



June 1999  
Volume 30, Issue 3

# Reflections

SOHO IS THE OLDEST  
CONTINUALLY OPERATING HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION ORGANIZATION IN CALIFORNIA.

S E R V I N G   S A N   D I E G O   C O U N T Y   S I N C E   1 9 6 9

## SOHO Announces the Most Endangered Historic Sites in the County

### BOOM TIMES MEAN BAD TIMES FOR HISTORIC STRUCTURES

L O U I S E   T O R I O

SOHO'S MOST ENDANGERED LIST FOR SAN DIEGO COUNTY WAS announced during National Preservation Week and, as has been the unfortunate case in previous years, we've been unable to keep the list to only 11 sites. (Each year the National Trust highlights 11 of the nation's most endangered historic places, but a comprehensive national list would probably show more than 1,000 endangered places today.)

Our country's boom time economy keeps on going, giving developers across the nation an opportunity to develop or redevelop areas using the existing historic fabric to create dramatic and dynamic revised areas. Very successful redevelopment happens when cities large and small acknowledge their past and incorporate their heritage into new plans. Yet so many developers convince city governments they need to take a scorched earth policy, that vast areas must be cleared to create better, bigger and more important structures. Too often our historic areas, whether or not they are properly and officially labeled as historic districts, are the casualties of economic boom times, when they could just as easily be the benefactors through restoration and reuse of the historic fabric.

When we travel, do we seek out the latest mall or condo complex to tour? Or do we visit the historic sites unique to the area? America, and specifically right here in our county, is fast losing its sense of place. Let's take a tip from European developers: they don't destroy the old wantonly. Old structures are reused and incorporated into modern developments. Heritage tourism in California accounts for about half of all tourist dollars now. In Europe it probably accounts for a huge percentage. Europeans have kept their historic buildings for us to view hundreds of years later. What will San Diego county keep for our descendants to see hundreds of years from today?

The following list is SOHO's most endangered structures for 1999. If you want to get involved in saving our heritage, call SOHO's Preservation Action Committee at 619-297-9327. You can make a difference.

### SOHO MEMBERS:

**THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
AND SOHO INVITE YOU TO JOIN US  
ON MONDAY, JUNE 14, 11:00 AM  
AT THE CORNER OF 8TH & K (THE CANDY FACTORY)  
IN THE HISTORIC WAREHOUSE DISTRICT  
WHEN THE TRUST ANNOUNCES  
ITS 11 MOST ENDANGERED LIST!**

#### Historic Warehouse District (1900-1920)

The Warehouse District has been on the books for designation and redevelopment concentration for at least a decade. But as the boundary was being discussed and contributing structures were being researched, the "powers that be" issued an edict and said there will be no district and prevented the City's Historical Site Board from its inherent advocacy role of identifying and designating structures that tell the story of the early development of San Diego. With the Padres desire to place the baseball stadium in this district, some of the buildings in the strike zone are Western Metals Building (1909), Showley Brothers Candy Factory (1924), Schiefer & Sons Building (1910), Kvass Construction Building (1927), and Nason & Company (Artplex) Building (1913). Of these, only the Artplex building was not recently designated as a local historic site. Building sports facilities in older urban areas has become a national trend, but San Diego's older urban area has room for a stadium and the preservation of these mostly restored warehouses. (See how beautiful these lofts are on the Warehouse Tour on June 27 on page 3.)

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

B R U C E C O O N S

## SAN DIEGO HISTORY: WHAT I SEE

*The following column is based on Bruce Coons' speech at the People In Preservation Awards on May 14.*

THIS YEAR IS SOHO'S 17TH ANNUAL People In Preservation Awards, SOHO's 30th year as an organization, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation's 50th year. Preservation has come a long way in all that time, and we look forward to a successful future in our continuing tradition of advocating the protection of San Diego County's architectural heritage.

In recognizing the people who have made a difference in preservation, we recognize that without a sense of the past, of the things that have gone before, we cannot move forward.

History is all around us if we can but see. This concept is easy to visualize when literally surrounded by it as we are tonight on the Berkeley. But what do you see when you look to the west from this site? I see the modern city of San Diego, of course, but so much more:

I see the ships of Cabrillo on their voyage of discovery;

The ships of Portola on their way to found the first European settlement;

The ships of Pantoja on his mapping expedition.

I see the ship *Pilgrim* carrying Richard Henry Dana, and the hide houses on Point Loma with their diverse community made up from people from all parts of the Pacific Rim.

I see the Spanish Fort Guijarros

and the battle with the American ship *Leila Byrd*; the lighthouses on Point Loma arising after American Conquest.

Then there's Babcock and Story trudging through the sagebrush on Coronado Island, flushing out jack rabbits, as they move along on their way to the site where they will build the fabulous Hotel Del Coronado.

I see Fort Rosecrans being built 100 years ago this year, at a time when little else was being built in San Diego, thus making some of its features very rare in our area.

Turning to the East --

I see Pantoja again, this time burying his dead on a little point of land next to what is now the Old San Diego Police Headquarters, making the notation on his map of what from then on would be known as Punta de los Muertos.

I see Gray, William Heath Davis and Father Horton planning their "new towns" on the slopes leading down to the bay.

I see Mexican Col. Manuel Farrar in his uniform holding court

like a lord of old, flying both the Mexican and American flags on July 4th, 1870 over Rosario Hall, named for his beloved wife.

I see the transcontinental railroad that finally did arrive, transforming the face of San Diego forever.

I see Albert Traganza, the Quayle Brothers and the San Diego Police Department designing and building one of the most beautiful and functional police headquarters in the nation.

I see the San Diego of the 1930s, with skyline unique among



*Rosario Hall at the corner of 12th and K in downtown San Diego.*

the cities of the world. Imagine high-rises all in the Spanish Colonial Revival style, influenced by the Expo.

I see this and so much more.

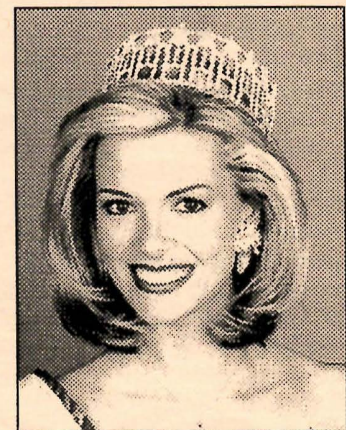
I also see the San Diego of today with a skyline that, if you take away the water, is indistinguishable from almost any large city in the world. Will there be any preservationists in the future fighting to preserve this San Diego, to shed a tear when city hall comes down? I have a hard time seeing that.

The challenge we and posterity throw down to San Diego city and county officials and to the architects of today is to

- Build upon our past;
- Build for the future;
- Build something that we can be proud of;
- Build something that will enrich our daily lives;
- Build something that will stand the test of time. •



*Downtown San Diego Mission Bell.*



*Guest SOHO PIP emcee Angelique Breaux, Miss California USA 1999*



## SAVE OUR HERITAGE ORGANISATION

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NEW -- e-mail:

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**Moving?** Send SOHO a  
change of address. Bulk  
mail will not be forward-  
ed by the post office.

## Have an old house? Thinking of buying one? SOHO co-sponsors the First Annual Old House Fair on June 12

"WHERE TO GO WHEN YOUR CONTRACTOR'S BEEN dead for 75 years" is the amusing tagline to this much needed house restoration fair. Come on out on Saturday, June 12, to historic South Park (corner of 30th & Beech Street, San Diego) to see about 50 vendors that are sympathetic to your old house needs. There will be no one telling you that you need to demo all that old plaster since "drywall is better" or that aluminum windows will look "natural" on your turn of the century home.

What can you expect? SOHO is a sponsor so we will be there, of course. Come on out and say hello. If we haven't met you yet, we want to! SOHO sponsor Retreads will be there, as

well as other antique dealers, stained glass artisans, hardware and woodworking businesses, salvage venues, and historic upholsterers, to name but a few.

Also for your benefit will be talks by the experts. At 1:45 you can hear SOHO PIP honoree Rurik Kallis speak on selecting a preservation-sensitive contractor. (For those of you who attended our very popular "Walls Can Talk! Workshop, this will be the half hour version of Rurik's talk!)

Here's the schedule:

- 10:00 Guided Walking Tour of Herb Gardens & Historic Homes
- 10:30 The Secrets of Home Financing
- 11:15 Decorating the Traditional Home: Fabrics & Furnishings
- Noon Keynote speaker Wayne Carlson, Editor In Chief of San Diego Home & Garden Magazine
- 1:00 Tips & Products for Restoring Your Home's Wood Exterior
- 1:45 SOHO: Selecting a Preservation-Sensitive Contractor
- 2:30 Great Advice on Financing Your Home & Improvements\*

## C.A.R.E. files public interest lawsuit; City allegedly violating EIR process in haste to build baseball stadium

C I N D Y I R E L A N D

C.A.R.E., THE COALITION ADVOCATING REDEVELOPMENT EXCELLENCE, HAS FILED A PUBLIC INTEREST lawsuit against the City of San Diego for its implementation of the ballpark/redevelopment project. The lawsuit contends that the City has begun implementing the ballpark plan in its currently proposed footprint before it has the right to do so. Public money is not to be spent on a project until the Environmental Impact Report is certified.

Why does C.A.R.E. care? C.A.R.E. is concerned that the City will reach a point of no return if money is spent before all the impacts are identified, discussed, and mitigation options defined. \$25 million has already been allocated for this project by the City. Businesses have been moved, property purchased.

There are numerous impacts and several alternatives available for this project. While traffic, parking, and pollution are of concern, C.A.R.E. is also very concerned about historic resources. Some of the proposed alternatives could save the Warehouse District, an extension of the Gaslamp District that was all a part of Horton's late nineteenth century "New Town." C.A.R.E. wants an honest, objective assessment of all the impacts and alternatives before a dime of public money is spent.

C.A.R.E. is made of citizens who believe in a lawful process and its members have been raising money for the suit through private donations. C.A.R.E.'s attorney, Susan Brandt-Hawley, an avowed preservationist, is from northern California and has an excellent reputation for protecting the integrity of the EIR process and litigating these types of lawsuits. The hearing for the C.A.R.E. lawsuit is scheduled for June 21.

If you would be interested in helping C.A.R.E., either through donations or other work, please contact C.A.R.E. The group is looking for more people to be sure the integrity of the California Environmental Quality Act is upheld. C.A.R.E. can be reached at 619-239-CARE (239-2273), by mail at P.O. Box 126507, San Diego, CA 92112-6507, or e-mail caresandiego@hotmail.com. In an effort to raise funds, C.A.R.E. is planning a tour of some of the great lofts in this historic Warehouse District for Sunday, June 27(see related article on insert). Come by, take a look, and help out!

*Cindy Ireland is a spokesperson for C.A.R.E.*



**THERE'S MORE:****SOHO's Most Endangered List for 1999**

(continued from cover)

**Old San Diego Police Headquarters (1939)**

The old HQ just celebrated its 60th anniversary but remains in serious peril from the aspirations of both the San Diego Unified Port District and developers of Hyatt Hotel and Seaport Village. This WPA building was designed by the master architects Quayle Brothers and Alberto Treganza. It's so well built that it will present a significant problem if the Port chooses to demolish. Walls are 12" thick at a minimum and the whole site rests on a 10' slab of concrete. It offers 110,000 square feet of highly reusable space with a character-filled courtyard. Can't you just see a Bazaar Del Mundo-like shopping/dining experience in here? The National Trust has written to the Port to encourage preservation, and three state legislators and three city councilmembers have pledged support. This is an ongoing issue and we'll keep you posted on what happens.

**E. Milton Barber House (1905)**

Located at the corner of First Avenue and Robinson Street in San Diego, this outstanding Hebbard & Gill craftsman home is a cornerstone property for the Hillcrest/Uptown neighborhoods. Procedurally it was recently the victim of bureaucratic error (see *Reflections*, April 1999). How did that happen? We will have to wait and see the fate of yet another saga in the diminishing works of important architects and early San Diegans. What this story tells us, though, is that financial decisions are made without the knowledge of how a historic property can be developed and provide the same monetary yield if done sensitively and intelligently. The amount of development that can occur on this site does not have to preclude the retention of this resource. But "clearing the land" for potential sale is what the realty community, the financial community, and the development community knows. We must teach them to the contrary.

*'The partially demolished Barber House.***Mrs. General Grant House (1894)**

Located on the corner of 6th Avenue and Quince Street, this Colonial Revival residence was the San Diego home of First Lady Julia Dent Grant, wife of President Ulysses S. Grant, and their son Jesse Grant. It was designed by master architect William Hebbard early in Hebbard's career. The house predates much of what we see along 6th Avenue today: it has an unusual positioning on the site, facing downtown instead of facing Balboa Park. Remember, at the time this home was built, there were no improvements along 6th Avenue, much less within the then

*The Mrs. General Grant House near Balboa Park.*

called "City Park." The structure is extremely historic and would qualify for the National Register, but the multitude of owners want to sell the house to be razed for a redevelopment project.

**John Sherman House (1887)**

Located on the corner of First Avenue and Fir Street, the John Sherman House is a handsome two-story-plus-tall-base-ment middle class Victorian residence from the early development of New Town San Diego. Situated around other designated Victorian sites and also a part of a potential "John Sherman District" (John Sherman built many of the residences in the area), this house doesn't look like it will make it. A demolition permit is under review, but the new owners have told SOHO that they may keep the house; they're just remodeling the history out of it. Already a chimney has come down and the small multi-pane windows on the back are gone. SOHO will keep you posted.

**Hotel San Diego (1910)**

This property finds itself in the middle of a huge multi-jurisdictional "governmental core" that is being planned by the City, County and Federal Governments. The first renderings of the site that covers several downtown blocks on both sides of Broadway addressed the area as having "no encumbrances." However, since President Clinton signed an Executive Order mandating Federal government agencies to include historic resources in any downtown core area developments, the planners have had to rethink their designs. Environmental review is on-going. There are studies being undertaken for the reuse of the building, but often those studies turn out to be pro forma and are dismissed for other reasons.

**San Pasqual Valley**

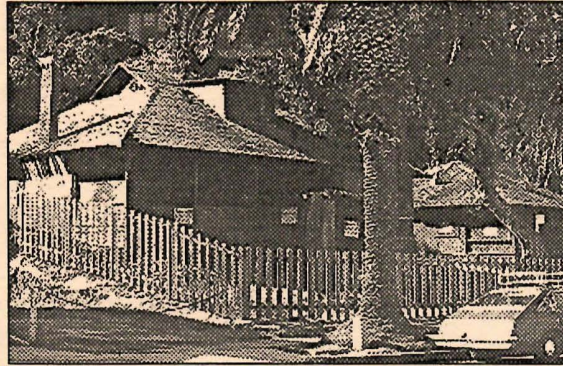
This pristine valley is arrested in time, with a period of significance from the Mission Period, to 1880s Victorian farmsteads, through the 1920s. It also includes important archaeological sites of Native American cultures. The area is part of the comprehensive planning for the San Dieguito River Park that stretches from Volcan Mountain to the Pacific Ocean. The City of San Diego has proposed a massive juvenile detention facility for the area,

although at press time it seems like they are backing away from the scale of the initially proposed project. The impacts from such a project would irretrievably alter the ambience of one of San Diego's most endearing rural spaces.



**Red Rest and Red Roost (1890s)**

Yes, these sad little bungalows make SOHO's list every year. They were listed on the National Register and qualified by being noted as the progenitors, the parents, to the California Bungalow. Yet they sit here suffering from demolition by neglect. Aren't there any angels that can see this as a potential cultural asset and money maker? Why can't someone with sophistication, hear and soul, and some funding restore these bungalows?



*The Red Roost and Red Rest in La Jolla.*

**Rosario Hall (1870)**

Rosario Hall, located on the corner of 12th & K Streets in downtown San Diego, is the oldest saloon and meeting hall in San Diego County. It opened on July 4, 1870 sporting both the Mexican and American flags. (See SOHO's article on PIP winner Rurik Kallis and his research on Rosario Hall.) Because it was moved to this site early in the century, SOHO isn't opposed to moving it again to save it from the path of the baseball stadium. It was recently designated a city landmark by the Historical Site Board.

**Coronado Railroad Right Of Way (1888)**

Very early on, the Coronado Railroad served the Hotel Del Coronado and residents of the City of Coronado more or less as a commuter and tourist rail. The line covers nearly 3/4 of the San Diego Bay shoreline. This historic rail transportation corridor also served as a critical component in WWII, connecting North Island with San Diego. It is now threatened by a shopping mall project within the City of Chula Vista. A counter proposal has been offered by a coalition of environmental groups to support its use as a rail line for ecotourism. It is ultimately under the jurisdiction of the San Diego Unified Port District, and that's why it's on SOHO's Most Endangered List.

**Olaf Wieghorst House (1947)**

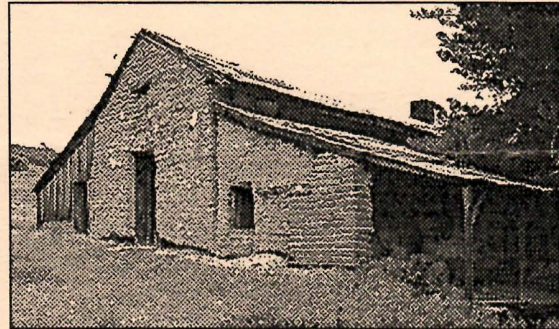
The home of Olaf Wieghorst, world famous western artist, is located in El Cajon at the corner of Sunshine and Renette Streets. The hand-built homestead and studio where Wieghorst painted and exhibited some of the most important works of his career is slated for a trip to downtown El Cajon. In the city's infinite wisdom, they believe the house would be a tourist draw with its "western theme" and that it would help revitalize downtown businesses. The original site encompass-

es the residence and an adobe cantina, as well as an undulating adobe wall and the stables. All will be destroyed if the city of El Cajon attempts to move the abode. How often have you heard SOHO say that preserving historic structures ON SITE gives significance and meaning to the historical interpretation of a structure. Here, with the adobe construction, a move is tantamount to a total demolition and reconstruction of the resource. Let's leave it where it is, and use some smart marketing to inform interested visitors where Wieghorst's house is and when the museum is open.

**Butterfield Stage Stop -- Warner's Ranch (1858)**

This poor melting adobe and its hand hewn timber frame barn sit in the middle of a huge expanse of open space owned by the Vista Irrigation District. Its presence testifies to a major transportation corridor along the Missouri Trail, the most southerly route for all of those new Americans that came west. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a National

Historic Landmark and has been noted by the National Park Service on their endangered list, yet still it melts away. This resource is in desperate need of stabilization, attention, restoration and interpretation. It's an important part of the county's past, and yet the Irrigation District perceives it as troublesome.



*The Butterfield Stage Stop at Warner's Ranch.*

**S.S. Catalina (1924)**

The Catalina is the Last Great White Steamer on the Pacific Coast. She's a 1766 ton ship driven by a steam triple-expansion, 3600 skip propulsion plant. She used oil rather than coal as fuel, and has a large single funnel just aft of her pilothouse. She's on the National Register of Historic Places, but that means nothing down in Mexico. From her maiden voyage to her retirement in 1975, she ferried over 24 million people. And during WWII, she was used in San Francisco Bay to transport more than any other transport during the war. You can help SOHO and the S.S. Catalina Steamship Fund bring the Catalina back to the U.S. by attending our July 9 fundraiser and getting your signed copy of Ken Marschall's print of this beautiful ship. (See details on page 8.)



*The John Sherman House at First & Fir.*

There's the list. Another year, and more significant destruction planned.

Are you angry enough yet? Then don't look at what's happening to the Ginty House. If you're really angry, call SOHO and come to our next Preservation Action meeting. •



# “And the 1999 PIP Award goes to...”

SOHO IS ONCE AGAIN PLEASED TO HONOR those people, organizations and groups who have contributed to historic preservation in our region.

This year's jury members were Welton Jones, San Diego Union-Tribune Arts & Culture critic; Corey Braun, staff liaison to the City of San Diego Historical Site Board; Craig Noel, Executive Director of the Old Globe Theatre; Fred Harder, SOHO board member; Vonn Marie May, past SOHO President and current Historical Site Board member; Coleen Frost, Senior Planner with the City of San Diego, and current SOHO President Bruce Coons.

## **The Most Valuable Player Award for Community Planning**

The Park Bay Diagonal Collaborative (Alan Levy, Cathy Smith, and architect Laura Warner) were given this award for their redesign of the East Village. Their plan incorporates a Las Ramblas-like promenade from Balboa Park to the bay, and relocates the intended downtown baseball stadium a few blocks east, thus avoiding destruction for the core contributing structures to the formerly-proposed Historic Warehouse District.

## **The Bridge Over Troubled Water Award in the category of Civics**

The Del Mar City Council has been fighting to preserve the North Torrey Pines Bridge, built in 1933. The City of San Diego wants to replace this bridge with a new one. The Del Mar City Council was awarded for knowing a cultural asset and tourist attraction when they see one. Hopefully, the council will get the bridge on the National Register of Historic Places. This fight is not over.

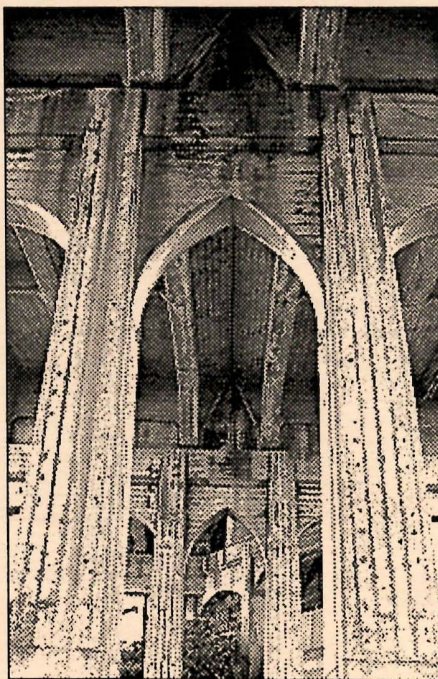
## **The History Speaks Volumes Award in the category of Education**

In late 1998 and early 1999 the Congress of History of San Diego and Imperial Counties hosted the most

comprehensive series of symposia entitled “The Literary History of San Diego.” The content covered periods in San Diego's stratified history from Kumeyaay, to Spanish-Mission, to Mexican Rancho, to American Empire, through the Golden Era. Recognized for their efforts: Charles Best, Joanne Hickey, Therese Muranaka, Lynn Whitehouse and Debye Dozier.

## **The Mission Belles Award in the category of Early California Heritage**

In 1999 the California Federation of Women's Clubs picked up where their predecessors left off in 1902. The first mission bells were installed by this organization along California's historic El Camino Real that once connected all of the Alta California missions from the Father Junipero Serra campaign. Now, through the Federation's dedication, the bells are being restored and replaced. (You can see the restored bells in downtown San Diego and Mission Trails Park.) The bells serve as a wonderful reminder of our binational past.



*The North Torrey Pines Bridge.*

## **The People In The Trenches Award for Archaeology and Historic Preservation**

Dr. Lynne Christianson is an educator and archaeological advocate who, in her position as Director of the South Coast Information Center, the regional State archive center based at SDSU, presides over the historical and archaeological history of our entire region. Dr. Lynne is also a member of the City of San Diego's Historical Site Board. Due to an oil spill off the coast of Mexico that was making it's way to the coast, Dr. Lynn was called to duty with the Coast Guard on the night of the award ceremony and couldn't be there in person to receive the honor. Thanks for all your work, Dr. Lynne!

## **The Boulevard Manor Award for Commercial Restoration**

The historic Imig Manor was built in 1946 on El Cajon Boulevard. That location was the gateway to all points east of the city, and the Boulevard was the main east/west artery for the city following WWII. The site was bought and sold over the years, coming close to being a homeless rescue mission in 1993, but the InnSuites Corporation has picked up the banner and restored the hotel to its original glory.

## **The Sea-Craft Award for Residential Restoration**

When William Ritter left San Francisco, he took with him the house plans designed by Julia Morgan and had this elegantly plain craftsman home built in La Jolla in 1913. Scripps Institution of Oceanography's intelligent restoration of this craftsman by the sea has made this former home once again vital and relevant. (They get extra points for retaining the garage!)

## **The Sherlock Homes Award for Historic Building Research**

Ever since he was a young child, Rurik Kallis has been researching the past of San Diego's historic buildings. His dedication to diligent research led to the discovery and historic designation of some of San Diego's earliest and most important buildings, including Rosario Hall, the oldest existing saloon and meeting hall in San Diego County



where the first Catholic services and theatrical performances in "New Town" were held. With Rurik's nose to the ground and his vast mental archive we can be assured that significant pieces of San Diego's past will be located, explored and preserved.

**The Art of City Hall Award for Adaptive Reuse**

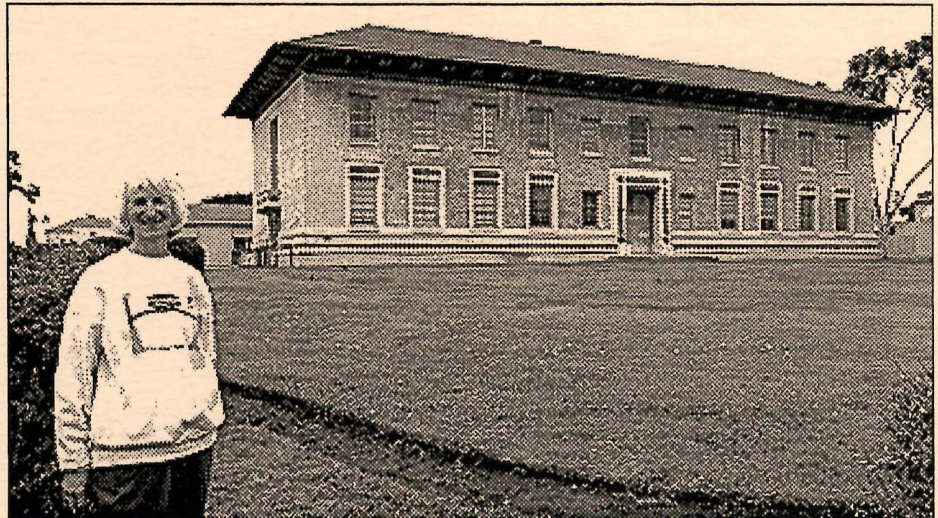
The Oceanside Museum of Art has creatively and artfully adapted the old Oceanside Civic Center, designed by Irving Gill in 1929, into a stunning art museum. The project, guided by architects Ferris, Johnson and Perkins, encompassed a complete interior remodel yet remained true to Gill's style. (You can see this beautiful building on SOHO's Oceanside Train Tour on Saturday, July 31. See related article on page 3.)



*The Oceanside Museum of Art.*

**The Don't Give Up the Fort Award for preservation of Military Buildings**

This award commends Admiral Veronica Froman and Captain Wayne A. Thornton of the United States Navy for their leadership and stewardship in seeing to the successful completion the restoration of the U.S. Army 115th Company Barracks and U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps/Commissary Storehouse in the Fort Rosecrans Historic District. The Admiral and the Captain have provided inspiration for other military commands to restore National Register properties for creative



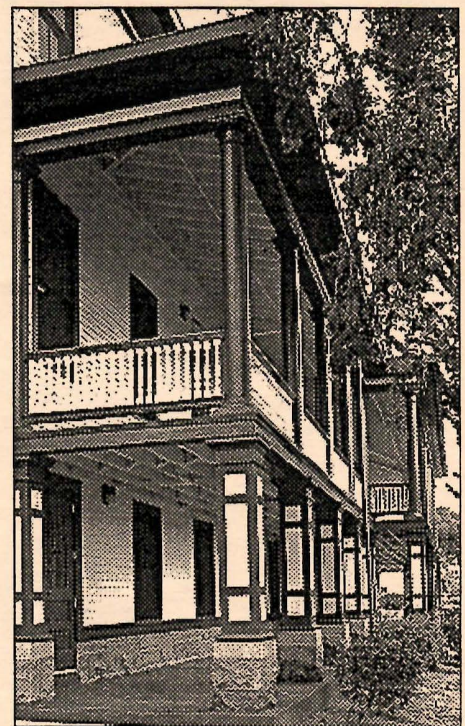
*Preservationist of the Year Ernie Bonn and the State Teachers College building.*

adaptive reuse as offices and industrial function, thus extending the life of these 95-year old buildings well into the next millennium.

**Preservationist of the Year**

Ernestine "Ernie" Bonn is referred to by her friends as the "fairy godmother of University Heights." She is the backbone of historic preservation awareness and action in her community. A founding member of the University Heights Community Association and the University Heights Historical Society, she has spent countless hours volunteering her efforts to preserve University heights "streetcar suburb" ambiance. Ernie has sought out and written numerous grant application to fund preservation projects such as the "Summer in the Park" series, and the Historic Church Walking Tour. Ernie sees the need to identify and designate historic sites as a means to utilize them as symbols to raise people's awareness of the importance they have played on the development of San Diego's older neighborhoods. Ernie was also involved with saving and designating the Mission Cliff Gardens cobblestone walls, the Trolley Barn Park, the State Teachers College Building, and the Georgia Street Bridge. In her acceptance speech on May 14, Ernie warned us all of the upcoming plans to increase density in our older neighborhoods. Sure enough, in late May there was a Union-Tribune editorial advocating a density increase

for the Sherman Heights and Grant Hill Historic District. (The article never mentioned that these were indeed historic districts.) So not only is Ernie a great preservationist, she's quite wise and insightful into the ways a city can undermine historic areas. •



*The restored Army buildings at Fort Rosecrans.*

*All photos of SOHO's PIP winners and Most Endangered List properties are by SOHO's good friend Jim Brady. Thanks, Jim!*



## Noted Maritime Artist Ken Marschall Donates Artwork to the S.S. Catalina Fund Inc.

### Catalina Fundraiser at the Maritime Museum to take place July 9

P A M E L A B E N S O U S S A N

ON APRIL 14, EL COLEGIO DE LA FRONTERA NORTE HOSTED A workshop on Preservation and the S.S. Catalina, followed by lunch and a SOHO-organized visit to the abandoned ship in Ensenada.

The grassroots concept of ordinary citizens working to save a historic monument is considered somewhat novel in Mexico, where historic preservation is primarily a government activity. Many of the workshop's Mexican participants were baffled about why Americans feel so compelled to save this old ship! The slide presentation by Maria Castillo-Curry was enlightening -- revealing a host of Mexican/American cultural resources that are scattered throughout the border area -- and a lively discussion ensued. (These historic border sites might be the subjects of a future SOHO tour - stay tuned!)

Tour participants were members of The Steamship Historical Society, The San Diego Maritime Museum, The Titanic Historical Society, The Los Angeles Conservancy and SOHO. Also in attendance was Ken Marschall, the visual historian for the recent film *Titanic*. Others were environmental and cultural researchers in Ensenada, and members of the Mexican and American press. The group's mission was to ascertain the current condition of the listing Catalina steamship.

The Ensenada excursion revealed to the knowledgeable participants that the S.S. Catalina is in excellent condition, despite partial submersion, and is quite restorable. Her incredible beauty, apparent even in her present undignified predicament, moved those who boarded her. On the journey back to San Diego they eagerly vowed to work together on fund raising for the imminent rescue operation and to increase public awareness of her plight.

As a result of the Ensenada trip, internationally renowned maritime artist Ken Marschall was so moved by the S.S. Catalina that he began work on a major painting of her. Ken's now-famous paintings of

the Titanic (featured in the bestseller *Titanic: An Illustrated History*, Madison/Hyperion, 1992) were inspirational to film director James Cameron in creating the award-winning movie *Titanic*. Cameron says of Ken's work:

"his paintings almost seemed to be stills from a movie that hadn't yet been made. ... It became my goal to accomplish on film what Ken had done on canvas, to will the Titanic back to life."

Ken Marschall's S.S. Catalina painting will depict the "great white steamship" in all the splendor of her early years, with Avalon Bay in the background. He has pledged all profits from art prints and reproductions of the painting to the official rescue fund (S.S. Catalina Steamship Fund, Inc.) and hopes that eventually the painting will hang in the restored ship.

#### Help the Catalina & get a beautiful signed work of art

On July 9 the San Diego Maritime Museum and SOHO, together with the S.S. Catalina Steamship Fund, Inc. will jointly sponsor a fundraising "Meet the Artist" banquet on board the restored 1898 ferry, The Berkeley. The highlight of the evening will be the unveiling of Ken Marschall's Catalina Steamship painting. After the banquet Ken will talk about his interest in the S.S. Catalina, his involvement as visual consultant on the set of *Titanic*, and his expeditions with Dr. Robert Ballard to the wrecks of the Lusitania and Titanic's sister ship Britannic. This will be a unique opportunity to hear first-hand about these exciting discovery expeditions, featured on television and within the pages of National Geographic Magazine. Also scheduled to speak is Don Lynch, Titanic historian and author of the best-selling *Titanic, An Illustrated History*.

The lecture and exhibition of the painting, following the banquet, will be free and open to members of SOHO and the San Diego Maritime Museum. Those attending the \$100 a plate pre-lecture banquet will receive a limited edition art print of the S.S. Catalina painting signed by the artist and the ship's original engineer. Prints of the painting (dedicated, signed and unsigned) will be available for sale, as will copies of the popular books featuring Ken Marschall's artwork. Both speakers have graciously agreed to a "book-signing" period

during the evening. All net proceeds from this event will be donated to the S.S. Catalina Steamship Fund, Inc.

Announcements will be mailed soon to both SOHO and San Diego Maritime Museum members. If you would like more information, or if you'd like to secure your place at the "unveiling" banquet, please phone Pamela Bensoussan at 619-420-7782.●



The S.S. Catalina today. You can help rescue her and get a limited edition signed print by Ken Marschall on July 9.



## SOHO's members: can you help solve a mystery involving Amelia Earhart?

*SOHO is often asked to help with many issues pertaining to history and preservation, but this request is a bit beyond our resources. Are any SOHO members able to help with this request? If so, please give Thomas King a call.*

Dear SOHO:

I'm writing in the hope that there might be someone in your organization who can help us with some historical research in San Diego.

I'm a one-time California archeologist who has lived in the east for some years. I participate in the work of The International Group for Historic Aircraft Recovery (TIGHAR). TIGHAR's major research these days is directed at solving the mystery of the disappearance of Amelia Earhart in 1937. We postulate that she and her navigator, Fred Noonan, landed on the uninhabited island of Nikumaroro (formerly Gardner Island) in the Phoenix Islands, and expired there. We've conducted a number of expeditions and historical research projects on the subject over the last decade, and think we're getting close to proving our hypothesis correct.

A bit ironically, a one-time San Diego resident, the late Floyd Kilts, beat us to our hypothesis by some 30 years. In 1960 the San Diego Tribune ran an article about Kilts, of 2615 Oleander Drive, who was a Coast Guardsman during World War II. In 1946, Kilts took part in dismantling a Coast Guard Loran station on Nikumaroro, and there heard a story about bones thought to have been Earhart's being found on

the island shortly after her disappearance and shortly before the outbreak of the War. We have since found a good deal of original documentation support Kilts' story. The newspaper article is quite terse, however, and it would be very useful to us if we could flesh it out. Kilts is deceased, but at the end of the article the author (Lew Scarr, who doesn't remember anything about it) says:

"Next month he will fly to the Philippines to visit his daughter and, perhaps, stop off at Gardner in the middle of nowhere and nothing to hunt for an airplane and do a little theory proving of his own."

We are quite sure he never "stopped off" at Nikumaroro, which truly is in the middle of nowhere and nothing, but the reference to a daughter is intriguing. We would like to try to locate her to see if she has notes from her father's time on the island, or at least recollections of his story. San Diego seems like the place to start looking. She very likely lived there sometime in the 1950s, and her residence in the Philippines in 1960s suggests that either she was in the military or was married to a military man, perhaps also with ties to San Diego.

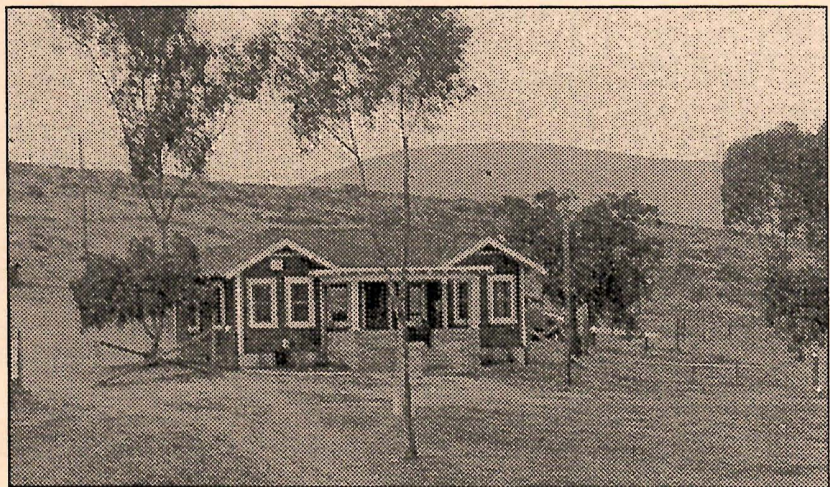
So, we're hoping to find someone in San Diego who might be interested in trying to track down Kilts' daughter. Any help you can give us, or suggestions you can make, will be much appreciated.

Sincerely,  
Thomas F. King, PhD.

P.O. Box 14515  
Silver Spring, MD 20911  
phone: 301-585-9572  
FAX: 301-589-5049•

## SWEETWATER AUTHORITY SEEKS PHOTOS & MOMENTOS OF 1929 COMMISSARY BUILDING

The Sweetwater Authority plans to restore the old commissary building near the dam on the grounds of the Sweetwater Reservoir. This small building with cobblestone porch was built in 1929 and served as the commissary for people taking advantage of the public fishing through the 1940s. Do you know anyone who used to fish there? Do you have any old photos? Sweetwater Authority is seeking any old images of the buildings and the surroundings, as well as oral histories, old menus, signs or any other memorabilia. Share the past so others can experience it again! Call Troy Murphree at 619-422-8395 x632 or Bruce Coons at 619-427-9178 x502 with any information.•





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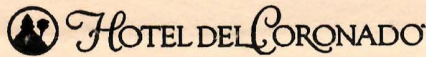
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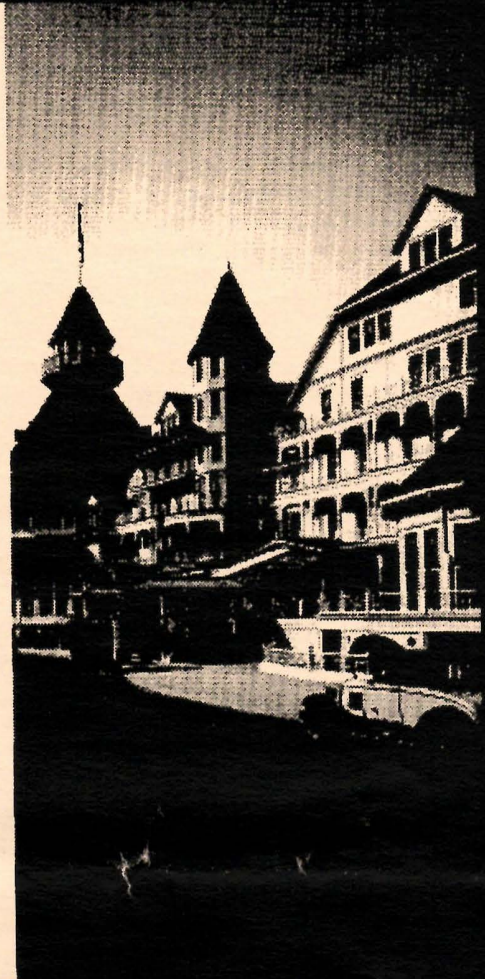
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Are you interested in helping at SOHO events (like tours, membership drives, etc.)?

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## FIRST ANNUAL SAN DIEGO OLD HOUSE FAIR

SATURDAY, JUNE 12 10:00 AM TO 3:00 PM

CORNER OF BEECH & 30TH

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## TOUR THE WAREHOUSE DISTRICT LOFTS FOR THE LAST TIME

SUNDAY, JUNE 27 AT 1:00 PM

SEE DETAILS INSIDE

### UPCOMING EVENTS

June/July

SOHO Board meetings:  
3rd Monday at 6:30.  
Preservation Action: Call for date.  
Education/Events: 2nd Tues.  
Call SOHO for other meetings.

June 27

**Historic Warehouse District  
Loft Tour to benefit CARE**  
This may be your last chance to  
see these lofts before bulldozers  
arrive. Cost: \$15 per person.  
See details on insert.

July 9

**S.S. Catalina Fundraiser with  
Ken Marschall aboard the  
Berkeley.** \$100 per person for  
dinner and signed print of the  
Catalina steamship. Lecture  
afterward free to SOHO and  
Maritime Museum members.  
Details to come.

July 31

**Oceanside Train Tour**  
Led by Historian Alex Bevil. Cost  
from downtown San Diego: \$32  
for train & tour (\$25 seniors 62  
and older, \$15 if you don't take  
the train but meet us there). See  
details on insert. RSVP to SOHO  
at 619-297-9327 by July 8th.

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## July 27: Last Chance to see the Historic Warehouse Lofts? Don't delay.

DID YOU SEE THE ARTICLE ON PAGE 3 ABOUT C.A.R.E., THE Coalition Advocating Redevelopment Excellence, and their work to make sure the City of San Diego follows the law? Well, lawsuits are expensive, so to raise funds there will be a major tour of the renovated lofts in the Warehouse District on Sunday, June 27, at 1:00 P.M. to benefit C.A.R.E.'s efforts. At press time, there are about seven lofts signed up (?! and most have never been on tour before! You will get to peek into the homes of designers and artists and really nice people who have, through their own effort, revitalized the warehouse buildings into their homes. After the tour, come back to the Black Box Studio for a wine and cheese reception and listen to the music of GSP and The Committee.

This will really be a fun day and, sadly, it may be the last opportunity you'll ever have to view these lofts. One way or another, a big stadium will go into the East Village and these lofts may or may not be around next year. So join C.A.R.E. for this event.

The price to gain access to all these homes is only \$15 per person. However, if you want to make an additional donation to the C.A.R.E. legal fund, they'll let you! In any case, you won't want miss out on this if you care about our urban environment and downtown living.

To register, call the C.A.R.E. number and leave a message on how many will attend. Send your check to C.A.R.E., P.O. Box 126507, San Diego, CA 92112-6507. You may also register by e-mail at [caresandiego@hotmail.com](mailto:caresandiego@hotmail.com).

Would you like to be a docent or volunteer? Then call Laura at 619-239-CARE (2273) and sign up! There will be a docent meeting about one week before the tour, so you'll be trained on what to do.

Come on out for what may be the final loft event of the Warehouse District, while there still is a Warehouse District.●

## All aboard for the next SOHO Train Tour! SOHO goes to Oceanside on July 31.

WHAT WOULD SUMMER BE WITHOUT A SOHO TRAIN TOUR? Historian and SOHO board member Alex Bevil will be leading the way once again as we go exploring Oceanside on July 31. Those of us in the southern part of the county will meet at the Santa Fe Depot in downtown San Diego at 7:45 A.M. to board the 8:10 Amtrak. We'll arrive in Oceanside at 8:58 A.M. and enjoy breakfast (on your own, not included in the tour price) at the Longboard Cafe. At 10:00 we'll explore Oceanside with a guide from the Oceanside Historical Society.

If you haven't been to Oceanside recently, you'll want to see it with our guides. Our walking tour is about two miles long and will take about two hours. We'll see many fine historic buildings, like the Mission Revival St. Mary's Star of the Sea Catholic Church and the Oceanside Blade-Tribune Building, the last project Irving Gill completed before his death in 1936. From about noon until our return train at 3:13 you'll be able to wander on your own, but we'll be there to offer suggestions (like how about a visit to PIP Winner Oceanside Museum of Art, the adapted former City Hall building or the Victorian cottages seen in the movie *Top Gun?*). We'll be back in San Diego by 3:10.

Cost for all this fun (and it is a great time) is \$32 per person (\$25 for seniors over 62). For our North County SOHO members who will not need to take the train but wish to meet us at the restaurant, tour cost is \$15 per person. The cost does not include food or museum admission charge if you decided to see the art museum. You needed be a SOHO member to attend, but you must register and send your check in to SOHO by July 8.

To register, call SOHO at 619-297-9327 and tell us your name, phone number, and how many will attend. Send your check to SOHO Train Tour, P.O. Box 3429, San Diego, CA92163-1429. We'll call you to confirm we received your check.

Alex informs us that we will not be required to get regulation Marine haircuts for this event.●

### IRVING GILL'S SUNNYSLOPE LODGE PLACED ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Many of you visited Sunnyslope Lodge, at 3733 Robinson Mews, during SOHO's Arts & Crafts Tour in March. This spring the home was listed as a local San Diego landmark by the Historical Site Board, and in April it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The "statement of significance" summary notes that Sunnyslope Lodge is one of the experimental cottages constructed on property purchased by Irving Gill in 1899. In the cottage, Gill developed his techniques for flush detailing, slab floors, and thin wall construction, and the cottage displays the simple, straightforward massing, materials and arched arcades with which Gill would be identified later in his career. This dignified, affordable house shows a truly unique San Diego style of architecture.

Congratulations to Sunnyslope Lodge's owners for their fine stewardship of this modest but highly important Irving Gill residence. (Compare the respect these owners give to their home with the awful treatment of the Hebbard & Gill house down the block from them at First & Robinson, or to the treatment of the Ginty House.) And thanks for opening Sunnyslope Lodge to SOHO members so we can all see how wonderfully you've treated this National Register Landmark.●



# THE GINTY HOUSE INTEGRITY DESTROYED

First off, we want to thank all of you who responded to our appeal to write to the Mayor and the City Council about the planned move of the Ginty House. In April we appeared before City Council to get the city to see the wisdom of leaving the Ginty House on site and lettering the developer work with the historic resource as the centerpiece to this project. We lost.

The Ginty, at press time, has been removed from its site. It sits aloft, waiting to make its way down the hill. Now everything that we said would happen to the Ginty is happening, and more. It serves as an extraordinarily distressing example of why no one should be moving historic properties:

- no one seemed to care to take any measurements of the house before they started destroying parts of the house. No one was looking for fenestration or ghost outlines or examples of gingerbread, nor would they allow a SOHO team on sight to do it ourselves. This information is so important to an accurate restoration of a historic building and is now lost forever.

- the kitchen wing addition, which contained portions of the original back porch, was torn off. Even after SOHO contacted the developer, the pieces where but on the trash pile.

- the chimneys were removed, leaving gaping holes in the roof through three rain storms, no doubt damaging the plaster and other interior materials.

- the house was left unsecured for days at a time, allowing anyone to enter.

- the house is now removed from its foundation and the front porch is not supported properly, so now the tower is sagging and the porch is coming apart. Some of the original hand blown wavy glass was destroyed. The house is set on blocks at an angle, putting pressure on the plaster work. We fear for the plasterwork, the ceiling medallions, and the tilework.

- all the original concrete work, some of the earliest of its type in the nation, is now destroyed.

The Historical Site Board, in allowing the Ginty to be moved, heard from the developers

Forest City West that they would replicate the retaining walls and the original siteing at the new location if the Historical Site Board allowed the move. It's clear now that they have no intention of doing living up to their commitments.

The developer now seems to want to do a quick rehab and we're afraid that the timetable will not allow for conservation of historic materials, accurate replication of missing features, nor a detailed or sensitive restoration of this extremely important site. The developer has no interest in this building, except for the fact that Councilmember Christine Kehoe made the building's restoration a condition of getting the permits for the cleared site. In essence, we're going to get a poor approximation of this house, and the historic resource will be forever compromised, in order to "get it done" quickly to get the occupancy permit for the new development.

SOHO is attempting to negotiate with the developers to have them do the correct thing for this important piece of San Diego history. What's happening here is far from the best job possible, but we'll keep the pressure up so that this isn't a total historic loss. However, we will be sure that the City of San Diego NEVER points to the Ginty House as an example of how they "save" and manage historic resources, since this is a major loss and significant disaster for preservation in the city. •

