

February 1996



Reflections

Save Our Heritage Organisation

SOHO Helps Community Save a Part of its History

Compiled from a report by Ron May

Early on a Sunday morning in December, in response to a call to SOHO for help from community activists, 17 enthusiastic volunteers gathered in Sherman Heights to conduct an emergency salvage of architectural materials from what was left of the historic Andrew Jackson Chase House before the fire-gutted remains were to be hauled away by the owner of the property.

The goal of the project was to recover representative architectural elements, metal hardware, and other artifacts which could be used to reflect the evolution and importance of the Sherman Heights community in San Diego's development. A plan had been drafted during an earlier meeting at SOHO. Angeles Leira, principle planner with the City of San Diego, and SOHO's president, (Cont. pg 4)



Vonn Marie May Photograph

Wearing protective gear, the crew sifts through the remains of the Chase House.

P * I * P

SOHO Calls for People In Preservation Nominations

SOHO is now accepting nominations for its 1996 People In Preservation (PIP) Awards.

The purpose of the PIP Awards is to recognize exceptional accomplishments in preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and interpretation of our architectural and cultural heritage. Winners will be announced during National Historic Preservation Week, 12-18 May.

SOHO invites its members and the general public to participate in this popular annual event by nominating individuals, businesses, governmental entities, and organizations who are thought to be deserving of a PIP Award. A panel of experts will judge the entries.

A nomination form is included in this newsletter. Additional forms can be obtained by calling SOHO, 297-9327.

Feb. 29 Deadline

Because this is a leap year, the deadline for getting nominations to SOHO is extended to Thursday, Feb. 29th.

President's Message

Vonn Marie May

For the better part of a decade the City of San Diego has been trying to re-write it's historic preservation code. In 1965 the first preservation language was added to the municipal code, predating the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. What radicals in those days (one is now a State Senator, another is a Gubernatorial appointee, a Ph.D. or two...etc.).

An updated comprehensive draft plan was completed and circulated in 1991 only to hit the proverbial wall of resistance. Since then it has been discussed, aired, heard and reheard by various committees or 'interested parties'. On another track entirely, the Zoning Code Update has been shaping up, addressing many inconsistencies in the municipal code, et al. Now it appears that we have the opportunity to fold in the preservation concepts that have adopted by consensus into this larger effort and finally get the job done!

Sounds too easy....it should be...but then there's the City Council who still needs to posture and postpone. When the going gets tough...continue the item. We thought the most recent meeting of the Council Committee on Land Use was going to make a decision and move it forward to the full City Council, alas not.

Eloquent testimony from concerned citizens was apparently for amusement. Issues that have been agreed on and overcome were raised again for the sake of rhetorical confusion. Feigned ignorance was displayed by one council member who should know better. But democracy is so human then, isn't it?

Issues I raised in my testimony as Jane Q. Citizen:

- Please resist the horror stories, resist the rhetoric, and resist the chauvinism of the living, if you will.
- Realize that property in most cases is not diminished in value, quite the contrary.
- This process has been fully aired, it's time to move on it. □

SOHO v. City of San Diego, et al

Lawsuit Update

By Al Alferos

Perhaps most of you know by now that even with the support and participation of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the California Preservation Foundation, and the State Attorney General's Office, SOHO has exhausted its legal challenges in the lawsuit it filed against the City of San Diego and others over the demolition of the historic T.M. Cobb building in the Gaslamp Quarter, and now is exploring means to address the claims awarded against the organization as a result of court rulings.

The Damages

The Superior Court of the State of California has ordered SOHO to pay \$6,061.16 to the City of San Diego, and \$540.20 to Harbor Fifth Associates, developers of the T.M. Cobb site. In addition, SOHO's attorney, William Adams, has submitted a bill to SOHO for \$5,814.04 for costs advanced in the litigation of the lawsuit.

So, counting some \$1,000 already paid by SOHO in filing and miscellaneous fees, the bottom line for undertaking the lawsuit comes to about \$13,400.

Some introductory talks have been held with the City Attorney's Office with regard to resolution of the debt and attorney Williams has agreed to await the outcome of these talks before taking up the matter of his submitted statement. Because it is a non-profit entity that depends on member dues for most of its operating budget, SOHO

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SOHO, a non-profit corporation dedicated to preservation of historic and cultural resources, is a member of:

The National Trust for Historic Preservation.

■
The California Preservation Foundation.

■
The San Diego Historical Society

does not have access to funds which would satisfy the claims as presented.

The SOHO board of directors, therefore, welcomes input and suggestions from members as to how it should proceed with the liability placed on the organization.. Remember, this was an action taken in good faith, one with the best interests of historic preservation in San Diego as the motivating factor, one as an inherent responsibility of the purpose of SOHO. □

Naval Training Center Re-use Plan Unveiled

By Vonn Marie May

With great anticipation we've awaited the unveiling of the Naval Training Center (NTC) Master Re-Use Plan. Last month the consultants presented their year long work for the Committee's review. Finally a time for excellence in land planning driven by a strong ethic toward public benefit. One could foresee a model plan of consensus and stewardship, a plan of vision that would be a source of pride for all San Diegans.

Now that we are no longer in denial or suffering 'the base closure blues', the conversion of NTC is San Diego's first major post cold war 'Peace Dividend'. It could fill the gap of deficit parkland, provide water-based recreational activity, add much needed passive beauty, maintain wide open views (no more walling-off the Bay) and in grand respect, a careful embrace around the original historic 1920's compound that firmly launched our relationship with the Navy. This 'bonus' property that is being gifted back to us some 70-odd years later is fine bayside property, prime real estate, finally real access to the San Diego Bay, one of the City's most character defining features.

The consultant walked through the plan scenario by scenario, justification by justification, cliché by cliché. What ensued was a lackluster presentation of an uninspired piece of....minimum standard. Another great thunder clap of mediocrity in San Diego's future history. It all started when the Re-Use Committee decided to return the most prime quadrant of the site back to the Navy for housing, that surely could have occurred elsewhere.

This move displaced other more 'public' uses from occurring as well as throwing off a comprehensive approach to the whole site. Subsequently, because of the high density Navy housing this will effect a need for schools and we, the public, must then pay for those services either on or off-site.

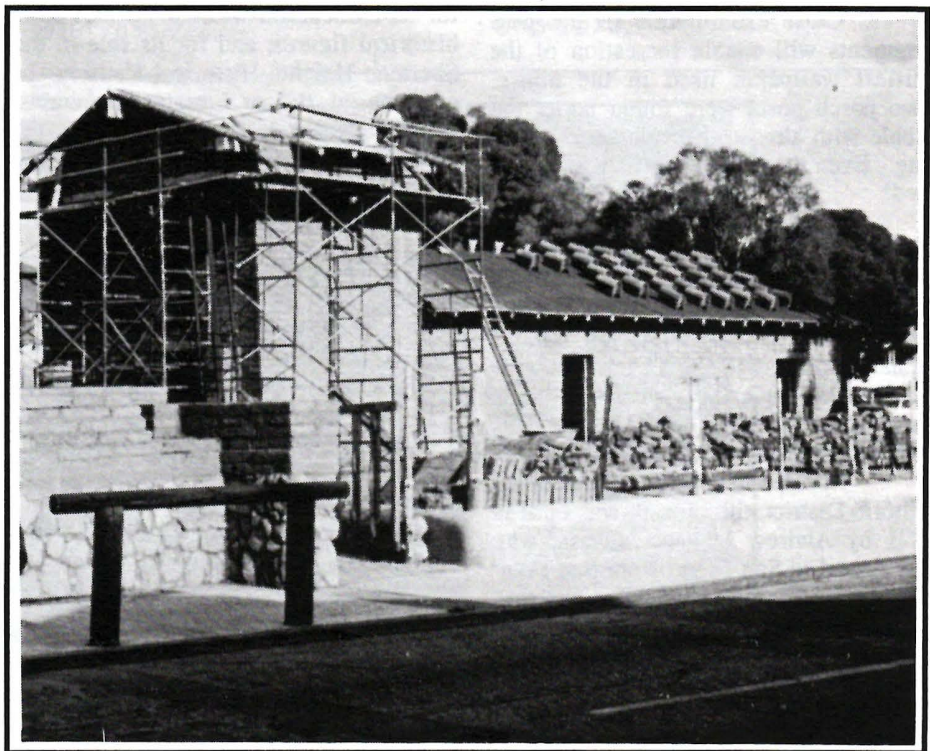
But wait, we'll pay for that by creating more housing on-site! We'll throw in a sizable block of 'market rate housing' requiring the sale of public property into private developer hands and since the City has been MIA in the 'transitional housing' or homeless arena we're going to make up for that too....hmm, so far the plan is a wall of housing.

But wait again, we get a green belt in the shape of a golf course, pretty to look at but what percentage of the public plays golf? The use of green space is prohibitive when golf balls are flying. And then the star piece --the historic core--in a limp gesture the consultant reluctantly conceded to save the 'old buildings', however, they need to blow out a few for.....parking!

Proposing as much density as they have there is a tremendous need for parking spaces. **Why, please anyone answer this, can we not create a land form other than a sea of rooves? Are we just too Southern Californian?**

Why are we proposing to sell off public land? Where is the overall public benefit? Why do we have to cure all the city's ills on one chunk of land? Is anyone proud of our Navy History? **Hello, is anyone out there?**

SOHO advised the City and the Navy very early on regarding the federal laws that require the nomination of the 1920's complex to the National Register and the availability of the National Park Service technical assistance in design and disposition issues. The consultant has not demonstrated experience in 'cultural resource planning' and the Re-Use Committee is dependent on their recommendations. The citizens who have not been active enough in this process need to make their views known. The City needs to respect the origins of the proposed 'NTC National Historic District'. The City needs to advance an interim strategy of measured planning and not make 'forever' decisions yet. The current plan is profoundly unacceptable. □



Vonn Marie May Photograph

As seen in this recent photograph, reconstruction of the historic Santa Barbara Presidio is well underway. San Diego's M. Wayne Donaldson, FAIA, directs the project.

Chase House (Cont.)

Vonn Marie May, and executive director, Al Alferos, and others helped to bring the volunteers together.

Archaeologist and SOHO board member Ron May, certified by the Society for Professional Archaeologists, agreed to direct the overall project. To provide for an orderly operation, he divided the site into sections and selected architect Paul Johnson, Erik Hanson, and David Swarens as section crew chiefs. They, in turn, would be responsible for supervising the work of the other volunteers.

With a field laboratory set up and a recording table in place the crew went about its difficult task despite knowing that the owner of the property, contrary to verbal assurances, had previously authorized "hardware strippers" to enter the ruins and remove valuable doors, cupboards, and metal hardware.

From the outset, all forms of unexpected architectural elements arose from the ashes including two complete windows, two dining room drawers complete with ornate brass handles, and the steel tract for the pocket doors that separated the dining area from the parlor. Among the more rewarding recoveries were a series of wallpaper samples from the dining room area.

Close examination of the wall fragments will enable recreation of the earliest wallpaper used in the house. Two porch posts were found under the rubble with almost no evidence of charring. Even the address panel was recovered!

By the end of a long and tiring day, some 165 items had been recovered, recorded and cataloged.

The operation also attracted the attention of two local television stations - Channels 8 and 10 - who sent crews to film the volunteers at work and interview Ron May who served as spokesman for the project.

Located in the Sherman Heights Historic District, the house was built in 1871 by Andrew Jackson Chase, who had moved to San Diego from San Francisco following the death of his business partner and cousin, Daniel Breed.

In San Diego, Chase went into business with his uncle, Ephraim Morse, dealing in agricultural products, whale oil, mineral oil, and other materials. They both became prominent figures in early San Diego history during the 19th century.

Some of the items recovered

windows
wallpaper
hinges
square nails
locks
hasps
door knobs
cabinets
electrical fixtures
lighting devices
banister segments

by the crew of ...

Bob Broms * Susan Floyd
Vykki Mende Gray * Erik Hanson
Paul Johnson * Angeles Leira
Dale May * Ron May
Vonn Marie May * Rosie Ramirez
Jeffrey Shorn * David Swarens
Louise Torio * Juan Ulloa
Steve Veach * Robert Weeks
Al Alferos

Thank you all!

The Chase House is significant for its 1871 Greek Revival architecture, for its association with Chase and other historical figures, and for its role in the Sherman Heights Historical District. In addition to the architectural remains, buried historic archaeology around the gardens contains time capsules of rich information on the socio-economics of early San Diego.

"Just as the San Pasqual Battlefield or Presidio Hill represent places of importance, the land upon which Chase built his home in 1871 is historically significant to the identity of people of Sherman Heights. The artifacts recovered in 1995 form an important linkage to San Diego's rich historical past" ... Ron May.

Later, after some additional archaeological processes, it is planned to use the recovered materials in an educational exhibit to highlight the historical merit of sites such as this one. □

Arts & Craft Home Tour and Lecture

An Arts and Crafts period ideal was the smoothing of the transition between indoors and out.

A SOHO tour on Sunday, Mar. 10, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., gives you the opportunity to experience the outside and the inside of several homes from the first quarter of this century.

SOHO Arts & Crafts Lecture and Home Tour

Lecture: Sat., Mar. 9, in Heritage Park, 7 p.m.

Tour: Sun, Mar. 10, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

*

Cost: \$25 General public

\$20 SOHO members

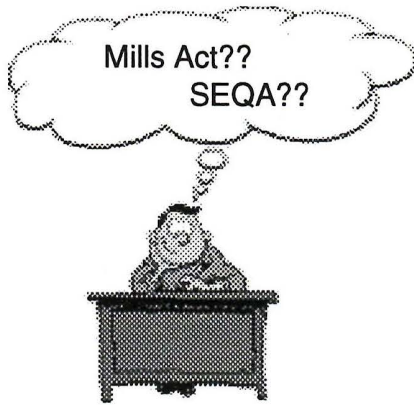
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Call SOHO for more information or to make reservations, 297-9327

The tour is scheduled in conjunction with the release of a new book, The Bungalow: America's Arts & Crafts Home by San Francisco author Paul Duchscherer. The book includes photographs and commentary on many San Diego homes including some on the tour.

Author Duchscherer will be in San Diego to give a lecture on Saturday evening, Mar. 9, in Heritage Park as a part of this Arts & Crafts weekend. Admission to his talk is included in the price of the tour. The homes featured for viewing have been chosen to show the wide range of this style and the owners' collections and decorations which typify this interesting period.

The homes are clustered on the South and East sides of Balboa Park. Tour participants provide their own transportation between the homes. Maps will be provided and guides will be present at each stop.



CPF Picks Escondido as Site For Mills Act Workshop in March

Workshop speakers also will address innovative preservation mitigations, particularly those created in response to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review processes, the State Historical Building Code, and other relevant topics.

Workshop registration fee (which includes the full-day program, lunch, and supplementary workshop materials) is \$65 for CPF members, \$75 for non-members, and \$50 for CPF student/senior members. Registration opens at 8:45 a.m., and the workshop begins at 9:30 a.m.

The workshop also qualifies for Certified Local Government (CLG) continuing education credits. SOHO has registration forms (297-9327), or contact:

CPF
1615 Broadway, Suite 705
Oakland CA 94612
(510) 763-0972

On Mar. 15, in Escondido, the California Preservation Foundation is offering a one-day workshop on the Mills Act and other preservation incentives and mitigations.

Mills Act contracts are property agreements between a municipality and an historic building owner, providing tax relief for owners of qualified historic properties who agree to comply with certain preservation restrictions.

The Mills Act is currently the most powerful financial incentive for preservation of California's historic built environment.

Urban Landscapes by Artist David Moore Showcased

The work of artist David Moore is featured at the Next Door Gallery in Golden Hill from February 1st to March 2nd.

The exhibit includes 20 new original oils of historical sites in Golden Hill. "The subjects I chose for this series are some of my favorite sights in Golden Hill. I love the way our San Diego light falls on these beautiful old buildings," Moore says.

Moore's work has been heralded as "a realistic style softened by nostalgia and thick slabs of paint," by Ann Jarmusch, architectural critic for the San Diego Union Tribune.

Other San Diego urban scenes will also be on display during the showing. For information, call 233-6679.



Al Alferos Photograph

Do you know why? In Mission Hills, at the top of Juan Street, the green street signs identify it as an intersection of Sunset Road and La Callecita Street but clearly stamped into the curb is the name "Long View Road." Call us if you know why. We will share the answer in the next *Reflections*.

Restoration of Historic Clayton House Completed

Grand opening ceremonies on Jan. 9 marked the completion of an extensive, \$400,00 restoration project undertaken on the historic Clayton House by the Vista Hill Foundation. Located along the western perimeter of Balboa Park at the corner of Sixth Avenue and Laurel Street, the renovated structure will now be operated as Vista Balboa, a 16-bed adult crisis residential facility.

The house was built in 1907 by William Clayton, chairman of the board of directors for the Spreckles Companies. Clayton had moved to San Diego to manage the Spreckels' transportation companies, including the trolley system and the San Diego and Arizona Eastern Railroad. He became a prominent figure in San Diego not only because of his successful business dealings, but also due to his work in organizing the 1915 Panama-California Exposition.

Clayton commissioned San Diego's first female architect, Hazel Waterman, to design his 2 1/2 story, 6,700

square foot residence. The prairie-style home has craftsman influences and massive cobblestone skirting around the first floor, which rises to form one-story pilasters at the corners of the house and at the entrance.

A protege of legendary architect Irving Gill, Hazel Waterman was the wife of Waldo Waterman (son of Gov. Robert Whitney Waterman). After her husband died unexpectedly in 1907, Hazel Waterman undertook a correspondence course to study architecture and later opened her own office, where she employed another acclaimed San Diego architect, Frank Hope. In addition to the Clayton House, Waterman also designed the Wednesday Club, the Children's Home Society and the restoration of the Estudillo House, a state monument in Old Town.

Before the renovation by the Vista Hill Foundation, the Clayton House had stood vacant since 1987. It was granted a historic designation in 1990 by the City of San Diego's Historical Site Board. □

50th Anniversary Celebration Event

Saturday, April 6

10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Spring into

Heritage Park

2455 Heritage Park Row
Old Town San Diego

1946  1996

Sponsored by
County of San Diego Department of Parks and Recreation
Country Craftsman

10:00 Easter Egg Hunt
11:00 Hat Parade
12:00 Recital in the Temple
1:00 Concert on the Green

Crafts and touch table with County Park Rangers
Visit with the Easter Bunny
Mormon Battalion Visitor's Center
Lemonade
Prizes

Bring a picnic lunch and spend the day in the historic Victorian Village of Heritage Park.
*San Diego County Parks is sponsoring five special events in 1996 to commemorate our 50th anniversary.
Watch for Details!*



CALENDAR

(Note: The SOHO member-picnic planned for February has been postponed to a later date.)

Feb. 16 - Mar. 27 - "Memories of Chester and Billy," - A symposium commemorating the 70th anniversary of the publication of Theodore Dreiser's landmark novel, *An American Tragedy*. Sponsored by the California Council for the Humanities, the event takes place in the Love Library at San Diego State University. Nominal charge. Call 594-6902 for information.

Feb. 16-18 - Conference of California Historical Societies in Bakersfield. Contact Conference of California Historical Societies, University of the Pacific, Stockton CA 95211. (209) 946-2169.

Feb. 18 - Marston House Lecture Series
Lecture #1 - The Arts & Crafts Movement - William Morris & His Contemporaries. All lectures in this series are held in the Thornton Theatre of the Museum of San Diego History. Programs begin promptly at 1:00 p.m. and conclude at approximately 2:30 p.m. Admission is \$7.00; \$5.00 for SD Historical Society members and students.

Feb. 20 - SOHO Board of Directors Meeting.
6:30 p.m. in Heritage Park.



Feb. 29 - Deadline for nominations for SOHO People In Preservation Awards.

Mar. 1 and 2 - 31st Annual Convention of History of Communication. Presented by The Congress of History of San Diego, the event takes place at The Handlery Hotel & Resort in Mission Valley and runs from 8:30 a.m. to approximately 5:00 p.m., both days. Call Helen Halmay, 296-3322.

Mar. 9 & 10 - SOHO-sponsored Arts & Crafts Movement Lecture and Home Tour. Author Paul Duchscherer lectures Mar. 9, at 7:00 p.m. in Heritage Park; A self-guided home tour takes place Mar 10, from 10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The cost for both events is \$25.00; \$20 for SOHO members. Call SOHO for information or to make reservations, 297-9327.

Mar. 15 - California Preservation Foundation (CPF)-sponsored workshop on The Mills Act and Other Preservation Tools. The workshop will be held in Escondido at a location to be announced. Registration fee (which includes program, lunch, and supplementary workshop materials) is \$65 for CPF members, \$75 for non-members, and \$50 for CPF student and senior members. See article elsewhere in newsletter.

Mar. 17 - Marston House Lecture Series
Lecture #2 - The English Arts & Crafts Movement. (See Feb. 18 listing for details.)

Mar. 18 - SOHO Board of Directors Meeting.
6:30 p.m. in Heritage Park.



SOHO Membership Application

Membership privileges include the newsletter *Reflections* to keep you informed of preservation issues and activities, as well as special prices for SOHO workshops, tours and related activities and events. Please call the SOHO office (297-9327) for more information. To apply for membership, complete the following form and send it and your check to SOHO, P.O. Box 3571, San Diego, CA 92163.

Thank You For Your Support!

Membership Categories

- \$1000 Lifetime
- 500 Benefactor
- 250 Corporate
- 100 Executive
- 50 Professional
- 25 Individual/Family
- 10 Student
- Yes, please send information on SOHO' Planned Giving Program

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone (H) _____ (W) _____

I would like to help with: Tours Newsletter Office Membership Workshops Other
You will be contacted regarding your choice(s).

MEMBER NEWS

SOHO welcomes new members **Anita and Griff Henshaw** of Pauma Valley, **Rick Geissler and Vickie Moody-Geissler** of El Cajon, and **Alby and Richard Furlong** of San Diego.

Membership Milestones

25 Years

Dr. & Mrs. Ronald Converse

*

20 Years

Cathy Grigsby

SOHO President in 1982

*

15 Years

Susan Andrea

Olive Safford

*

5 Years

Kathleen Fanella

James W. Royle, Jr.

A big SOHO thanks to **Carol Lindemulder**
for opening up her
lovely home for SOHO's Holiday Party.
A great time was had by all!

□ □ □

Crawford's "Stranger Than Fiction"

New Book From Historical Society

A reviewer describes Stranger Than Fiction, the new book by Richard W. Crawford, director of the research archives of the San Diego Historical Society, as "a marvelous collection of essays that capture the lives of a variety of interesting characters that illuminate San Diego history. Whether it is a vicious Sam Temple killing an Indian that provided Helen Hunt Jackson with a scenario for her novel *Ramona* or Frank Buck 'force-feeding' snakes with a sausage stuffer, Rick Crawford captures the moment. Rick makes local history - good local history - come alive. You don't want to miss this book." The book sells for \$9.95 (\$8.97 for SDHS members).

Address orders to:

San Diego Historical Society
Attn: Stranger
P.O. Box 81825
San Diego CA 92138

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