



Save Our Heritage Organisation

Reflections

The SOHO newsletter for the preservation of architecturally and historically significant structures in San Diego County.

NATIONAL PRESERVATION NEWS

PRESERVATION LAW UPDATE

SUPREME COURT LAND USE DECISION DOES NOT UNDERMINE HISTORIC PRESERVATION LAW ACCORDING TO NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

J. Jackson Walter, President of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, said today that while the Supreme Court's June 9 decision in First English Evangelical Lutheran Church is disappointing, it "should have little, if any, adverse impact on historic preservation laws."

Walter noted that the Court in First English merely held that a temporary and complete 'taking' of private property by a governmental authority must be compensated. It has long been settled law that a permanent, complete 'taking' of private property requires compensation under the Constitution. "But the First English decision does not overrule or modify the Supreme Court's 1978 holding in the Grand Central Station case (Penn Central v. New York City) which holds that the impact of a historic preservation ordinance is not a 'taking' of private property." Walter also noted that the Court's holding in First English was specifically limited to the unique facts presented in that case, which involved a total ban on construction in a flood plain after the church's property had been destroyed. Further, the Court did not find that a 'taking' had occurred, but sent the case back to the California courts to make a determination on that issue.

"Nothing in the Court's opinion indicated any change in the Court's 1978 Penn Central decision that local historic preservation laws are constitutional and do not amount to 'taking,'" Walter said.

"The Court's decision is regrettable" Walter continued, "because it may create an unwarranted fear among local governments that any land use regulation, no matter how reasonable, may expose them to financial liability." In addition, Walter said the timing of the decision is unfortunate. "Many localities are struggling to find tools to deal with rampant growth" Walter stated. "This decision may impede the public's ability to plan for a community's future."

The National Trust participated as a friend of the court in a brief which supported the local government in the First English case.

REHAB TAX CREDITS IN NEED OF REVISION

According to the June 3, 1987 Wall Street Journal, historic rehabilitations using the investment tax credits have dropped despite the retention of the credits in the new tax law. Although reduced from 25% to 20%, the historic rehabilitation tax credit is one of only two real estate tax credits to survive 1986 tax reform. Why then, are far fewer applications being submitted to the National Park Service to qualify for the tax credit (down from 270 to 150 a month)?

Various investment disincentives were, apparently, inadvertently written into the law, such as the elimination of 19 year depreciation and the limitation to \$7000 maximum credit that an investor can apply against his or her income. Most damaging, however, is the phasing out of tax credits from passive investments as an investor's income rises above \$200,000. Unfortunately, it is investors in this particular income bracket who have supplied most of the equity for historic rehabilitations. They can no longer afford to invest in historic rehabs.

San Diegans have benefited from the tax credits, in one way or another, as we have witnessed the revitalization of the downtown. Any device that enhances historic rehabilitation in the eyes of investors and developers is a boon to preservation, and we must work to revive the original structure of the credits.

Write a letter to your representatives in Congress, and let them know that tax reform has impeded the revitalization of our cities and the rehabilitation of this nation's landmarks. Lobbyists from Preservation Action continue to work on behalf of a rejuvenated tax credit. A letter from you may earn them a sympathetic ear and vote on Capitol Hill!



WORKSHOP UPDATE

SOHO just completed its first "Hands On" workshop series. The series is a new concept designed to provide "Do-It Yourselfers" with information and insight into finishing processes associated with older homes.

The series began with demonstrations in decorative finishes conducted by Laura Bender and John Early of SITE PAINTERS. Workshop attendees were shown how to create a faux marble finish as well as glazing, sponge texturing, rag rolling, and stenciling techniques. Vykki Mende Gray and David Swarens conducted a workshop on furniture repair and finish restoration. Gerhard Walther, a General Contractor experienced in older home restoration, took the workshop through a Mission Style Bungalow and addressed questions about floor refinishing, window repair and plumbing and tile repair. Chip Melvin and Norm Hasenfung, recent recipients of SOHO's "People In Preservation" award for craftsmanship, led the workshop through a Japanese Craftsman Bungalow and discussed interior and exterior wood refinishing. A second "Hands On" series will be presented in the Fall.

In the meantime, SOHO will be repeating its popular "Home Restoration" series commencing August 29th. The series will run for 5 consecutive Saturdays, excluding Labor Day weekend, and will cover the issues of obtaining financing to purchase an older home, researching the history of a home, how to deal with an architect and a contractor, and reconstructing period interiors and landscapes. People signing up for the full series will receive an informative booklet that outlines and supplements the lectures. Series costs are \$40.00 for SOHO members and \$45.00 for non-members. Individual workshops will be open for attendance at \$10.00 for SOHO members and \$12.00 for non-members. TO SECURE YOUR PLACE, ENROLL NOW!!

Schedule for the series:

Aug. 29--basic introduction to architectural styles, historical research, tax credits, etc.
Sept. 12--working with an architect and contractor.
Sept. 19--watching the trades at work in a home undergoing restoration
Sept. 26--Period interiors
Oct. 3--Period landscaping and a visit to the newly restored Kate Sessions garden at Mary Cossitt #4.

FORTHCOMING FROM PRESERVATION PRESS

Great American Movie Theaters by David Naylor

American was once filled with "picture palaces"--grand theaters where moviegoers sat in opulent surroundings that frequently surpassed in flamboyant virtuosity what was shown on the silver screens. Built largely during the years between World War I and the Great Depression, these theaters ranged in style from outrageously eclectic to near-perfect replicas of the finest royal palaces of Europe and the Orient. This architecture of fantasy incorporated everything from imitation Mayan tombs to Babylonian hanging gardens, paintings by the old masters lining the walls of grand foyers and balcony promenades to plaster versions of the treasures of King Tut. Today, these glorified structures are dying out--being lost to changed moviegoing habits and urban development. (Or in the case of the Balboa Theater, stubborn redevelopment agencies)!

Thanks to the Preservation Press, the first guide to 350 of the most historic movie theaters still standing throughout the country has been published. Great American Movie Theaters by David Naylor organizes the theaters by region, state and city and gives each theater's address, construction date and architect. Colorful architectural and theatrical descriptions are furnished for each of the landmarks. Historical and contemporary photographs accompany the

descriptions, helping capture the magic of these remarkable structures. An essay details preservation problems--and solutions--while a coda brings back some of the lost great theaters for a final call.

David Naylor, a free-lance writer and photographer, is author of American Picture Palaces: The Architecture of Fantasy (Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1981), and has written articles for Atlantic and Historic Preservation.

Individual copies of the book may be ordered from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Mail Order Division, 1600 H Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006 (plus \$3 shipping and handling and applicable tax). Please write or call (202) 673-4200 for complete ordering information.

OLD HOUSE JOURNAL

SOHO has a chance to receive a \$1000 grant from the Old House Journal. The Journal is a how-to magazine for the home restorer. It provides data on everything from finding hardware to repairing wooden shingle roofs. This magazine is a great complement to our workshops.

The magazine is offering an opportunity for non-profits to raise money. They are offering a one-year subscription or renewal for only \$14, a 22% discount off their regular price. SOHO will receive \$7 for every subscription sold and become eligible for a drawing for a \$1000.

How to take part: Send a check for \$14 (made out to SOHO) and your name and address, to SOHO. We send twelve names at one time to the Journal and they begin the subscription.

ART DECO COMMITTEE

The Art Deco Committee continues to meet on the second Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. All meetings are held at Mixed Produce at 378 1/2 Park Blvd. Everyone with an interest in Art Deco architecture and design is welcome.

Another Place Another Time

The small individual shops
reminiscent of the 30's and 40's
in the quiet setting of

Mission Hills

along 1500 and 1600 W. Lewis Street

*Make a Personal Discovery
Enjoy a Special Treat*



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

San Diego's inner city neighborhoods may finally receive an essential element (and first step) of any preservation program--the survey. Last year, Sherman Heights, one of the city's oldest communities was thoroughly surveyed. Now it appears that North Park, Burlingame, the boulevards of Mid-City, Little Italy and segments of Uptown may be candidates for upcoming surveys.

Surveys assist the planning process by documenting significant remaining structures and identifying styles and eras. The results of a survey aid decision makers in the development and implementation of historic preservation programs.

Zoning is another essential ingredient for an effective preservation program. For example, the lovely old apartment buildings that line Park Boulevard between Upas and Robinson streets may disappear unless zoning encourages their preservation.

Historic Site Board review and rezoning hearings make better sense to property owners, developers and politicians if a survey has demonstrated the need for preservation policy guidelines.

The recently adopted Interim Development Ordinance (IDO) should temporarily halt the wanton destruction of many valuable urban structures. Let us insure that, when the City's General Plan is updated and approved, an inventory of our inner city's architectural heritage is in the works and in the City's budget, too!

SAN DIEGO, A PICTORIAL HISTORY

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

SOHO earns \$ 6.00 for every book sold through our organization. Call the office, 297-9327, for more information.

SAN DIEGO COUNTY HISTORIC SITES BOARD

(From *Adelante*, the newsletter for the Congress of History of San Diego County)

The Historic Sites Board of San Diego County was formed by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (at SOHO's urging). Each supervisor appointed three people from their district. The first meeting of the Historic Sites board was held in December of 1986.

The Board meets, regularly, on the 2nd Wednesday of each month in the PERB Board Room in the County Administration Building at 5201 Ruffin Road,

San Diego, near Clairemont Mesa Blvd., at 1:00 p.m.

The agenda for each meeting is posted on the outside of the building, on Ruffin Court, seventy-two hours in advance of the meeting. Everyone interested is invited to attend.

If you do attend a meeting, wish to speak and be included on the agenda, it is necessary to contact Ron May, Staff Assistant to the Historical Sites Board, at 565-5627.





by Helen Marquardt

You are invited to tour the Donald Simison house, built in 1916. This fine example of a California Craftsman has been carefully and sensitively restored and upgraded by the Chadwick Construction Co.

OPEN HOUSE every Sunday through September-1 to 4 p.m.

Helen Marquardt
"I Know The Neighborhood."



**FIRST MISSION
PROPERTIES**

820 W. Washington St.
San Diego, CA 92103
260-1636 234-1726

DAUGHTERS OF PAINTED LADIES

SOHO has been offered the opportunity to co-sponsor a slide presentation/lecture with the Heritage Park Bed and Breakfast. Many of you probably have read and/or own copies of the beautiful **Painted Ladies, San Francisco's Resplendent Victorians**, a book that celebrates the unique collection of Victorian houses in San Francisco and their significance to this and future generations. The authors of **Painted Ladies** have completed another book entitled, **Daughters of Painted Ladies**, a volume highlighting Victorians around America, including some San Diego examples (some in Heritage Park).

On Monday, November 9, from 7:30-9:30 p.m. the authors will present "Capturing A Revolution In Progress," a slide/lecture. SOHO and the Heritage Park Bed and Breakfast will host the presentation at 846 Fifth Avenue, Suite 300 in the Gaslamp Quarter above the San Diego Hardware Store.

If you wish to reserve a space for "Capturing A Revolution In Progress," please send a check for \$10 if a SOHO member and \$12 if not, to: P. O. Box 3571, San Diego, Ca 92103. Hope to see you there!



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