decided to attend. Upon entering the Commission meeting room, I felt right at home. There were leaders, on both sides of the issue, lining up their speakers, filling out speakers slips, passing out information and jockeying for the best seats. The same feeling was in the air that I have felt so many times here in San Diego when, at City Council, Planning Commission or Historic Site Board meetings, community activists and preservationists get ready to champion their cause. I felt an immediate kinship with these people because we had something in common--a desire to PRESERVE SOMETHING THAT CAN NEVER BE REPLACED.

The fate of the Silver Spring sites has yet to be decided, but I will continue to monitor the issue. I would like the people in Silver Spring to know that we in San Diego have them in our thoughts and offer them our moral support.

From Washington to San Diego and all points in between, preservation battles are being won and lost every day. But, be thankful they are being fought.

## REFLECTIONS

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Save Our Heritage Organisation  
P.O. Box 3571, San Diego, CA 92103  
(619) 297-9327

This newsletter was produced by Anna L. McPherson. The following persons contributed articles, graphics, and ideas: Kathleen Kelley-Markham, Ann MacCullough, Robin Webster, Dorothy Collins. Thank you.

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### NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

If you have some spare time and are interested in assisting with the SOHO newsletter, Reflections, please call Anna at the office, 297-9327. SOHO's newsletter is so very important; it is our primary vehicle of communication with some very important people--our members. It is also a very big job. Any help would be appreciated, including the writing of articles, layout, graphics, and mailing. Thank you.

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### ART DECO/MODERNE COMMITTEE

The Art Deco/ Moderne Committee continues to meet on the second Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. All meetings are held at Mixed Produce at 3789 1/2 Park Blvd. The committee has met twice already and is very enthusiastic. Everyone with an interest in Art Deco and Moderne architecture design is welcome.

## RESTORATION WORKSHOP SERIES

SOHO is applying the final touches to its spring series of restoration workshops featuring Victorian, Craftsman Bungalow, Spanish Colonial Revival, and Art Deco architecture. The series will offer valuable insights into the different stages of a restoration project.

### March 28--"Before You Buy"

- a video presentation of restoration standards
- introduction to tax credits and easements
- the historic designation process
- preservation organizations and local, state and federal agencies
- recognizing architectural styles
- research and resources

### April 4-- "After You Buy"

- introduction to general construction
- permits and zoning variances
- investigating problems in existing structures
- working with construction teams

### April 11--"The Trades-The Finish Touches"

- a view of different trades in action

### May 2--"Interior Styles"

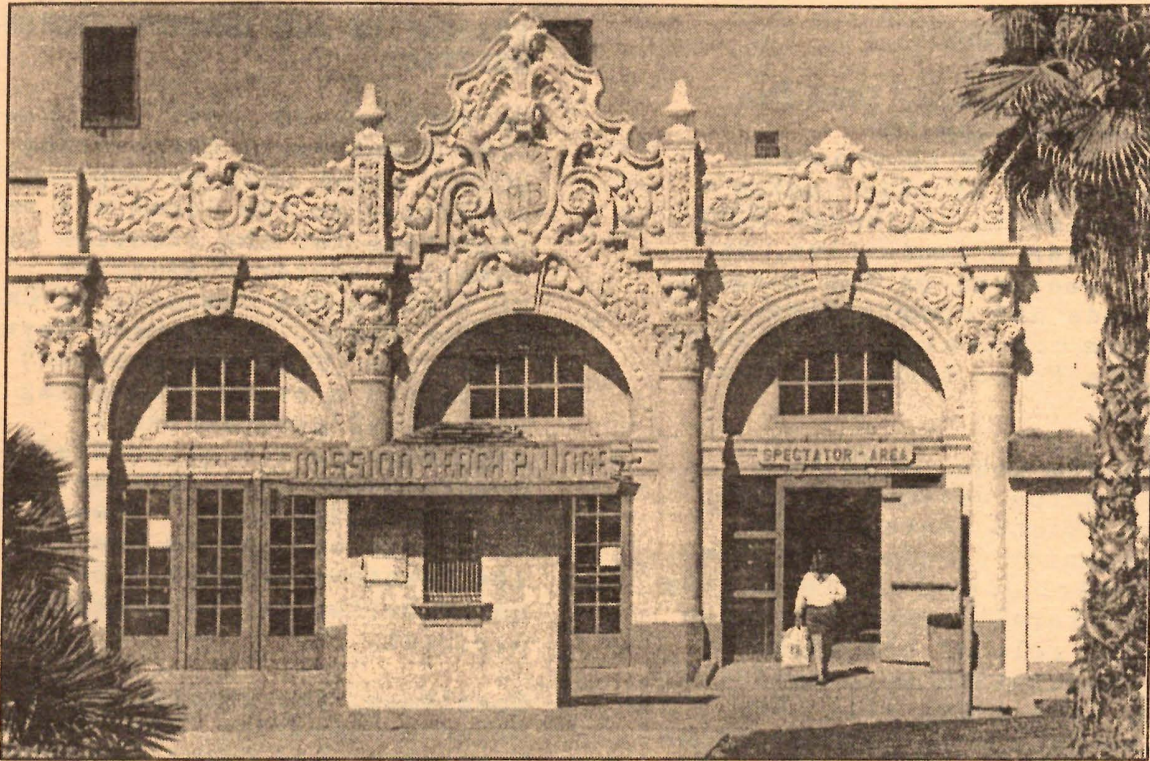
- introduction to period interiors
- furniture styles
- sources

### May 9--"Landscaping"

- introduction to period landscaping
- species and sources

The workshops will be held at various locations around San Diego. They will begin at 10:00 a.m. and last for 2 and 1/2 hours. Cost of the series is \$35 -- SOHO members and \$40 -- non-members. Tickets are also available for the individual workshops, \$6--SOHO members and \$7--non-members. Please call the office at 297-9327 for further details and to make reservations as space is limited.

Please note that the series will start March 28, instead of March 21 as stated in last month's newsletter.



The San Diego Union/Greg Vojtko

## MISSION BEACH PARK--HERITAGE LOST?

As this newsletter goes to press, the Mission Beach Park Roller Rink has just been demolished (even though proper City of San Diego procedures were ignored), and an ugly chain link fence surrounds the historic 1920's Plunge building. It faces imminent demolition, despite the 80,000 registered San Diego voters who requested an opportunity to exercise their right to vote, to govern and to reconsider the Belmont Park Associates project.

SOHO is terribly disappointed in the City Council, with the notable exceptions of Mayor O'Connor and Councilwoman Wolfsheimer who distinguished themselves with a vote for the people, for paving the way for the bulldozers. Once again, the Council sees fit to sell(lease) this city's heritage to the highest bidder.

SOHO applauds the Save Mission Beach Park Committee in its continued effort to preserve the Plunge Building and Park. Despite the assurances of the developers, we have questions about the longevity of the Plunge (pool), because of their earlier plans to divide it into four smaller pools and to destroy the historic tile.

We should also be concerned about the Coaster, because upon expiration or earlier termination of the Roller Coaster lease, Belmont Park Associates shall have the right to first refusal to take over the remaining lease for the Roller Coaster property. Even if the Plunge is destroyed we will continue to monitor the situation and support the passage of the initiative in November.

SOHO is also proud of its membership, once again you have given generously of your time, money and yourselves. We have not failed. Every preservation battle is one of attrition and perseverance. We may have lost this battle (not yet) but we will win the war--the preservation of historic neighborhoods, communities, landscapes and buildings--all that makes San Diego a unique and wonderful community.

Yes, if the Plunge is destroyed, we will have lost an important part of our built environment that no shopping center will ever replace, but we will have raised a greater awareness of San Diego's architectural heritage. We will also have served notice that we never give up the fight.

You only lose faith when you give up trying.

## RANCHO SANTA FE TOUR

For a number of years, SOHO has hosted some very special architectural tours to promote public awareness of this region's built environment. Although SOHO is a countywide organization, our tours have centered on San Diego's neighborhoods and communities. This year we are traveling north to Rancho Santa Fe to conduct a tour on April 25.

Augmenting the tour, will be a panel discussion devoted to the history of Rancho Santa Fe as a unique community development, the role of the Art Jury in maintaining the architectural integrity of the area and the role of the Rancho Santa Fe Association in planning decisions. The panel will also discuss the impact of incorporation upon planning and preservation in the community.

The day will conclude with a winetasting at the Inn at Rancho Santa Fe. Premier wineries from the south coast will participate, and Inn will provide the hors d'oeuvres.

Please come and join us for a delightful afternoon in the North County on Saturday, April 25 from 1:30-6:00 p.m. Call the office at 297-9327 to make reservations, or send a check to SOHO/Tour, P.O. Box 3571, San Diego, CA 92103. Cost of the event is \$30--SOHO members, \$35 non-members.

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## SAN DIEGO, A PICTORIAL HISTORY

SOHO is continuing to promote San Diego, A Pictorial History by Dr. Raymond Starr (see December issue of Reflections).

SOHO earns \$5.00 for every book sold through our organization. Call the office, 297-9327, for additional information about price and ordering procedures. If you are interested in glancing through a copy, one is available in the SOHO office.

## PRESERVING SAN DIEGO'S CHINESE HERITAGE

On February 20, 1987, the Centre City Development Corporation Board (CCDC) asked that an application be submitted to the local and national registers for the creation of a thematic historic district to include the remnants of Chinatown in San Diego. Architect Wayne Donaldson (SOHO boardmember) presented a study evaluating the historical/architectural significance and structural soundness of nine Chinese buildings in the Marina area. These buildings and others identified in the downtown area will be contributing to the thematic district.

Donaldson, representatives from the Chinese community, the Planning Department and Carol Lindemulder (former SOHO president) all recommended the establishment of such a district to preserve the last remaining vestiges of Asian culture, history and architecture in downtown San Diego. Carol Lindemulder was especially eloquent: "You're being asked to make a commitment for the last of our Chinese heritage. You must take the concept that we go for the whole thing or not at all." Ms. Lindemulder was responsible for the listing of several of these buildings on the local register.

While some of the buildings are small and nondescript, others are fine examples of the Asian presence in turn of the century San Diego. Most of them are located on Third and Fourth avenues between Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Way and J street. Together they present a foundation for the formation of another exciting historic district in San Diego's downtown.



## NEW BOOK FROM PRESERVATION PRESS

### INDUSTRIAL EYE

Photographs by Jet Lowe from the  
Historic American Engineering  
Record  
Introduction by David Weitzman

One hundred twenty breathtaking color and duotone photographs are featured in this album of an industrial America that few people have seen. Perched atop building ledges and balanced on thin platforms, "daredevil photographer" Jet Lowe has captured the awesome beauty of some of the country's most famous engineering and industrial landmarks, such as the Statue of Liberty and the Brooklyn Bridge, as well as less celebrated sites--abandoned textile mills and still-active manufacturing plants, railroads and dams, power plants and windmills, from the Virgin Islands to Alaska.

**Industrial Eye** is an exploration of the world of working places and landmarks of America's engineering ingenuity. Progress and decay are given new perspective as Lowe stretches for the unexplored angle and rarely seen view. The introduction by David Weitzman describes the significance of our industrial heritage and the tangible relics of the industrial revolution that changed the face of America.

Lowe's portraits of industrial America are unique, not only because they have been photographed from out-of-the-way places and dangerous heights but also because of their detail. The Statue of Liberty is seen from her toes to her ears and crown, inside and out, before and during restoration. The intricate workings of the machines and the fine web of steel bridge wires are all captured in crisp startling images.

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SOHO would like to wish former boardmember Bruce Herms a speedy recovery. Bruce suffered a heart attack and is now slowly but surely recuperating. Bruce, we send you our good thoughts and hope that you get well soon. We look forward to seeing you at a SOHO event!

## SPEAKERS' BUREAU

SOHO's Speakers' Bureau is active again. The Committee, Kristen Aliotti, Larry Ford, with Dorothy Smith Collins serving as chairperson, has planned to provide two levels of presentations. A general introduction to SOHO and an overview of its preservation activities is the Level 1 presentation. Dorothy Smith Collins has made this type of presentation for two organizations. In January she was the guest speaker at a Sunday Brunch for the Sierra Club Singles Group. In February, Collins gave a presentation at an evening meeting of the Kensington Community Church's Women's Guild. She was enthusiastically received by both groups.

The Level 2 presentation will include the introduction to SOHO and a visual tour of some of the outstanding buildings that SOHO has been involved in preserving. The Committee is looking forward to giving more presentations to various community groups. Call the SOHO office at 297-9327 to request a program.

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## FRIENDS OF SAN DIEGO ARCHITECTURE

As part of their Spring series, the Friends of San Diego Architecture will present the following programs:

March 21, 1987

Harry Anthony, Architect and Professor Emeritus  
"City Planning in Pre-Columbian Meso-America"

April 18, 1987

Gary Rose Weber, Land Use and Urban Planning Consultant  
"Revitalizing Our Inner City"

All programs are held on Saturdays from 9:30-11:30 a.m. at the New School of Architecture, 2252 Main Street, Chula Vista, 429-6000.

Admission is free.



## Neighborhoods

by  
Helen Marquardt

Do you plan to remodel without a permit? You should know that lenders look askance at remodeling and additions that have been done without permits EVEN IF THE WORK IS TO CODE, and even if you are a contractor or an architect.

Buyers, too, tend to shy away from homes that were remodeled without permits. You should hear their sighs of relief when told that all improvements are legit!

The extra effort to get a permit can save you a lot of headaches later when you decide to sell.

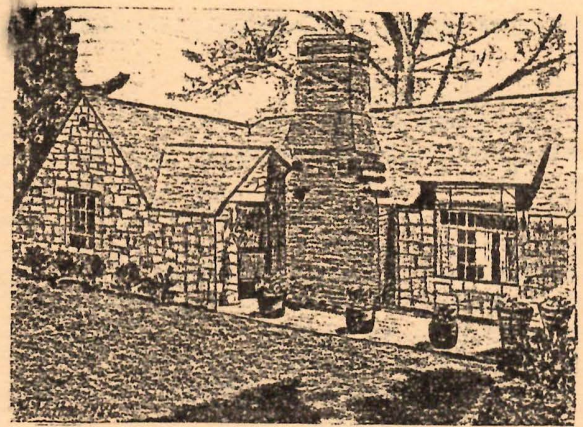


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### PRESERVATION ADVERTISING

SOHO is now accepting appropriate advertising in the newsletter. We believe that we can provide a service for our membership by accepting advertising from preservation professionals, real estate agents who specialize in historic properties, and businesses that cater to the needs of old house owners (and admirers!). Please call the SOHO office for prices and details, 297-9327. We are offering discounts for 3 and 6 month prepaid advertisements.