



Reflections

Volume XXI No. 8, January 1990

Save Our Heritage Organisation

SOHO Granted New Facade Easement

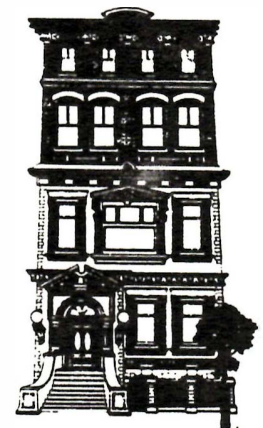
The SOHO Board of Directors at its December meeting voted to accept a facade easement for the Cole Block building located at the northwest corner of 5th Avenue and G Street in the Gaslamp Quarter.

The Cole Block is Historical Site No. 103 on the city's historical site board register. The building, a 3-story masonry structure, was constructed during 1891-1892. Scheduled to be rehabilitated in the upcoming months, the Cole Block will house the Avanti Restaurant and the New Kelsey Hotel, a 48-room SRO.

Attorney Marie Burke Lia represented the owners, San Diego Historic Properties, while SOHO member Steve Doyle represented our organization.



Looking westerly toward subject from G Street



Looking northerly toward subject from Fifth Avenue



Reflections

*Celebrating 20 years
of active preservation
in San Diego*

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San Diego, CA 92103

(619) 297-9327

Save Our Heritage Organisation is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of cultural resources throughout San Diego County and is a member of

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

The Balboa Theatre: A Diamond in the Rough

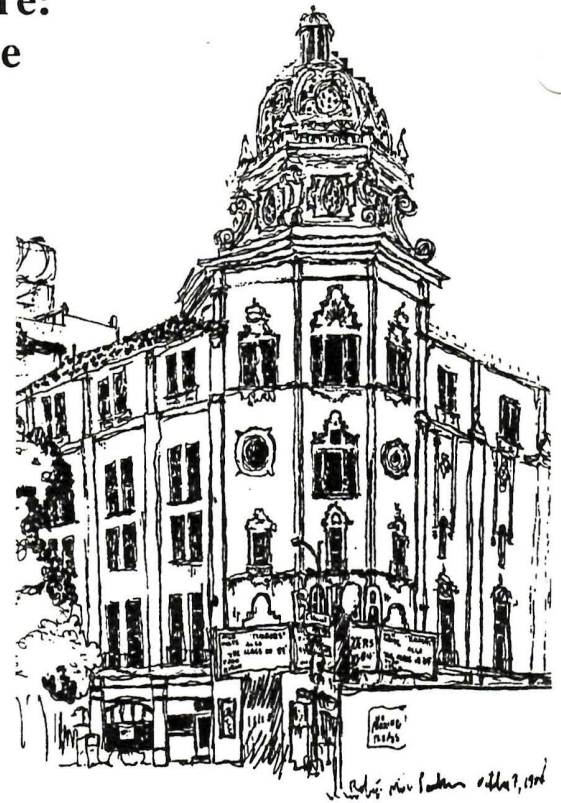
As the new executive director of the Balboa Theatre Foundation, Mimi Groom, LEAD Class of 1989, is enthusiastically leading the efforts to restore the Balboa Theatre. "This is an exciting and unique opportunity for San Diego and its performing arts community," said Groom.

The Balboa Theatre, owned by the City, lies in the heart of downtown redevelopment in Horton Plaza, near the Gaslamp Quarter and within walking distance of the new Convention Center. It is the vision of the foundation that the theatre will be the premiere downtown showcase for San Diego performing arts organizations as well as a facility that would attract national touring shows.

The Balboa Theatre was built in 1924 from designs by the noted architect and performer William Wheeler. The physical condition of the theatre is in much better condition than most other theatres of its era that have been renovated. One of its greatest assets is that it offers superior acoustics.

The restoration of this magnificent facility would be a most exciting addition not only to the downtown area but to the arts community at large. There is a need for a midsized performing arts venue in San Diego, The Starlight Civic Light Opera is supportive of the restoration effort and is interested in performing there.

The theatre would also provide an opportunity for national touring shows which are interested in coming to San Diego but have had to pass us by due to inadequate staging facilities. The possibilities and opportunities a restored Balboa Theatre could offer



San Diego and its performing arts community are innumerable.

"Leadership, however, is crucial to the success of the foundation's efforts," said Groom. "The foundation is now in the process of recruiting a Leadership Development Committee which will identify and recruit leadership for the effort and build a 'Committee to Restore Balboa Theatre' that will be capable of meeting the challenges that lie ahead."

Excerpted from Commitments, a publication of LEAD, San Diego, Inc.

Help Wanted

The National City Historical Society is seeking a candidate to conduct a city site inventory for the city of National City.

Interested parties should request an application from: National City Historical Society, Box 1251, National City, CA 92050, or contact Tom Carnes at 267-8427.

Reflections

From the President...

As we enter a new year and a new decade — SOHO's 3rd! — we pause to reflect.

Up on the hill here at Heritage Park, Temple Beth Israel has been rededicated and will resume its public service, this time as an interpretive center and meeting hall for the County park, ending a ten-year effort that involved many in the community as well as the County Parks Department.

We celebrated the holidays with many of our members at the incredible Timken House on "Banker's Hill", returning to the site of one of our earlier tours. This was made possible through the courtesy of Dr. Arthur Austin, Timken House owner. Our city is lucky to have such individuals who take their stewardship of our shared heritage so seriously.

And driving along Interstate 5 between Old Town and downtown, one can't help but proudly notice the "new" chimney and cupola as Michael Foote's "Mission Brewery" project nears completion. The brewery restoration is a grand and creative effort, combining preservation incentives such as facade easements (which SOHO holds) with a great landmark building and an attractive product. (SOHO's 21 this year and looking forward to the brew!)

This preservationist can't look at the brewery project without a sense of irony, as across town our "other" historic brewery — the Quayle Bros.' Savage Tire/Aztec Brewery — stands still threatened by insensitive development plans that call for the demolition of these National Register eligible buildings, their promise ignored.

If we continue to apply different standards in different areas based on income or ethnicity, we

should not be surprised if we awaken to a day when our "shared cultural heritage" is no longer shared, and we have created a nation of strangers.

In the semi-rural southeast San Diego neighborhood of Encanto, "Habitat for Humanity," a group that develops housing opportunities for low income people (and is maybe best known for the association with former president Jimmy Carter), has refined a project that threatened the 1917 estate of two-term mayor, Edwin Capps. The proposal originally called for demolition of the Capps' house, loss of historic landscape elements, and substantial grading. Now, Habitat plans to restore the Mission style bungalow as a project focus, retain the mature plantings and limit the grading to house pads.

And speaking of "affordable" housing, San Diego's City Council is moving ahead with a 54 million dollar Housing Trust Fund. SOHO, along with many community-based groups and the Building Industry Association, has asked for a strong emphasis on rehab and the preservation of existing housing stock and communities. The utilization of pre-war structures for affordable housing is economically sound in terms of costs, energy, and recycling, and socially sound in terms of maintaining the existing social fabrics of our older neighborhoods, as well as historically sound in terms of preservation. With over 26,000 substandard units in San Diego, can we "afford" any other approach?

Come to think of it, we don't have much time to pause!



Escondido Moves to Preserve Historic Properties

The City of Escondido has recently taken several steps aimed at encouraging preservation of historic properties including an incentives program for designating an historic property. The incentives include a \$1,500 matching fund for architectural fees, a \$1,000 rehab/maintenance cost matching fund, the waiving of building permit fees, assistance in procuring a complete title search, and the availability of a Mills Act contract with the city for property tax reduction.

As a disincentive to the demolition of a structure that is on the city's historic site survey, a fee is charged for the demolition. This fee is determined on a sliding scale which takes into account the square footage and historic rating of the structure. A demolition permit application for a rated structure must be reviewed and can be denied.

Although the recent loss of several important historic structures in Escondido cannot be reversed, it is hoped that these new measures can prevent the further loss of valued resources and preserve for Escondido its cultural identity.

Compiled from an article by Woody Zuill, Chairman Of The Historic Preservation Policy Committee, City of Escondido.



SOHO Membership

Application/Renewal

Membership privileges include the monthly newsletter *Reflections* to keep you informed about preservation issues and activities in San Diego County, as well as special prices for SOHO workshops, tours and related activities. Membership categories are:

- Life • \$1,000**
- Benefactor • \$500**
- Corporate • \$250**
- Executive • \$100**
- Professional • \$50**
- Individual/Family \$25**
- Student • \$10**

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

SOHO
P.O. Box 3571
San Diego, CA 92103

New Member Renewal

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____

Work Phone: _____

I would like to help with:

- Newsletter
- Tours
- Workshops
- Office
- Other

JANUARY CALENDAR

| | | | |
|------|----|---|--|
| Jan. | 9 | Green Dragon Colony Hearing 10 a.m. | Cal. Coastal Comm. Burton W. Chace Park West end of Mindanao Way Marina Del Rey, CA |
| Jan. | 10 | County Historic Site Board meeting 1:15 p.m. | 5201 Ruffin Road Suite 5B |
| Jan. | 16 | Aztec Brewery Hearing | City Council Chambers 12th Floor, City Hall |
| Jan. | 20 | Angeles Leira Presentation, "Bi-National Region of San Diego-Tijuana" 9:30 a.m. | Ratner Art Center 1249 F St. San Diego Info: Call 287-0050 |
| Jan. | 24 | San Diego Historical Site Board meeting 1 p.m. | 12th Floor, City Hall |
| Feb. | 5 | SOHO Board meeting 6 p.m. | Senlis Cottage, Heritage Park |

Earthquake Workshop Scheduled

The California Preservation Foundation is planning a workshop in San Diego for March 1 on "Earthquake Preparedness And Response Procedures," with a focus on the impact of seismic codes on historic resources. The program should appeal to architects, developers, cultural resources planners, engineers, local building officials, attorneys, and preservationists. The program will include the most current information available on lessons learned from the October 17 Loma Prieta earthquake.



The workshop is co-sponsored by SOHO, the State Office of Historic Preservation, the California Seismic Safety Commission, the State Building Standards Commission, the International Conference of Building Officials, and the State Historical Building Code Board.

Look for further details in the February newsletter. For more information, call CPF at (415) 763-0972.

Only \$5 Each...

1990 Mission Brewery Plaza calendar which includes a brief history and features twelve beautiful watercolors. SOHO member Edwin Wordell created one of the works. To order, call the SOHO office at 297-9327.



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Obituary

Gertrude B. "Trudie" Casper

Gertrude Casper, nationally known public relations specialist and author of historical articles, died December 9 in her Mission Hills home. She was 88.

A long time member of Save Our Heritage Organisation, Mrs. Casper also was a volunteer researcher for the San Diego Historical Society and was active in the Open Forum, a public affairs discussion group.

In 1980, the Historical Society journal published her story "San Diego's Open Forum: Birth and Death."

Her husband, Melvin Casper, died in 1973. There are no known immediate survivors. There were no services.

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