



SANTA MONICA CONSERVANCY NEWS

VOL 5 NO 4

ENSURING THAT THE PAST HAS A FUTURE

DECEMBER 2007

SANTA MONICA CONSERVANCY *Holiday Party*



**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2007
3 – 5 P.M.**

**SIEBERT/FRESCO RESIDENCE
514 PALISADES AVENUE, SANTA MONICA
FREE FOR MEMBERS**

RSVP to the Conservancy (310) 496-3146, or by email:
rsvp@smconservancy.org

- Explore and enjoy one of the finest Craftsman houses in Santa Monica
- Silent Auction of original artwork to benefit the restoration of the historic shotgun house
- Refreshments and live piano music.
- Come early for a self-guided architectural tour of historic homes along Palisades Ave.

See page 3 for details

ANNUAL MEETING MAIN LIBRARY JANUARY 27, 2008



SAVE THE DATE! The Santa Monica Conservancy's Annual Meeting will take place at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, January 27, 2008, at the Main Library (7th and Santa Monica Boulevard) in the multipurpose room on the second floor. The new library building, designed by Moore Ruble Yudell, opened to great acclaim on January 1, 2006 and has earned rave reviews for its light-filled design.

This building is the fourth one in the city's history to serve as our main library. The very first one was installed in the Bank of Santa Monica building (c. 1890), a Victorian formerly located at the southeast corner of Third and Santa Monica Boulevard. Its neighbors in that building were the city council chambers, the post office, the Santa Monica Water Company, the express office and a Masonic Lodge. That building was demolished many decades ago, and the library – growing to serve the burgeoning city – established its headquarters in increasingly larger buildings through the ages.

Come and learn more about the history and evolution of our library, as well as about the Santa Monica Conservancy. Meet and mingle with fellow members over refreshments. More information about the meeting, including the Board elections, will be mailed to our members.

BUS TOUR SPOTLIGHTS SANTA MONICA LANDMARKS



Marcello Vavala tells the tale of the ancient Moreton Fig Tree at the Hotel Miramar

The landmarks of Santa Monica had their day in the spotlight on September 30, during the Santa Monica Conservancy's third annual Landmarks Bus Tour. The sold-out event, attended by approximately fifty, took tour goers on a three-hour odyssey of Santa Monica history, with our city's landmarks serving as the characters. Leading the tour aboard a Big Blue Bus, Santa Monica Conservancy president Marcello Vavala pointed out architectural details, historical highlights of the city's past, and the fascinating stories behind many of Santa Monica's best known buildings. The

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THE CONSERVANCY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our board comes from neighborhoods throughout the city and includes:

Marcello Vavala President
 Mike Deasy Vice-President
 Tom Cleys Treasurer
 Carol Lemlein Secretary
 Ken Breisch Past-President

Joel Brand Peter Kagan
 Bruce Cameron David Kaplan
 Michael Folonis Ruthann Lehrer
 Nina Fresco Susan McCarthy
 John Zinner

MEMBERSHIP DUES

Individual Membership	\$35
Household Membership	\$45
Low Income Membership	\$15
Sustaining Membership	\$100
Conservancy Supporter	\$250

Those interested in supporting the Conservancy at the highest Patron or Circle levels can learn more by calling our phone number at (310) 496-3146.

THE NEWS STAFF

Alice Allen Dick Orton
 Ruthann Lehrer Nina Fresco
 Sherrill Kushner Judy Parsons
 Marcello Vavala

NEW PHONE NUMBER FOR SMC

SMC has a new telephone number which facilitates checking messages more regularly. The new number is

(310) 496-3146

The email address remains the same: info@smconservancy.org and the website is still www.smconservancy.org.

SUSTAINABILITY & HISTORIC PRESERVATION



Santa Monica City Hall under construction 1940. Note the P.W.A. sign just left of center. Photo courtesy of the Santa Monica Public Library Image Archives.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This article is excerpted (with Mr. Rypkema's permission) from a talk given by Donovan Rypkema in San Jose on September 27, 2007 that appeared online (<http://www.preservation.org/rypkema.htm>). Mr. Rypkema is the author of "The Economics of Historic Preservation: A Community Leader's Guide" (The National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1994), and lectures widely on economic and preservation issues relating to rehabilitation, community development and commercial revitalization.

Much of the world has begun to recognize the interrelationship and the interdependency between sustainable development and heritage conservation; but much less so in the United States. Far too many advocates in the US too narrowly define what constitutes sustainable development. Too many advocates in the US

think that so-called green buildings and sustainable development are the same. They are not. There is far more to sustainable development than green buildings, such as:

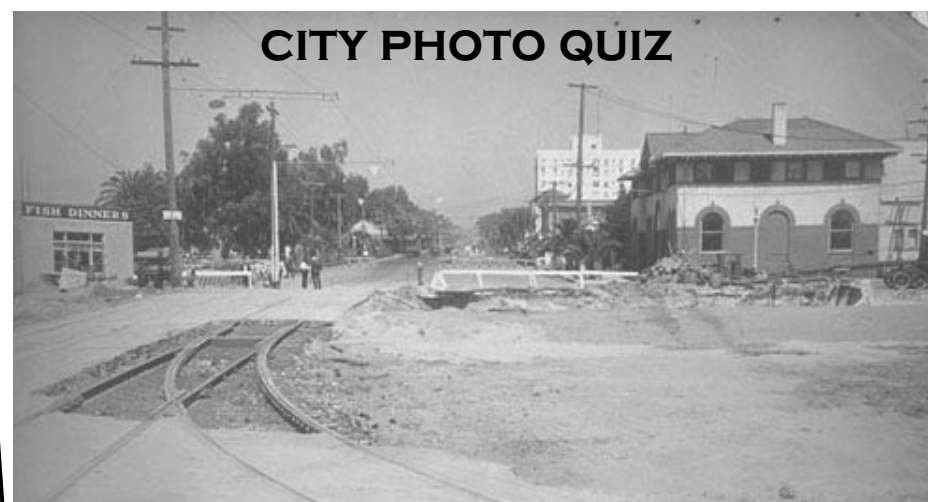
- Repairing and rebuilding historic wood widows would mean that the dollars are spent locally instead of at a distant window manufacturing plant. That's economic sustainability, also part of sustainable development.

- Maintaining as much original fabric as possible is maintaining the character of the historic neighborhood. That's cultural sustainability, also part of sustainable development.

Looking at a broader framework of sustainable development includes environmental responsibility, economic responsibility and social/cultural responsibility. It includes much more

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CITY PHOTO QUIZ



A prominent landmark on the left and the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks in the foreground, will help you identify the location of this Santa Monica photograph taken May 5, 1935. Photo courtesy of the Santa Monica Public Library Image Archives.

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DECEMBER 2ND HOLIDAY PARTY HAS CRAFTSMAN SETTING



Dining room walls feature stained Douglas Pine paneling, plate rails and bracketed shelves.

With gratitude for your annual support, we offer our members an invitation to enjoy a holiday party at the restored and renovated home of Victor and Diane Fresco. We are privileged to celebrate the December holidays at one of the finest examples of Craftsman design in Santa Monica. Santa Monica Conservancy members will learn what the current and past owners have done to restore, renovate, and create sensitive additions to this 1911 home. Refreshments and live piano music are provided.



Built-in buffet boasts scenic stained glass window and handcrafted brass hardware.

A number of original works of art by Santa Monica artists featuring Santa Monica subjects will be on display and sold in a silent auction during the party. Proceeds from the auction will support the Conservancy's shotgun house restoration project. Bidding will close at 4:45 p.m. Checks will be accepted as payment for

the winning bids.

We are also offering guests an introduction to this historic neighborhood. Beginning at 2 p.m., you can pick up information for a self-guided tour of the historic homes lining the broad, tree-lined streets of Palisades Avenue, part of the Palisades tract that opened in 1905. The neighborhood is notable for its large lots and generous setbacks, and features a unique neighborhood amenity called "Goose Egg Park." Many notable architects are represented in this tract.

NOTE

MARK YOUR CALENDAR & RSVP NOW!

There will not be another invitation mailed for this event.

Please RSVP to this invitation by calling (310) 496-3146, or by email: rsvp@smconservancy.org.

The party is free for members. SMC Members may bring a guest who, we trust, will want to join the Santa Monica Conservancy.

The Fresco House was built in 1911 by A.C. Siebert for F.R. Siebert; its design and finely crafted workmanship show familiarity with the best work of Greene and Greene. Notable Craftsman exterior features include the cobblestone porch piers, wide and spacious porch, low spreading gables of the house, exposed beam ends and rafter tails, and porch pergola. The dining room interior is a

SILENT AUCTION DETAILS

As an added attraction at the party, a silent auction will be held of artwork donated by Santa Monica artists that features our local urban environment. Party-goers will have a special opportunity to acquire beautiful original works of art, with proceeds going to support the Conservancy's shotgun house restoration project. Bidding for the artwork will take place during the party, with the winning bids announced at 5 PM.

So- don't forget your checkbooks!

masterpiece of Craftsman design. Low room dividers separate this room from the spacious living room, an open spatial plan that seems strikingly contemporary.

The Frescos recently completed a new kitchen/dining area wing addition, with expanded living space above. The guiding spirit of the Fresco work has been fidelity to the original, enhanced with creative touches such as the Bradbury and Bradbury wallpaper on the ceiling of the piano room.

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LANDMARKS BUS TOUR

group also learned about the city's historic preservation process and got a fresh look at familiar and less-well-known landmarks alike that have been preserved through adaptive reuse.

Some of the newest landmarks to be highlighted on this year's tour included architect Stanford Kent's Teriton Apartments on San Vicente Boulevard and the culturally significant Zephyr Surf Shop on Main Street. The tour also included off-the-bus site visits to Irving Gill's modernist Horatio West Court, precociously designed in 1919, and Oscar Niemeyer's Strick House, the famed Brazilian architect's sole residential design in North America.

Special thanks to the Conservancy's Program Committee for planning this annual event, to the Big Blue Bus, and to the Fairmont Miramar Hotel for graciously accommodating the tour during the intermission.

PRESERVATION EVENTS FOR HOLIDAYS, FAMILIES, AND A PREVIEW OF THE NEW YEAR



CANDLELIGHT TOURS

Date: December 8 and 9, 2007
(call for evening tour schedule)
Banning Residence Museum and Friends of
Banning Museum
401 East M Street, Wilmington, CA 90744
(310) 548-2005

See the Victorian Christmas display and see the Museum with candlelight elegance and holiday spirit. Special evening guided tours of the museum with refreshments and entertainment in the Photograph Gallery..
Reservations required, members \$15,
non-members \$20.



LAS POSADAS

Dates: Sunday, December 16, 2007 4:00 p.m.
Autry National Center, Casa de Adobe
4605 N. Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, CA

(323) 221-2164

Las Posadas features a candlelight procession that reenacts Joseph and Mary's search for shelter for the birth of Jesus. The evening will include traditional music, holiday refreshments and a pinata for the children.
Free admission



WALKING TOUR OF HISTORIC ECHO PARK LAKE

Date: Saturday, December 22, 2007 10:00 a.m.
Echo Park Historical Society
P.O. Box 261022, Los Angeles, CA 90026

(323) 860-8874

The Echo Park Lake tour will include some of the neighborhood's most prominent landmarks, such as Jensen's Recreation Center, Angelus Temple and, of course, the lake. The tour takes about two hours to complete and includes several stairways. Building interiors are not included. Tour starts at the Echo Park Boathouse, 751 Echo Park Ave.
Reservations required. \$5 for non members, no charge for members or children under 12 years.



FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT: THE SOUTHWEST LEGACY (SYDNEY D. GAMBLE LECTURE SERIES)

Date: Friday, January 25, 2008, 7:30 p.m.
Friends of The Gamble House
Art Center College of Design, Ahmanson Auditorium
1700 Lida Street, Pasadena

(626) 793-3334

Lecture by Frank Henry. Frank Lloyd Wright discovered the Southwest in the latter half of his life, its vast landscapes inspiring him to produce some of his greatest works. He developed the "Romanza" style, with its unique textured concrete block houses, for Southern California in the early 1920s.

\$20 for FOGH members, \$25 general admission.

A tour of a Frank Lloyd Wright house on January 26 is available for an additional fee

gamblehs@usc.edu



"DIG-IT!" FAMILY STYLE

Dates: 2nd Sunday of each month 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Southwest Museum of the American Indian
234 Museum Drive,
Los Angeles, CA 90065

(323) 221-2164

Family-style introduction to archeology. Who lived here before us? What did they leave behind? And what does your garbage say about you? Discover the answers to these questions during a special hour and a half "archaeological" dig at the Southwest Museum of the American Indian. Access to the museum is limited, but the museum store and some programs are available on weekends, noon to 5:00 p. m.

Free admission.

autrynationalcenter.org/southwest



2008 CALIFORNIA PRESERVATION CONFERENCE

Date: April 23-26, 2008
California Preservation Foundation
5 Third St., Ste 424, San Francisco, CA 94103

(415) 495-0349

"Balance and Complexity: The Vinyard and Beyond" educational tracks, mobile workshops and study tours with the conference headquartered in the Embassy Suites, Napa, California. Check the CPF website for additional details, registration and lodging reservation link.

http://californiapreservation.org/

http://www.banningmuseum.org/

autrynationalcenter.org/

http://historicechopark.org

INK WELL BEACH TO RECEIVE COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE by Sherrill Kushner



In the early 1920s, Santa Monica was home to a thriving black-owned business community not far from the beach where the Phillips Chapel, now a historic landmark, still serves its African-American congregation. Unfortunately, racial discrimination was alive and well. Unless they belonged to a club, which wasn't possible because of racial restrictions, blacks were limited in where they could enjoy the nearby beach. Eventually they frequented Ink Well Beach, a 200-square foot, roped off part of Santa Monica State beach between Bicknell and Bay Streets. It became a popular place for blacks to socialize from the 1920s through the 1950s.

Douglas Flamming in his book, *Bound for Freedom: Black Los Angeles in Jim Crow America* (2005), writes about the beach's origin.

"The impetus for Ink Well came when a young black chauffeur named Arthur Valentine and his family and friends brazenly settled on a section of the 'whites only' beach for Santa Monica's Memorial

Day festivities in 1920. Three police officers ordered them to leave. When the group refused, one officer picked up and 'tossed aside a small black child who got in their way.' The police beat Valentine and then shot him. When Valentine filed a complaint, the authorities charged him with assault with a deadly weapon. If he had had a weapon, historical records do not indicate what it was...The incident prompted blacks to claim their own sliver of public beach near the Crystal Plunge, a former open-air swimming pool that had been destroyed by a flood in 1905, then abandoned. The area was a polluted, debris-filled spot that no one else wanted. Around 1922, it became known as Ink Well Beach."

Black investors were unsuccessful when they tried to purchase the adjacent Crystal Plunge site. In 1926 Club Casa del Mar opened, providing wealthy white tourists a place to enjoy beach parties, dinner dances and illegal gambling and drinking. Those who frequented the adjacent Ink Well danced to the big bands who played at the



Club and whose music carried outdoors.

In the 1940s, Ink Well Beach was also home to now-deceased Nicolas Gabaldon, a graduate of Santa Monica High School and considered to be the first African-American surfer.

Recently, at the urging of Rhonda Harper, an African-American female surfer and surf historian, the city of Santa Monica agreed to

erect a bronze plaque where Ink Well Beach had been. Mounted on a large boulder in a landscaped area adjacent to the intersection of the bike path and the boardwalk, the plaque recounts the Ink Well as "a place of celebration and pain."

The Santa Monica Conservancy is planning to host an illustrated talk about Ink Well Beach sometime in early 2008.



■ Sources: Rhonda Harper, Rhonda. rochelle@inkwellsurf.com

■ Anita Varghese, The LookOut news at www.surfsantamonica.com

■ Cecilia Rasmussen, "L.A. Then and Now," Los Angeles Times, July 3, 2005.

SUSTAINABILITY AND PRESERVATION

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than simply “Does this building rate a LEED certification?”

Starting with the environmental responsibility component of sustainable development, how does historic preservation contribute to

that? Let’s begin with the simple area of solid waste disposal. While we all diligently recycle used aluminum cans, let’s take a typical downtown building that’s 25 feet wide, 100, 120, or 140 feet deep. When we tear down this one small building, we have wiped out the environmental benefit from the last 1,344,000

aluminum cans that were recycled. We’ve not only wasted an historic building, we’ve wasted months of diligent recycling by the good people of our community. And that calculation considers only the impact on the landfill, not any of the other sustainable development calculations, such as embodied energy.

Embodied energy is defined as the total expenditure of energy involved in the creation of the building and its constituent materials. When we throw away a historic building, we also throw away the embodied energy incorporated into that building. How significant is embodied energy? In Australia, they’ve calculated that the embodied energy in the existing building stock is equivalent to ten years of the total energy consumption of the entire country. Much of the “green building” movement focuses on the annual energy use of a building. But the energy consumed in the construction of a building is 15 to 30 times the annual energy use.

Razing historic buildings results in a triple hit on scarce resources. First, we are throwing away thousands of dollars of embodied energy. Second, we are replacing it with materials vastly more consumptive of energy in their production. Historic materials of brick, timber, concrete, plaster are far less energy consumptive than plastic, steel, vinyl and aluminum. Third, recurring embodied energy savings increase dramatically as a building life stretches over 50 years.

Historic preservation is the ultimate in recycling.

The EPA has noted that building construction debris constitutes around a third of all waste generated in this country. When you preserve a historic building, you are reducing waste generation. Adaptive reuse is the key: the functional adaptability of historic buildings is one of their great under-recognized attributes.

You cannot have sustainable development without a major role for historic preservation.

ANSWER TO PHOTO QUIZ



Ocean Avenue looking north. In 1935 the building that is now the Lobster Restaurant was visible on the far left and The Georgian Hotel was across the street. The railroad tracks lead to the rail yard where the Civic Center is now located.

Over the years the park has evolved along with the city, with the addition of small localized gardens, plaques and monuments while maintaining its integrity as a Beaux-Arts style landscape design typical of the early 20th Century. Its unique location on top of a bluff high above the Pacific Ocean offers spectacular views all the way up and down the coast.

There are more than 35 notable features, views, works of art and other objects in the park. A few are so significant that they are likely to qualify for individual landmark designation, such as the Camera Obscura located upstairs in the Senior Recreation Facility near Broadway (see the April 2004 issue of the Conservancy Newsletter). Another is the Art Deco/Moderne statue of Saint Monica that is silhouetted against the sea as one looks down Wilshire Boulevard. The WPA commissioned artist Eugene H. Morahan to create that statue in 1935. Other individually significant features include the redwood pergola near Idaho Avenue that is the inspiration of the Santa Monica Conservancy’s own logo, and the Idaho Gates that are believed to be Greene and Greene designed and graced with Batchelder tiles, although there is not definitive confirmation on those associations.

The Conservancy produced a self-guided brochure on Palisades Park several years ago, available upon request. A guided tour of this important landmark place will be offered in 2008. Watch the newsletter for additional information.

LANDMARKS COMMISSION REPORT NEW LANDMARK: PALISADES PARK by Nina Fresco



At its September meeting, the Landmarks Commission had the honor of designating a regional icon as a city landmark: Palisades Park. Eligible for listing on the National Register, Palisades Park is equal to the Santa Monica Pier in significance and is a signature feature of the city. The narrow park that spans 14 blocks of coastal bluff with breathtaking views met all six of our designation criteria.

Palisades Park was established in 1892 as Linda Vista Park by Santa Monica founders John P. Jones, Colonel Robert S. Baker and Arcadia Bandini de Baker, with the condition that it be used forever as a public park. Today it is still a vibrant tourist destination for residents and visitors. Over the years it has also become a repository of commemorative monuments, plaques and memorials that reflect the values and culture of Santa Monica.

The formal, linear design was originally conceived by the Beaux-Arts inspired landscape architect I.G. LeGrande. Eucalyptus and Cypress trees and dirt pathways winding through wild grasses and brush along the bluffs were replaced by LeGrande with a more formal European design that included walkways, planters, pergolas, fountains and a brick wall to separate the park from Ocean Avenue. The plans for the wall were later abandoned. Today, the lampposts, formal rows of trees and locations of the pathways continue to reflect the original longitudinal flow and design of the park.

VOLUNTEER PROFILE: DWIGHT FLOWERS by Judy Parsons



Have you seen Dwight pedaling around your neighborhood lately?

One can certainly understand why Dwight Flowers joined the Santa Monica Conservancy – he wants to help preserve our city’s rich past and promote the city’s powerful personality. As a retired architect and city planner, Dwight has passionately loved his trade. And, the SMC has welcomed Dwight – it is a nice fit.

By the early age of 10 he had already developed an interest in architecture and went on to get his degree from the University of Michigan. Soon, he was in graduate school at MIT after his interest turned to urban design and city planning. “It became apparent that a focus on individual buildings was ignoring the larger context. I became more interested in urban design.”

After completing coursework he took off for the Peace Corps, as the only architect/planner in a group assigned to eastern Venezuela. Upon return two years later, he settled in Baltimore, and was first married. “Our son was one month old when we took off for Stockholm on a Fulbright grant to study new communities there.”

The Flowers family began to crisscross continents: Colombia, South America; Jakarta, Singapore (the city where his daughter was born) and then back to the USA where they settled in Maryland. He later was remarried to Laurie Brenner and worked in Annapolis. “I have always been fascinated by the older cities of Asia and Latin America. I really appreciate the historic character of old neighborhoods. Old buildings in their natural setting are most interesting, and as a carpenter I am impressed with the craftsmanship of details in wood.” Welcome to the SMC!

When it came to retiring five years ago, Dwight and Laurie chose Santa Monica. “One of my neighbors, Doris Sosin introduced me to the conservancy. “I take great pride in the scale and diversity of our city’s neighborhoods, in terms of their architectural styles and landscaping. Through the downtown business tours I have come to appreciate the richness and beauty of our older buildings and their importance in the overall urban context.”

NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE:

SAN VICENTE GARDEN APARTMENTS by Marcello Vavala

The landmark designation of the Teriton Apartments at 130 San Vicente Boulevard has brought a renewed focus to the collection of garden apartments lining San Vicente Boulevard between Ocean Avenue and Seventh Street and the potential for a historic district. This two-block stretch reflects both Santa Monica’s burgeoning development during the post-war era and also the architectural trends that evolved during this period.

Paving the way for this linear development of apartments was the adoption of one of Santa Monica’s very first zoning ordinances. As far back as 1922, this segment of San Vicente was zoned to allow for income producing properties, in addition to single-family dwellings. Vacant lots and only a few scattered residences lined the street at that time, however. It wasn’t until the housing boom following WWII that the neighborhood’s current character began to take shape. Garden apartments proliferated during the post-war era and fulfilled the critical need for affordable housing; large numbers of people who were attracted to the region for defense industry jobs were looking for just such a place to call home.



Garden apartments reflect the city’s mid-Century growth.

By 1960 most of this segment of the boulevard was built up. The resulting streetscape was characterized by uniformly scaled garden apartments set among broad lawns and lush landscaping, representing a microcosm of the evolving architectural trends during the post-war era. Nearly fifty years later, many of these apartments remain unchanged, ranging in style from Regency Moderne to American Colonial Revival to vernacular modern. Some are the work of notable architects including Carl

Maston, William E. Foster, and Stanford Kent who designed three sets of apartments along this stretch, two of which survive.

Kent’s Teriton Apartments are the first to receive landmark designation along this strip, and one of just a handful of landmarks citywide that date from the post-war era. The potential for a Multi-Family Residential Historic District encompassing the San Vicente garden apartments, first documented in 1983, was reaffirmed during a survey of the existing apartments last year. Nationwide, structures from the recent past, generally defined as a moving window of approximately fifty years, are increasingly the subject of research and discussion within the historic preservation community. They shaped the mid-century era of American life and reflect the optimism and tastes of an entire generation. The next time you find yourself in this neighborhood, take a closer look at the various architectural details and the settings for these apartments. With names like The Bermuda and Monica Manor and styles evoking Colonial grandeur to sleek modernism, this neighborhood has a character all its own.



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P.O. Box 653 SANTA MONICA, CA 90406-0653

3 WAYS TO GIVE THE GIFT OF PRESERVATION



1 GIFT CERTIFICATES FOR OUR DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR

Good any Saturday morning during the upcoming year. Includes our attractive and informative Walking Tour booklet, pictured to the right.

\$5.00 for members

\$10.00 for non-members



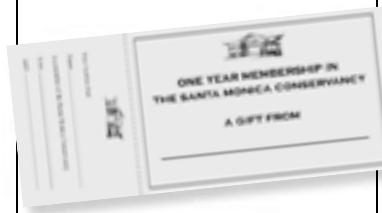
2 SELF-GUIDED WALKING TOUR BOOKLETS

For the more independent or adventurous – or if a Saturday morning docent-guided tour just doesn't work – take a self-guided tour using the Walking Tour booklet, available at any of these convenient locations:

- Hostelling International Travel Store, 1434 2nd Street
- Visitor Center 1920 Main St.
- Visitor Kiosk in Palisades Park

Sorry, not available on line or by mail order.

\$3.00



3 ONE YEAR MEMBERSHIP IN THE SANTA MONICA CONSERVANCY.

Share the Santa Monica Conservancy with someone special by making them a member. Membership includes:

- Discounts for all events, tours and lectures
- Quarterly newsletter
- Email updates and news of interest to the community.

Starting at **\$35.00** (See page 2 for other options)

TO ORDER.

Orders may be placed on our website:
www.smconservancy.org

or by sending a check to:
Santa Monica Conservancy
P.O. Box 653,
Santa Monica, CA 90046.

Certificates with information for using them will be mailed to you in approximately two weeks.

