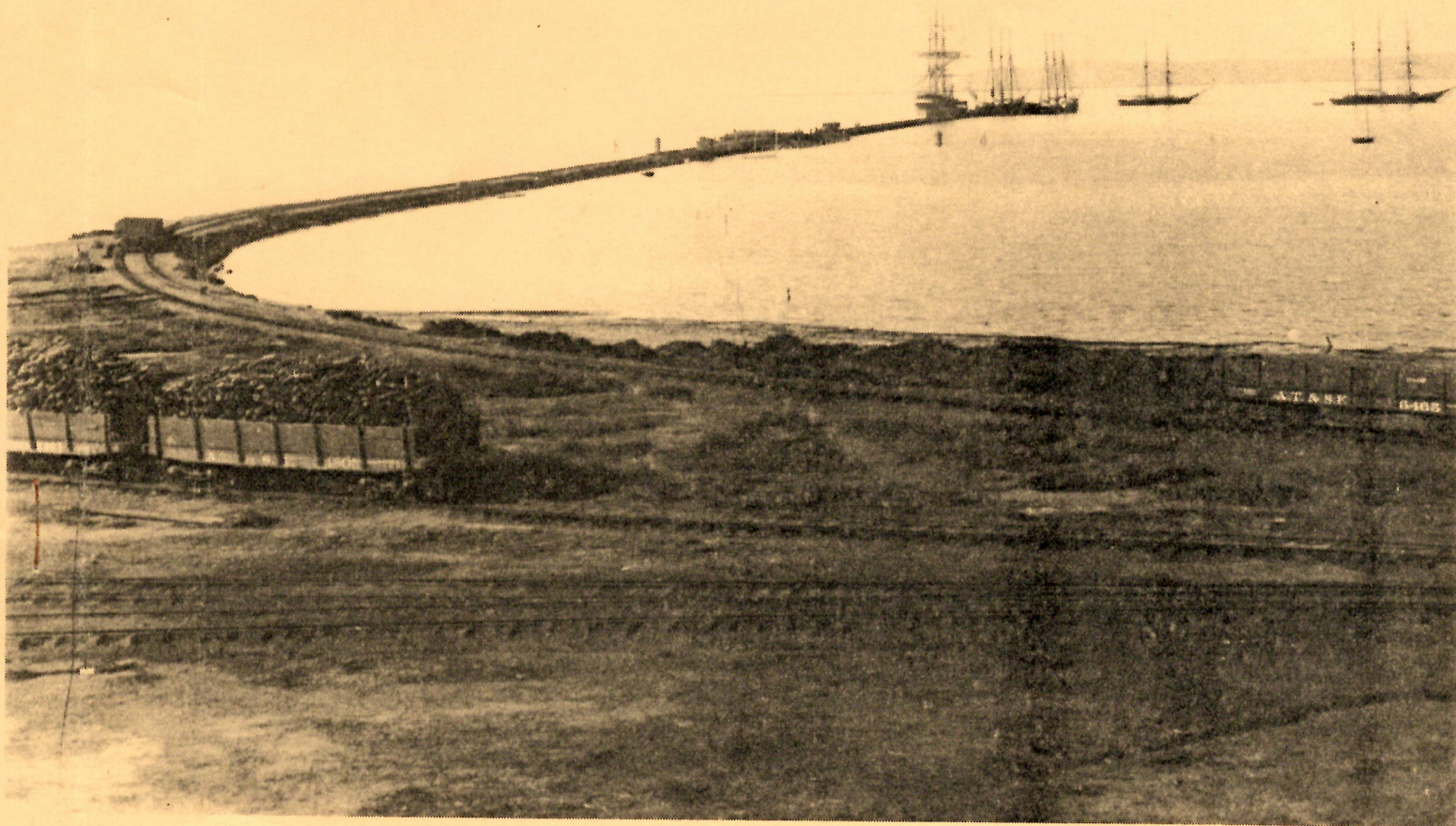




VICTORIAN

NATIONAL CITY



January 24, 1981

WELCOME TO S.O.H.O.'S NATIONAL CITY VICTORIAN TOUR!

S.O.H.O. IS PROUD TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT THIS TOUR IN A COMMUNITY WHICH HAS MADE GREAT EFFORTS IN PRESERVING THEIR FINEST HISTORIC BUILDINGS. MUCH CREDIT MUST BE GIVEN TO THE NATIONAL CITY COUNCIL, AND TO THE SOUTH BAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, ESPECIALLY WITH REGARD TO THEIR PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION OF THE GRANGER MUSIC HALL, DESIGNED BY IRVING GILL.

THIS TOUR IS A PART OF S.O.H.O.'S CONTINUING PUBLIC EDUCATION PROGRAM, OUR EFFORT TO BRING THE PUBLIC IN TOUCH WITH IT'S LOCAL PAST HISTORY. ALL TOUR GUIDES, RESEARCHERS, HOSTS AND HOSTESSES, AND SOHO OFFICERS ARE VOLUNTEERS, SELF-TRAINED AND OFTEN HOLDING DOWN FULL-TIME EMPLOYMENT AS WELL.

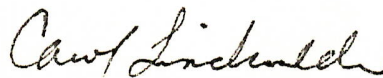
SAVE OUR HERITAGE ORGANISATION IS A NON-PROFIT EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION, WHOSE PURPOSE IS THE PRESERVATION OF SAN DIEGO'S HISTORIC BUILDINGS. WE ARE TWELVE YEARS OLD THIS YEAR, AND HAVE BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN PRESERVATION IN MANY AREAS OF OUR COMMUNITY, FROM DOWNTOWN, GOLDEN HILL, THE COUNTY, TO OUR MOST WELL-KNOWN INVOLVEMENT IN HERITAGE PARK, OLD TOWN.

S.O.H.O. HAS A NEW OFFICE IN HERITAGE PARK, IN THE SENLIS COTTAGE, OPEN TO THE PUBLIC SEVEN DAYS A WEEK. OUR NEW LOCATION ALSO IS ESTABLISHING A RESTORATION LIBRARY FOR THE PUBLIC, WHICH WILL OFFER DO-IT-YOURSELF-ERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN HOW TO RESTORE THEIR OWN HOMES OR OFFICES.

WE ARE TOTALLY SUPPORTED BY MEMBERSHIPS, DONATIONS AND FUNDS RAISED BY TOURS AND OTHER EDUCATION PROJECTS. WE WOULD WELCOME ALL OF YOU AS MEMBERS, AND A MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION IS ATTACHED TO THIS BROCHURE. S.O.H.O. PUTS OUT A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER GIVING YOU CONTINUING NEWS ON PRESERVATION IN SAN DIEGO, AND OFFERS YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT MANY OF THE HISTORIC STRUCTURES IN SAN DIEGO.

AS PRESIDENT, MAY I THANK YOU FOR JOINING US, FOR YOUR INTEREST IN PRESERVATION, AND IN HOPES THAT YOU WILL TAKE BACK TO YOUR OWN COMMUNITIES A RENEWED ENTHUSIASM FOR THOSE BUILDINGS IN YOUR AREA WHICH MIGHT BENEFIT THE NEIGHBORHOOD BY PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION.

MY SPECIAL APPRECIATION, ALSO, TO ALL THOSE S.O.H.O. MEMBERS WHO HAVE WORKED SO HARD IN BRINGING THIS TOUR TO ALL OF YOU.


CAROL LINDEMULDER
S.O.H.O. PRESIDENT

Being a Brief History of National City

In January of 1868, thirty-four year old Frank Kimball was warned that he had less than a year to live if he continued to reside in San Francisco. Traveling south with his brothers Levi, Warren and George, Kimball scouted 17 tracts of land throughout Southern California before coming to the San Diego area. There, impressed by the equitable climate, desert beauty, and development potential, the Kimballs purchased the 26,631 acre El Rancho de la Nacion for \$30,000 on June 18, 1868. Under a U.S. Land Patent it was renamed National Ranch.

On August 8, 1868, Sarah Kimball came down from San Francisco, was the guest of Mrs. Alonzo Horton at her home, and joined her husband in walking to the site of her soon to be completed home.

The premier issue of the weekly "San Diego Union" on October 20, 1868 notes "The Kimballs will sell farms on their ranch only to those who will cultivate the grounds" and adds "We think the new town on the Ranch will be called, "Kimball Town." However, when Frank Kimball ordered 3,000 bricks, lumber, shingles, nails and lime shipped from San Francisco it was shipped to National City and the name stuck.

The town of National City was plotted next to the bay and became the second settlement in the area. The remainder of the ranch as well as five-eighths of the townsite itself would eventually be given to the railroad as land subsidies to establish a line that would link National City with the East.

The Kimballs soon became prominent financiers and were considered the wealthiest men in San Diego County. In addition to his land and railroad interests, Frank Kimball founded a number of businesses and helped establish the agricultural economy of Southern California. His work with the Mission Olive led to the development of the United States Olive Industry. He also cultivated oranges, lemons, limes, citron, grapefruit from Mexico, and the tangerine which he discovered at an exposition in New Orleans. In 1876, the Kimball brothers planted the first eucalyptus grove in San Diego County. The grove would eventually provide fuel for their brick kiln and was fertilized by sheep kept in movable pens.

As part of his agricultural pursuits Frank Kimball also established a lemon packing plant and an olive mill which could process 18 tons of olives in twenty-four hours.

Despite the success of his many business and real estate ventures, the perfidy of those close to him would eventually undermine Frank Kimball's financial position. His willingness to back developing businesses made him an easy target for unscrupulous businessmen and several business associates made purchases in his name while keeping subsequent profits for themselves. By 1893, Kimball's debts were so extensive that a trust deed was filed against him.

The 32,000 fully paid shares of San Diego Land and Town stock that Kimball had counted on to see him through the crisis were steadily decreasing in value. Kimball's difficulties were compounded when B. P. Cheney took over the company and made an assessment of \$1.00 per share. Unable to pay the assessment, Kimball was eliminated from the company to which he had given most of his life's earnings.

When the trust deed was filed, Frank's property was worth several times the \$800,000 debt against it. The property in the deed included the Brick Row as well as 41 houses, town lots, orchards, businesses, and several hundred acres of land. Mismanagement of the deed, however, resulted in much of the income property being sold leaving taxes on the remaining property unpaid. In 1894 a second trust deed was filed, and two years later the property was purchased by Ralph Granger for the amount of the delinquent taxes.

Kimball's financial position continued to deteriorate until he lost his home of thirty years through a mortgage foreclosure. As a result Frank and his wife, Sarah, were forced to move into an old restaurant building owned by a nephew.

Discouraging days followed with Kimball laboring from dawn to dusk doing any work available. Through diligent effort Frank was eventually able to redeem his old mill in 1905 and again sold olive oil and pickled olives. By this time, however, Kimball was an old man and was never able to recoup his losses entirely. It was not until 1908 that the Kimballs were able to buy another house after ten years of living in a restaurant and an old bank building.

Frank Kimball died in 1913 at the age of 81. He had been a true pioneer who willingly sacrificed everything to progress. His life had its full measure of joy and sorrow, and in later years he was to confide, "I have spent the best years of my life trying to make those around me happier, and the result is unsatisfactory. I am confronted at every step by ungrateful people, but I look back and thank God I have lived. As far as I know, I have done my best."





BRICK ROW
900 Block of "A" Avenue,

Heritage Square

In September of 1887 when Frank Kimball started building the Brick Row, National City was still in the midst of a boom era; houses were scarce and people were sleeping on the veranda of the International Hotel. At that time Frank Kimball wrote in his diary, "Let contract to build ten houses covering 250'x45' to J. J. Hunt for a lump sum of \$2,200.00 with an agreement that if he does not make journeyman's wages, besides paying the bills, then I shall give him \$150.00 more." National City was still in fierce competition with San Diego and the row houses were probably built to house the VIPs of the Santa Fe Railway.

The five unit, two-story building was constructed according to drawings sent from Philadelphia. The Philadelphia row house scheme, unique to the East Coast, contrasted sharply with the detached Victorian residences typical in Southern California at that time.

The individual units are L-shaped with the plan reversed for every other unit, creating U-shaped service yards. The units are divided by twelve inch thick interlocking brick walls. The brick foundation walls are set on mortar three feet into the ground. It has been a good test of the Kimball brick to withstand the weight of the walls all these years. There are over 240,000 bricks in the entire structure, many of them from Kimball's brick kiln built in 1886. In that year the bricks from the National City Brick Yard were selling for \$7 to \$10 per thousand.

The brick work on the Row Houses was laid with an artistic eye to break the severe lines of the long walls. The bricks above the second story are set upright at an angle. The same motif is carried out in the border around the entire building. The two end walls are recessed to give a panel effect and relieve their otherwise plain surfaces. Sixteen ornamental brick chimneys originally adorned the front of the building, but all but four have since been removed. The utility chimneys are located in the rear.

A one-story porch runs the length of the front of the building. Wood dividers corresponding to the party wall insure the privacy of each unit.

The curved toppings on the windows are cement and are set on decorated units which in turn rest on the 12" walls. The design under the arch is pressed wood and duplicates, in reverse, the design used on the porch.

THE ELIZUR STEELE, CRANDALL-ENNIS HOUSE Originally 904 East 8th St.

Elizur Steele came to National City in 1874 and worked as a real estate agent for Frank Kimball. Elizur and his brother, John, built many houses in the National City area. Elizur also was known as a rancher in the Paradise Hills area.

The house was also known as "El Cipres" for the two Monterey cypress trees which stood in the front.

Frederick Crandall, also a realtor, acquired the house in the 1920s and owned it until his death in 1941. Mrs. Florence Ennis then lived in the house until her death at age 87 in 1966. It was moved to Heritage Square in 1977.

THE RICE-PROCTER HOUSE Originally 1311 Roosevelt.

Julius Rice was active in educational affairs. He was the schoolmaster, and later a principal, and was also active in real estate. On Feb. 2, 1897, John W. Procter bought the house for \$1,000 from Julius Rice. It was moved to Heritage Square in 1978.



FRANK KIMBALL HOUSE
Originally 10 W. Plaza. Now Brick Row

The home of National City's founder, Frank Kimball, is called "the most important house ever built on the National Ranch." Kimball bought the National Ranch and construction of his house began in 1868, immediately after the survey of the Kimball "empire" was completed.

Kimball chose property near W. 10th Street (now Plaza Blvd.,) and National Avenue for his house while brother Warren chose land near what is now 24th Street and Highland Avenue; and brother Levi chose land in the Sweetwater Valley.

No records indicate the architect for the Kimball House, but the first structure on the property was erected by the Kimball brothers themselves. It was a night's shelter for them as they began their empire building.

Kimball and his wife, Sarah, took up residence in their still uncompleted home August 4, 1868. Into Kimball's house, valued at that time between \$8,000 & \$10,000, went 3,000 bricks shipped from San Francisco to form the kitchen chimney. The two chimneys of the house were completed in 1887 and considered "the finest in town." Kimball referred to the hall area west of the living room as the "Tower Hall." In it is the winding staircase leading to the second floor.

The house originally faced in another direction but was later shifted to face what is now Plaza Blvd. When the house was turned, a large rear addition containing kitchen and dining facilities for the "help" and one upstairs bedroom was removed.

At Kimball's house, there was always a welcome for sailors returning from the sea and in need of food and a night's lodging. And families settling in the area often stayed with the Kimballs until their own homes were built. Visitors included not only Kimball's relatives but men like Pardee, Parsons and Phinney whose ranches later became subdivisions of the new town Kimball was building. On April 30, 1891, the house took on special lustre as Kimball hosted an important group visiting a

growing portion of Southern California. Newspaper accounts and Kimball's diary reveal that the "entire presidential party" of President Benjamin Harrison, Secretary Rusk, Col. Ingersoll, and Ulysses S. Grant, Jr., were entertained in Kimball House. Kimball also noted in his diary a visit by a less noted personage.

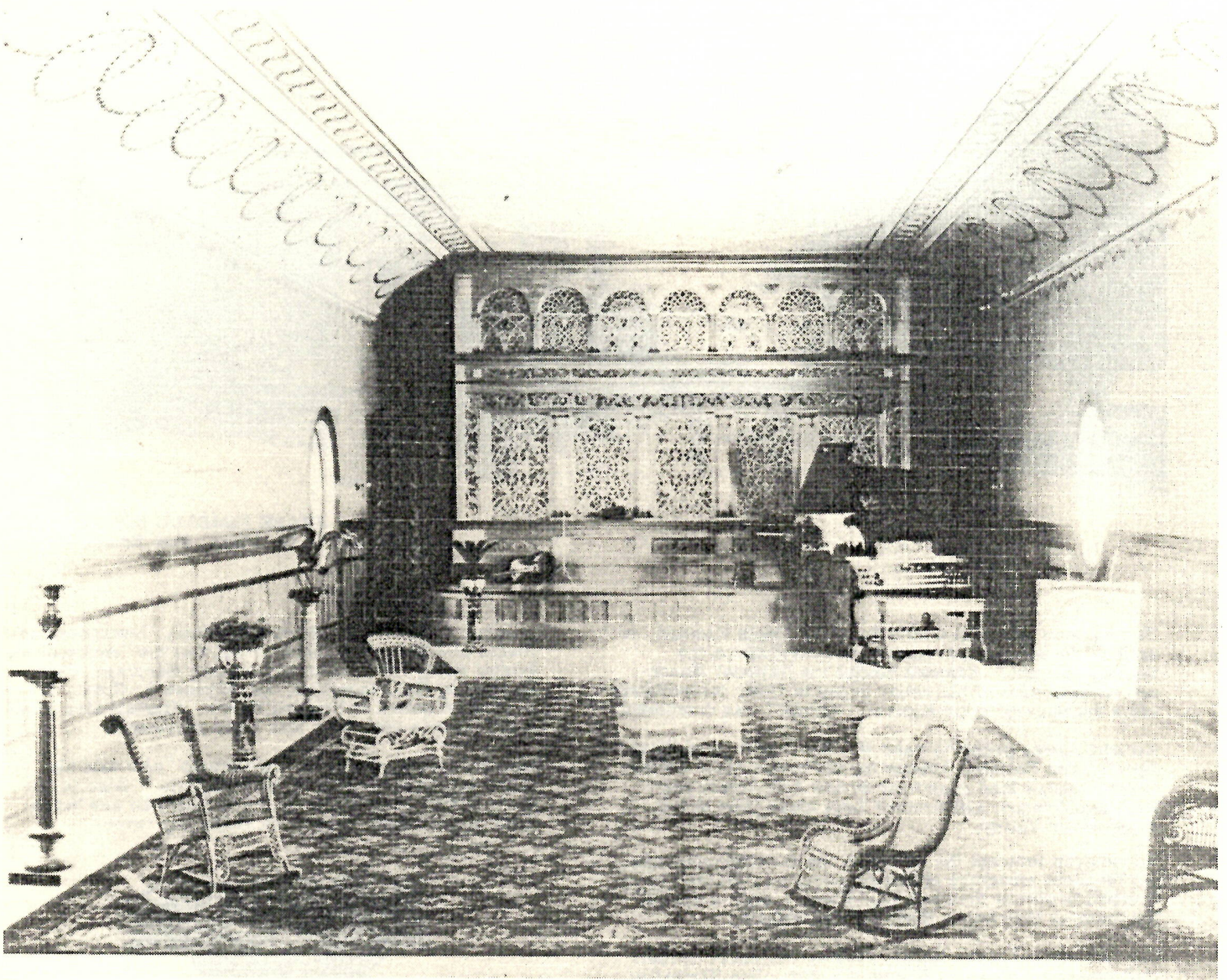
According to Kimball, he fed a tramp "who said his name was Frank Kimball, but I doubt it." Also in his diary Kimball wrote that in the 29 years he and Sarah lived in the house, they were alone only twice.



ST. MATTHEW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
521 East 8th Street, 1887

Completed in 1887, St. Matthew's is the oldest Southern California Episcopal church still on its original site. Reflecting the Victorian Gothic style with its soaring tower and Gothic doors, the church was built with a combination of Georgia hewn pine shipped "around the horn," California redwood, and Douglas fir. The extreme proportions of the tower dominate the simple gable form of the main nave, and the interior is graced by the repetitive roof trusses of simple rafters, tie beams, and diagonal braces. The architect modeled the church after photographs of a countryside church in the south of England. The windows were originally of plain glass with plans to replace them with stained glass as funds became available. Most of the stained glass windows now present were given as memorials to former parishioners.

Granger Music Hall



GRANGER MUSIC HALL
N. W. Corner 4th & Palm 1896 - 1898



In 1896, Colorado silver magnate Ralph Granger built a music room across the driveway from his Paradise Valley home. The hall was built as a place where violin concerts for those of discerning tastes could be given. The original 19x36 foot room was designed by the famous San Diego architect Irving Gill, who made every effort to achieve the best possible sound effect. Thus, the ceiling has no supports to stop vibrations and the floor runs across without girders under joists. The exterior walls reflect Gill's early experimental use of shingles. The original music room also contained a concrete vault inside which a safe was placed to keep Mr. Granger's recently purchased collection of priceless violins in best possible condition.



The Museum of American Treasures at 1315 East 4th Street began life as the "Museum of Sun Colored Glass" when founder-collector Hans Lindemann opened it 25 years ago to house his glass collection.

Lindemann, 82, is a German who fled to this country in 1936 in distaste for the activities of Adolf Hitler. He has never returned home although his family home is in what is now part of Poland.

His love of his adopted country has led him to collect all the precious pieces of Americana that he can find. His collection soon included far more than glass and forced him to change the name of his museum.

After moving to National City, Lindemann acquired the buildings and site for his museum for \$3,400 in 1943.

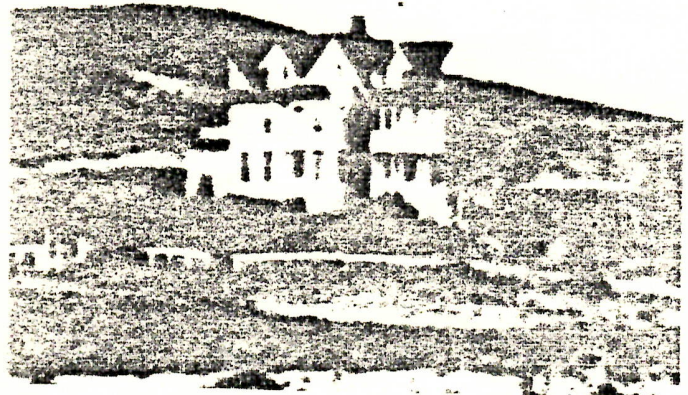
The museum now houses documents signed by several American presidents, ornate antique marriage licenses, antique gramophones and many other bits of Americana. Lindemann has a large collection of intricately engraved shell casings which he said soldiers used to create while time hung heavy on their hands. He likes to think of the casings as weapons of destruction that have been turned into examples of beauty.

The museum's place of pride is occupied by an 82-inch delicately carved elephant tusk which was created for the last emperor of China, according to Lindemann. It disappeared during China's revolution and re-appeared in Long Beach where Lindemann acquired it.

There is a story behind each of the thousands of articles Lindemann has collected, and Lindemann takes great pleasure in recounting those stories to visitors as they tour his museum. The museum is open on Sundays from 11-5 p. m. and by appointment.

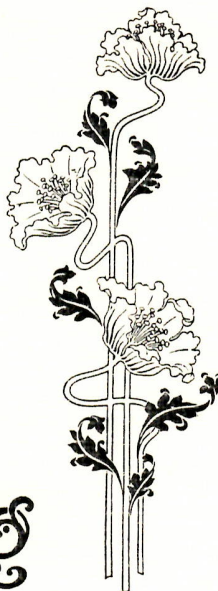


Josselyn Home



JOSSelyn HOME, 1889
425 Shell

Originally a large Victorian structure, this house has been extensively remodelled into a Spanish style. The current porch is not original; early photographs show an open porch and seven gables on the third floor. The 3rd floor was all one room with built in benches in the gables. It was used for parties and as a playroom. The house still retains its brass fixtures. Underneath the stucco is the original redwood shiplap.



The Tower House of Moses Kimball

This home is an excellent example of Queen Anne Architecture with its three-story corner tower and wrap-around porch. The floors are of fir; the three story floating stairway is of oak as is the almost foot wide ornately carved Newell post. There are four fireplaces all utilizing a central chimney.

Moses Kimball (no relation to the Kimball brothers) built the home as a retirement home for himself, and his wife and son. Much of the lumber came from the Brewster Nursing Home which was on the eleven acres Kimball bought. Some of the brick is also recycled and much of it came from Frank Kimball's Sweetwater Brick Kiln. Although the house was not connected to the sewer until 1906, it was built with indoor plumbing. The water was collected from the roof and stored in a cistern. After the death of his wife in 1900 the house was sold to the Hutchinson brothers who farmed extensively in National City and El Cajon. The current owners bought the house four years ago from an estate sale and are restoring it.



THE TOWER HOUSE OF MOSES KIMBALL
2202 East 10th Street, 1893



DICKINSON-BOAL HOUSE
1433 East 24th Street, 1887

This large and handsome Queen Anne Victorian is the work of the architectural firm of Comstock & Trosche, who designed several buildings in San Diego, the best known of which is Jesse Shepard's Villa Montezuma. Of particular interest are the veranda over the broad covered porch, the hexagonal tower, and the tall pressed brick chimney. The 18 room house contains a carved stairway of black walnut, some stained glass, fine hardwoods, and sculptured fireplaces with ceramic tile.

In 1886 Col. William Green Dickinson came to the city and purchased 40 acres on which to build a home. Six years earlier a group of Boston financiers had formed the San Diego Land and Town Company and, promising to build to National City a railroad that would connect with a cross-country line, had received as a subsidy a major portion of the Kimball's National Ranch. Col. Dickinson was sent out to manage the company and in this capacity was involved in the building of Sweetwater Dam and the National City and Otay Railroad. He is considered the founder of Chula Vista, a suburban town of small fruit tracts. The colonel died in 1891 at the age of 65.

George Kimball House



GEORGE KIMBALL HOUSE
1515 L Avenue, 1887

George Kimball, the oldest of the Kimball brothers, came to National City in response to a 17-page letter from brother Frank telling of all the healthful advantages of such a move. The elder Kimball "had palpitations of the heart," according to local history, and always was looked after by Frank and the other Kimball brothers.

George, his wife Lucy, and his sisters Laura and Jennifer arrived by the steamer "Orizaba" Nov. 16, 1869. The first house that was built for them was near Frank Kimball's home at Plaza Blvd. & National Ave. That house was the first post office in the area when George was appointed postmaster. The house later was moved to San Diego for restoration as an historic site.

On Feb. 16, 1870, George Kimball picked out land at what is now 1515 L Avenue for his home. The land was a gift from brother Frank. Construction began in 1886. There is not much mention of the house until an 1887 edition of the National City Record which refers to George Kimball's house as "an elegant residence on Nob Hill."

The house was valued at its construction at \$6,000. Millwork was done at Warren Kimball's planing mill and bricks for the house came from the Kimballs' kiln in the Sweetwater Valley at the mouth of the river.





National City, Packing lemons at the foot of 23rd c. 1906



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San Diego City & County Directories, various years
Viewing Victorian Vistas, 1975, Save Our Heritage Organisation
Photo Collection, San Diego Historical Society, Title Insurance & Trust Collection

TOUR COMMITTEE

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Tour Guides, Hosts and Hostesses



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Please complete and return this membership form to:

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SOHO depends upon membership dues, contributions, and fund raising activities to support our restoration/preservation expenses. Members receive the monthly SOHO Newsletter and invitations to special events. Gift memberships are available and we will send the recipient a card in your name announcing the gift. Memberships and donations are tax deductible. Please join us!

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