

# Reflections

on the Past 20 Years

Volume XXI No. 2 May 1989

Save Our Heritage Organisation

## "Saving Horton Plaza"

A case study in perseverance.  
by MaryJoralman

In 1983, historic preservation faced a formidable opponent, a multi-million dollar shopping center, mandated to revitalize downtown San Diego. It was called Horton Plaza.

The Irving Gill Fountain in Horton Plaza Park (the real one) was to be its logo and possibly the centerpiece of the center's entry. Threat to the existing park seemed a reality. Well-known landscape architect Lawrence Halprin, with Van Dyke Halsey, were hired by CCDC to re-design the park. Park workshops were organized. The citizens of San Diego were invited to participate.

Over 300 people, including many members of SOHO, attended. Local architects were among facilitators. This workshop format gave the public opportunity to address issues in a creative mode. Unfortunately this format does not lend itself to valid consensus, nor was the historic place well served in such manipulative participatory action.

At the conclusion, Mr. Halprin "synthesized" the recommendation. As SOHO feared, many completely new features were created, issues of concern were not addressed and the historical integrity of the park was gone.



Serendipity and general good fortune appeared in an informal gathering of architects, preservationists and others concerned with the destiny of the historic plaza.

The idea: an alternate proposal. The dynamics of creating this plan and the architects, historians, engineers and

landscape architects who came to this unstructured group were very special. Instead of adopting a confrontational negative attitude towards the Halprin plans, the group opted for a positive stance, presenting an alternate proposal that maintained the historic integrity of the plaza while rehabilitating it for contemporary use. It was also a fiscally responsible approach, coming in under \$600,000, as opposed to \$2.4 million of the Halprin proposal.

There was much opposition. Serendipity appeared in the guise of Wayne Donaldson, an architect long active in the historic Gaslamp Quarter and a facilitator at the workshops. He became a part of our creative group and generously allowed initial group meetings in his office. After stating that he was "not really a preservationist" (hah!), he became our spokesman and driving force for the SOHO plan.

His articulate reasonableness and generosity greatly enhanced the long trek through all the processes and meetings.....to a victorious outcome. Harry Evan, President of San Diego Historical Society, and long-time preservationist came to the fore and with Wayne and myself became a triumvirate on our many visits to City Hall. *Saving Horton* (Cont. on page 7)



---

---

# Reflections

Page 2

---

---

## Reflections

Celebrating 20 years  
of active preservation  
in San Diego

### Save Our Heritage Organisation Board of Directors:

Robin Webster-President  
David Swarens-Vice President  
Anna L. McPherson-Secretary  
Charles Sykes-Treasurer  
Dan W. Conway  
Bruce Coons  
Kathleen Kelley-Markham  
Stephen Doyle, Esq.  
Suzanne Lawrence  
Rick Garbini, ASLA  
Ann MacCullough  
James Guthrie

#### Reflections:

Misty Carlson-Editor  
Suzanne Lawrence Director  
Mary Joralman-Contributing  
Writer

*Reflections* is published bi-monthly by Save Our Heritage Organisation, P.O. Box 3571, San Diego, CA 92103 (Ph.) 297-9327.

Save Our Heritage Organisation is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of cultural resources of San Diego County. They are a member of:

- \*California Preservation Foundation
- \* National Trust for Historic Preservation
- \* San Diego Historical Society

## The President's Column

### President's Letter

San Diego is not alone in trying to save its historic sites from the wrecking ball. Just recently, I had the opportunity to visit the site, where Christopher Columbus landed on St. Croix. At first, I was rather surprised at the low keyed approach for marking the site. Then, I was touched by the relative unspoiled effects of modern man on the site.

I later found out that the battlelines are forming between many Crucians and a large resort developer that has negotiated rights to the property. As it seems inevitable with compromises to properties that richly reflect our cultural and historic heritage, it will be a question of the dollar of the developer verses the tenacity of the general public.

During the quincentenary observance of Christopher Columbus's discovery, celebrations will be held either at a National park, or amidst the manicured lawns of a high end resort. Let us hope the Crucians prevail.

To find out what other communities are doing to protect their cultural resources, many SOHO members attend the California Preservation Conference in Los Angeles. It was wonderful opportunity to compare notes, to be updated on the technical and financial aspects of preservation, and to see the successes of other communities.

On May 20, SOHO will be celebrating National Preservation Week by honoring San Diegans who have played an important role in preservation during the past year. It is my hope that much of the membership will join the viewing and applauding the work of the honorees. "People in Preservation" is always a special night, and it reflects that one person can make a difference. You can order tickets to the dinner/awards banquet by sending a check/money order to SOHO - \$30.00/member and \$35.00 for each nonmember.

-Robin Webster

**People In Preservation**

**May 20th**

**Clairon Hotel**



## New Executive Director

SOHO is very proud to announce the selection of Cynthia Malinick as its new Executive Director. Cindi assumed her duties on April 3, and after settling into the office, she will become very active in interfacing with the public and local governments on preservation issues.

Cindi received her B.A. from the College of William and Mary and has been active as an archivist for William and Mary as well as San Diego's local Universities. Since her arrival in San Diego, Cindi has been very active in numerous civic and non-profit organizations, including SOHO. She is currently enrolled at the University of San Diego working on a graduate degree in Historic Preservation.

She resides in Coronado with her husband and small daughter in a charming bungalow that the Malinick's have been slowly renovating. Her interests include history, tennis, and travel.

After an indoctrination period, Cindi's office hours will be posted. In the meantime, we would like the membership to join us in welcoming Cindi.

## Liffreing House Update

On February 17, the San Diego County Planning Commission recommended approval of the recommendation by the County Department of Planning and Land Use to add the "H" Designator in the rezoning application to protect the Julia Liffreing House. The rezoning application is now being forwarded to the County Board of Supervisors for action.

The owner of the Julia Liffreing House is still resisting designation because it impacts her ability to fully develop the parcel of land. It is SOHO's position, as well as that of many local residents, that the property can be effectively developed around the Liffreing House in a manner sensitive to this historically significant structure.

SOHO encourages its members to write to their County Supervisor in support of continued protection of the Julia Liffreing House by approving the rezoning application to include the "H" Designator.

## Join SOHO or Renew Your SOHO Dues

Membership privileges include our monthly newsletter Reflections, to keep you informed about preservation issues and activities in San Diego County, as well as reduced prices for SOHO workshops and tours.

Membership categories include:

Active: \$20  
Professional: \$35  
Corporate: \$100-\$500  
Patron: \$500  
Benefactor: \$1000

Please call the SOHO office for more information: 297-9327. To join SOHO, please complete the following information and send your check to:

SOHO, PO Box 3571  
San Diego, CA 92103

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Day Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Evening Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to help with: \_\_\_\_\_

Government Liaison: \_\_\_\_\_

Newsletter  Tours

Workshops  Office

Other



## News from throughout comm

"Armed with pitchforks and picks the workers approached ... **Bottroff-Bliss House** ... yanked protective boards off the window frames and doors....."

"That's when my heart sank," Santee City Councilman Jim Bartell said. "I had to stop it...."

"Bartell, also vice president of the Santee Historical Society, stood by the house to prevent the [demolition from continuing] ... "The judge set a deadline ... some money came in, but not enough."

"In December, the City Council had challenged residents to come up with about one-third of the estimated \$95,000 exterior restoration cost or see the house destroyed."

"On March 4th some of the walls and most of the roof of the 91-year-old house were torn down."

*San Diego Union*

"Landmark reprieved at last minute" & "Crew starts tearing down 91-year-old Santee house"

By Irene Jackson  
February 18 & March 5

"The dispute is over the **Julia Liffreing House**, a 96-year-old redwood Queen Anne-style structure on an East County knoll north of Hillsdale Road between Jamacha Road and Vista Grande Road."

"Betty and Robert Chu are owners of the house and surrounding 70 acres of land, which they want to use for a residential development."

"Planning commissioner Richard Wright made the motion to recommend an historic designation on the one acre around the house."

"Representatives of the El Cajon Historical Society, [SOHO], and other preservation groups urged the commission to save the house."

"The 2,500-sq.ft. house was built in 1893 by noted architect John B. Stannard for the Liffreing family in what was then the citrus farming community of Hillsdale."

".....vacant for 15 years, the house retains its features of fish-scale shingles on gable ends, a wide exterior porch and angled bay windows under pendants ... a classic example of the rural farmhouses of the San Diego region in the 1800's."

"As part of the process for rezoning requested by the Chus, a study [conducted early last year] found the house to be of historical significance and structurally sound ... Estimates on restoring the house ranged from \$90,000 to \$120,000."

"County supervisors ... directed staff to work with the owners to try to devise a plan to spare the structure ... suggestions to move the house brought protests from preservationists."

[If the historic designation is placed -- as recommended by the Planning Commission -- on the zoning ... it bans demolition or removal of the house without a special county review. The vote was 6-0 with Commissioner Al Ziegus absent -- recommending an approval of the County Department of Planning and Land Use's recommendation of an "H" Designator.]

[The rezoning application is expected to go before the County Board of Supervisors in May.]

*San Diego Union*

"Planners move to protect historic East County farmhouse"  
by George Flynn  
February 18



# out the preservation community

"Restoration ... Starting January '89 promises the hand-lettered sign next to the old **Belmont Park roller coaster.**"

"Coaster-lovers still hope that reconstruction of the ... ride will begin this June, with new clacking along ... by January."

"Some residents who live near the old Mission Beach landmark don't want [it] to run again, ... opposition prompted ... another environmental study....."

"The steel-tracked roller coaster would push noise levels on nearby Ventura Place to the 77-decibel level, exceeding the city's noise ordinance."

[So before work starts, the Council has to amend the noise ordinance and approve a lease with a group of Santa Cruz coaster experts.]

*The Reader*

"The Way the Coaster Rolls"

by Paul Krueger  
March 30, 1989

"The old La Jolla Library is now a shambles of empty book stacks and dusty, outmoded equipment."

"The City is set to move the remnants from the building by May 31, when the ... Athanaeum Music and Arts Library ... reclaims the building for restoration and renovation."

".....the exterior of the building probably will change very little."

"The library has been a La Jolla landmark at Girard Avenue and Wall Street since 1921, when benefactress Ellen Browning Scripps contributed the majority of the money....."

"The building [a historic site] was designed by architect William Templeton Johnson ... known for the San Diego Museum of Art and the Museum of Man."

*San Diego Union*

"Old library is expected to stay a site for culture"

By Carol Olten  
March 19, 1989

"The vacant, 62-year-old **El Cortez Hotel** building downtown -- once the grande dame of San Diego hotels -- is apparently being primed for a face lift."

"Building owner Grosvenor Industries plans to renovate the aging structure so it can once again operate as a hotel....."

".....the project at 702 Ash St., ... a 14-floor hotel sits atop Cortez Hill, ... was one of the most popular social spots....."

".....once host to presidents and movie stars, [it] was known for one of the first outside glass-front elevators in the nation."

"Grosvenor will seek to place the building on the National Register of Historic Places, [to take advantage of the tax benefits]."

*San Diego Union*

"Renovation planned for El Cortez Hotel"

By Steve Schmidt



## Datebook

<b>through August</b>	<b>Exhibit at Villa Montezuma</b>	"Eden at your Back Door: San Diego's Gardening Tradition, 1870-1910.
<b>May 1</b>	<b>SOHO Board of Directors</b>	6 p.m. at Senlis Cottage
<b>6</b>	<b>Lilian Rice Historical Home Tour</b>	Five Rice homes open from 10-3 pm, sponsored by the Planned Parenthood Auxiliary (Ph.) 756-0106
<b>13</b>	<b>Escondido Historical Society Tour of Homes</b>	from 2-5 p.m., \$10 for members, \$12 for non-members (Ph.) 743-8207
<b>17</b>	<b>Historic Sites Board</b>	1 p.m., 202 "C" Street
<b>Through 21</b>	<b>Designers Showcase</b>	Sefton-Clark House on Narragansett Street in Point Loma (Ph.) 232-6226
<b>25</b>	<b>Ordinance Workshop</b>	A.M. ? Planning Commission Workshop for proposed new ordinance.  Questions, call Ron Buckley at (Ph.) 533-3691 or Planning Department at (Ph.) 236-6450
<b>June 5</b>	<b>SOHO Board of Directors</b>	6 p.m. at Senlis Cottage
<b>17, 18 &amp; 24, 25</b>	<b>Threshing Bee &amp; and Antique Engine show</b>	9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Antique Gas & Steam Engine Museum in Vista, \$3.00
<b>21</b>	<b>Historic Site Board Tour of Homes</b>	1 p.m., 202 "C" Street (Ph.) 756-0106

### Preservation Workshop Coronado

Mark your calendars! On Saturdays, May 13th, June 3rd, and June 24th, the City will be sponsoring community workshops at the City Council chambers to help determine the future direction of the Coronado Historic Preservation Program. The City needs to know from you, the citizens, your ideas on how best to preserve the historic buildings that make Coronado a special place to live. The workshops will be conducted by Diann Marsh, an expert in historic preservation, and Jim Burns.

#### **People In Preservation**

6 pm at the Clarion Hotel (formerly the Lafayette) 2223 El Cajon Blvd.

Saturday, May 20th.

\$35 nonmembers

\$30 members to SOHO

**BECOME A  
SOHO  
VOLUNTEER  
297-9327**



---

---

---

# Reflections

---

---

---

Page 7

Saving Horton  
cont. from pp 1

We sent letters and got good responses. We had flyers made of Gill's blueprint for the fountain, and invited all to the unveiling of the alternate proposal on a warm summer's day in the plaza. Postcards were sent by all SOHO members to the City Council; the huge stack was prominently displayed by the Mayor at the final meeting. Many hours were spent contacting influential groups and individuals for their approval.

Helping our cause was Halprin's higher cost, but without our proposal to consider the City would probably have gone forward with his plans.

The final City Council vote was on November 5, 1984. Restoration proceeded under CCDC and Wayne's professional eye. I lent my official approval as SOHO President and in September, 1985, we unveiled the commemorative plaque at SOHO's annual meeting where it all began.

Mary Joralman is a past SOHO president and last year's recipient of the SOHO Lady Award.

She played an instrumental role in saving the fountain.

## Spring Annual Meeting for all Members

When: June 3, 1989

Where: The grounds around Senlis Cottage, Heritage Park

Time: Noon - 3:00 p.m.

Program: Speaker from the County to discuss the renovation of Temple Beth Isreal; auction/sale of some office furniture and miscellaneous items

Come join the celebration of SOHO's 20th anniversary. Bring a picnic lunch (and a blanket) - SOHO will provide the lemonade.

## People In the News

SOHO Board member, Bruce Coons, has been selected as supervisor, Bill Billray's representative on the County Historical site Board. Congratulations Bruce.

On March 17, SOHO was proud to recognize Tiffany R. Walker and Lindsey F. Purdie for their outstanding work in this year's San Diego - Tijuana International History Fair. Tiffany and Lindsey produced a very clever video presentation on the Whaley House. SOHO Boardmember, Rick Garbini, juried the entries and SOHO President, Robin Webster, presented the winners with a copy of Dr. Raymond Starr's Book, "San Diego Pictorial". The winners are students of Mr. Helscher at Francis Parker School.

The SOHO office is doing a little house cleaning. There are several items, although dear to our heart, that are no longer functional for our tiny office. We would like to find these pieces a good home, during our June General Membership Meeting, by holding a little auction. If you have any items that you would like to contribute for the auction, please call the office to make appropriate arrangements.

---

---

# Reflections

Page 8

---

---

## Green Dragon Colony

Time may be running out for the Green Dragon Colony in La Jolla.

There are only 2.5 months left on the City Council approved denial of issuance of a demolition permit for the Colony. At this time, no buyers have been able to successfully negotiate a purchase with the Mosher Trust.

## Classifieds

ICART 1924 original etching/aquatint, "Frileuse"; pencil signed, #176. Good condition: framed in gold molding; certified appraisal, \$1,350. Kay: 619/296-3526.

Mail any classifieds material (30 words or less \$15) to: Reflections, P.O. Box 3571, San Diego, CA 92103

## Our Apologies and Thanks

Last month's issue failed to thank the cover artist - well-known to all of us at SOHO ... Miles Parker.



SOHO

Save Our Heritage Organisation

P.O. Box 3571  
San Diego, CA 92103

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED  
RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED

---

NONPROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. Postage

**PAID**  
San Diego, CA  
PERMIT NO. 984

---

11/85

Kathy Flanigan

5700 Baltimore Dr. #6  
La Mesa, CA 92042



**SOHO**  
**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

**TOURS AND FUNDRAISERS**

SOHO has a long history of sponsoring unique tours and exciting events. These are some of the organizations most popular activities. SOHO wishes to re-establish a full calendar of these activities featuring walking and bus tours as well as fanciful events. If you would like to become a part of the planning and implementation of these activities please call our office at 297-9327.

**NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE**

SOHO invites all members to become involved with the workings of the organization through participation in the creation of *Reflections*, SOHO's newsletter. We are looking for individuals to be involved with all aspects of producing a quality newsletter, through writing stories, conducting interviews, graphic arts, photography and advertising management. If you would like to become part of the REFLECTIONS team, please call our office at 297-9327.

**OFFICE ASSISTANCE**

We need individuals to assist in the daily workings of our office headquarters in Senlis Cottage in Heritage Park. The office duties include taking phone messages, general light office work as well as acting as a Greeter/Information Officer to visitors of Heritage Park. You set your own hours. It's a wonderful way to become familiar with the workings of the organization, current preservation issues, and to meet other members.

**LIBRARY ASSISTANCE**

SOHO is currently in the process of embarking on a project to revamp our library facility located in Senlis Cottage in Heritage Park. This is a great opportunity for anyone interested in the preservation resource material available through the organization.



## PUBLIC RELATIONS REPRESENTATIVES FOR EVENTS

Individuals are needed who are willing to represent SOHO at numerous historical events throughout the year. Public relations representatives will be familiar with the organizations goals and objectives as well as current issues. Duties at events include distributing organizational information, promoting membership and recruiting volunteers.

## SPEAKERS BUREAU

Save Our Heritage Organization has opportunities to speak to groups ranging from elementary school students to seniors and professional organizations. This is SOHO's opportunity to spread the word about current preservation issues and about SOHO as a preservation resource. Speakers will be given an informational orientation along with an outline and audio-visual aids for use at presentations. This commitment is scheduled according to your availability.



Yes. I would like to be involved in SOHO's volunteer program.

Please contact me regarding

Tours and Fundraisers

Library Assistance

Newsletter Committee

Public Relations

Office Assistance

Speakers Bureau

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Send to P.O. Box 3571 San Diego, CA 92103



# People In Preservation

People in preservation, SOHO's annual awards dinner honoring individuals who have participated in historic preservation and restoration efforts throughout San Diego, will take place at the Clarion Hotel. The 42 year old historic landmark originally known as Imig Manor has recently completed a \$10 million dollar refurbishment. You and your friends are cordially invited to attend this years People In Preservation awards in the historic Mississippi Ballroom of the Clarion Hotel, located at 2223 El Cajon Boulevard - for reservations Call 297-9327.

## 1989 PEOPLE IN PRESERVATION JURORS

- Lucy J. Berk -** Member, Escondido Preservation Policy Committee and County of San Diego Historic Site Board.
- James B. Guthrie -** Architect and Urban Designer, Vice President of Normal Heights Community Development Corp. and Instructor New School of Architecture.
- Angeles Leira -** Consultant to the City Council's Transportation and Land use Committee, previously headed the City of San Diego's Planning Department Urban Conservation section - 1988 Preservationist of the Year.
- Jim Gibson -** Of Local Color Inc. Restoration Contractor specializing in painting and wood finishing. His projects have won several past People In Preservation awards.
- Kathleen Kelley -  
Makham -** Planning Consultant involved in Historic Preservation Issues - immediate past President of Save Our Heritage Organization.
- David Swarens -** Vice President of SOHO, chair Preservation Action Committee, member Sherman Heights Community Center; active in developing Southeast San Diego's Community Plan.