



The South Beach Tour

The Santa Monica Conservancy invites you to experience **The South Beach Tour: Living History by the Sea on Sunday, October 20, from 11 am - 4 pm.** Discover the eclectic charms of the vintage South Beach neighborhood, one of Ocean Park's best-kept secrets. Step inside select houses for a closer look at how residents are preserving their classic homes and thereby the special character of South Beach.

The South Beach neighborhood contains homes that reflect the stylistic influences of American Foursquare, Craftsman, Dutch Colonial, Italian Revival, Mission Revival and other vernacular interpretations from 1901-1925. South Beach represents the first phase of beachfront development in Ocean Park as far back as the City's founding in 1875 and many of the homes retain their historic roots while blending updates that serve new tastes and changing residential needs.

By the 1960s, much of the area was razed



133 Wadsworth Avenue. Photo: Steve Loeper

by the Redevelopment Agency, and what remains today was saved by residents. More than 80 percent of the structures are still contributors of historic character to the potential

district. However, as older generations move on, new construction erodes the integrity of the neighborhood.

SOUTH BEACH TOUR *continues on page 4*

Conservancy Wins 4th Street Corner Historic District Appeal!

by Ruthann Lehrer and Carol Lemlein



Contributors to the 4th Street Corner Historic District.

On Tuesday evening, July 23, the Santa Monica City Council voted 6-0 to designate the 4th Street Corner Historic District, supporting the Santa Monica Conservancy's position that the 14 contiguous and intact historic residential structures qualify as a historic district under the Santa Monica Landmarks Ordinance.

The buildings represent an important period in the early residential development of Ocean Park following the western extension of what is now Ocean Park Boulevard to Main Street and the beach. Like the neighboring Third Street Neighborhood Historic District, a variety of architectural styles found in Ocean Park are represented in the district. The new district is unusual in having all of its residences recognized as historic, with a high level of architectural value, representing

HISTORIC DISTRICT *continues on page 4*

New Preservation Advocacy Fund, page 5

OUR MISSION

The Santa Monica Conservancy is the leading voice for preserving our historic places. We promote understanding of the cultural, social, economic and environmental benefits of historic preservation through education, assistance and advocacy.

JOIN US

The Santa Monica Conservancy exists because of the involvement and generosity of people like you. Become a member today and strengthen our voice for preserving Santa Monica's architectural and cultural heritage. *Membership information is available on p. 7.*

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THE NEWSLETTER STAFF

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This newsletter is supported in part by a grant from the City of Santa Monica and the Santa Monica Arts Commission.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Members and Friends, when we tell you about our accomplishments, we almost always add "but there is so much more to be done to protect our historic places!" On page 5 of this issue, you will see the announcement of our new Preservation Advocacy Fund, intended to provide much-needed financial resources to address the increasing challenges to Santa Monica's preservation policies and designations.



But there is also another way these mounting preservation challenges need to be addressed. The past few months have provided ample illustrations of how little progress has been made in educating the public about our City's Historic Preservation Program—something that has been a City goal since at least 2002, when Santa Monica's Historic Preservation Element (a part of the General Plan) was published.

This lack of knowledge is displayed as misperceptions of landmark designation and its impact on the owners and neighbors. In the past few months we have heard inaccurate testimony at Landmarks Commission and City Council meetings about negative impacts of historic designation, for instance the forcing of homeowners to make extreme investments to maintain their properties. Admittedly, some of this is hype created by individuals who have other motives for opposing a given designation. However, the underlying message is that the public needs much more education about the benefits of historic preservation and the inaccuracy of rumors about its downsides. This has long been a key part of the Conservancy's mission, and it could not be more important to our community than it is today.

The Historic Preservation Element and many policy statements since give us every reason to expect that the City of Santa Monica will be doing its part to educate the public about these important city policies. The Landmarks Commission strongly prioritized community education and outreach in their October 2017 retreat and again in their requests to the City budget process this spring. A subcommittee of the Commission has developed an educational brochure but they have been told that budget and other constraints will limit its distribution.

This is unacceptable, especially when the Conservancy successfully campaigned for years to make funding for the City's Historic Preservation objectives part of the Community Benefits packages in Development Agreements. As I testified to the Landmarks Commission in 2017:

The Conservancy spent many hours meeting with developers and their representatives as well as testifying in support of this funding at Planning Commission hearings and Council meetings regarding specific projects, without endorsing the projects themselves. As a result, by July 2014, \$145,000 was allocated from projects, with language specifying that "these monies shall be applied for and distributed in accordance with a process, to be established by the Planning Director, whereby those entities that are exclusively devoted to historic preservation may make an application to receive distribution of some or all of the funds."

Two years later, there is still no process for accessing these funds for the benefit of the City's Historic Preservation Program!

What can we do? Keep spreading the word! Encourage your friends and neighbors to come on our tours and join the Conservancy. When you hear a ridiculous statement about the results of designation, challenge it! If you don't have the information you need, ask for it. Send your questions to info@smconservancy.org or directly to me at president@smconservancy.org.

As always, thank you for your support. Every one of us who understands how important it is to protect our heritage can make a difference!

Carol Lemlein

VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Moonie Fishburn

by Robin Tung

Moonie Fishburn joined the first group of Beach House docents in 2009 and has been a dedicated volunteer ever since. “I love telling the story of Marion Davies



and William Randolph Hearst and life here at the Beach House. I have also had the pleasure of meeting some amazing people over the years. You would be surprised how many people are really interested in this story!”

Her love of architectural preservation grew as she discovered the work of the Conservancy through her docent involvement. “I was so impressed with the Conservancy’s work. Santa Monica is bursting with history and I love that they are preserving it.”

Fishburn was born in Bangalore, India, and

raised mostly in Palos Verdes, California, where her parents still live. She studied theater at USC and has worked for many years in business management, though she recently returned to her acting roots. “I stopped acting for 25 plus years to raise my kids and got back into it about four years ago. I’ve done several commercials— some for the international market, and I filmed a pilot last year. I audition quite a bit and that keeps me busy!” She has just finished filming a Lifetime movie called *Christmas Reservations*, which will be out this December.

Farewell, Susan Eve!

by Steve Loeper

When British native Susan Eve moved to Los Angeles after living in some of the most cultured cities in the world, she was immediately fascinated by the region’s eclectic mix of structural styles and wanted to learn more about this form of exterior expression. She began a quest that led her to the Santa Monica Conservancy, where she began volunteering on the Program Committee in 2012.



Now, Eve’s service to the Conservancy has come to an end as she seeks to “rediscover” her homeland, England, where she will join her sister in the lush southwestern countryside.

“It’s been a wonderful experience in many ways,” Eve says of her time with the Conservancy. “I’ve made some good friends who I will cherish forever. I’m excited about entering a new phase of my life, but I will miss my life here – the sunshine, the walks in Palisades Park, my allotment at Ocean View Farm.”

Conservancy Awarded Two-Year Grant

In July, City Council renewed the Santa Monica Conservancy’s Organizational Support Grant for two years, awarding \$13,299 annually. The funds will go toward the Conservancy’s educational programs and tours. Cultural Affairs Administrator Nathan Birnbaum noted that the grants are given to organizations who demonstrate “efforts to bring first-rate artistic, cultural and heritage programs to the people of Santa Monica.”

Marion Davies’ Film Screened

by Libby Pachares

On August 24, the Santa Monica Conservancy Docent Council screened *Peg O’ My Heart*, a 1933 talkie starring Marion Davies, at Santa Monica’s Main Library. In the film, Davies plays a young woman who must leave her small fishing village to train as a proper lady in an English mansion before inheriting her late grandfather’s estate.

The docents enjoyed seeing Davies, who spoke with a stutter off-camera, deliver an outstanding and sentimental performance, complete with a masterful Irish brogue. Our Beach House docents regularly share the stories of Davies and her companion William



Photo: IMDB

Randolph Hearst at the site of their former Santa Monica beachfront estate, the Annenberg Community Beach House.

Join the Docent Corps!

The Conservancy is currently accepting applications for new docents at the Shotgun House and Annenberg Community Beach House. For more information, visit the “Get Involved” page of our website at www.smconservancy.org or email us at volunteer@smconservancy.org.

The next Shotgun House docent training will take place over three Saturdays this fall: October 12, October 26 and November 2. Apply by September 27 to take part in the training and start volunteering!



Our 2018 Shotgun House Docents. Photo: Catherine Conkle

In Memory of Bill Androlia

We are saddened by the passing of Bill Androlia, a docent who worked both at the Annenberg Beach House and at our Preservation Resource Center. He



and his wife Linda were a wonderful docent team who began volunteering at the Beach House and Resource Center in 2017. Androlia was a patent attorney in his own law firm specializing in international and technical patents, and he also partnered with his wife in her travel agency. We appreciate his service and will miss his kind and welcoming presence in our programs.

Summer Speaker Series Shines Again

The Conservancy's second Summer Speaker Series was a spectacular hit with all three Sunday evening lectures selling out early. More than 200 guests attended the series at Santa Monica's oldest building, the 1875 landmark Rapp Saloon.

Local historian and former Landmarks Commissioner Nina Fresco offered a look into amusement and entertainment in early Santa Monica, author Stephen Gee introduced the life and iconic work of architect John Parkinson, and USC's historian and Exile Studies Librarian Michaela Ullman illustrated the fascinating history of exiled artists near Santa Monica Bay.

The series was brought to life by the Program Committee: Co-chairs Libby Motika and Steve Loeper along with Diane Citron, Phillis Dudick, Dwight Flowers, Diane Locklear, Fran Lyness and Libby Pachares. Special thanks to our guest speakers and the Rapp Saloon for hosting the series.

SOUTH BEACH TOUR *continued from page 1*

The self-guided tour will cover approximately four blocks and will conclude with a separately ticketed reception at Horatio West Court, a modernist masterpiece by Irving Gill.

Tickets and additional details available at www.smconservancy.org. Advanced purchase is required. Your support helps us raise awareness about the history and importance of South Beach and the methods and benefits of preservation. Proceeds support the Conservancy's educational programs and events.

Nick Gabaldon Day



Youngsters from the Martin Luther King Jr. Recreation Center and Ross Snyder Park in South Los Angeles took a field trip on June 1 with the Santa Monica Conservancy's *Passport to Success LA 2019: Life at the Beach* program. Back row, left to right: Los Angeles County lifeguard Joshua Williams, historian Alison Rose Jefferson, Ph.D., Eric Griffin (director of the MLK Rec Center) and Hector Espinoza (chaperone for Ross Snyder Park).

Leadership Circle Members Tour New Proper Hotel



Leadership Circle members joined us on June 8 for an exclusive preview of the Santa Monica Professional Building at 710 Wilshire Boulevard as part of the new Proper Hotel. Architect Howard Laks and preservation architect Robert Chattel led the tour of this 1928 commercial building and the challenges of its rehabilitation and adaptive reuse. Photo: Robert Chattel

HISTORIC DISTRICT *continued from page 1*
unique aspects of Ocean Park's history.

In supporting the designation, Council rejected the assertions by staff and the City's consultant that the district was not large enough to qualify as a district, a criterion which is not defined anywhere in the Santa Monica Landmarks Ordinance or in the National Register guidelines. Also rejected were claims that the properties were not distinguishable from any other small grouping of historic properties in Ocean Park. More information on the district is outlined on our website at www.smconservancy.org.

The Conservancy thanks the neighborhood organizations and all those who helped us petition City Council through email and in person to support the 4th Street Corner Historic District!



Photo: Robert Chattel

Santa Monica Airport's Compass Rose

Aviation has long been a part of Santa Monica's history from Clover Field and Douglas Aircraft to the start of the Women's Air Derby, in which Amelia Earhart and 18 other women raced to Cleveland, Ohio.

At the Santa Monica Airport, a remnant of our aviation history lives on through the historic compass rose, designed in 1939 by Wilma Fritschey, a member of The Ninety-Nines International Organization of Women Pilots. A compass rose is an aviation marking used to display the orientation of the cardinal directions and their intermediate points. The organization's Los Angeles chapter has launched a campaign to preserve, landmark and restore the compass rose as it faces a new threat with plans to change the airport into a public park.

The Nine-Nines was established in 1929 by 99 female pilots, including luminaries such as Amelia Earhart, its first president, and Pancho Barnes, founder of the first movie stunt pilots' union. To learn more about the Compass Rose Project, visit www.la99s.org.

4th of July at the Shotgun House



Linda Greenberg and her grandkids enjoy a puzzle at the Shotgun House after the parade. Photo: Catherine Conkle

Support Our New Preservation Advocacy Fund

We've created a new Preservation Advocacy Fund to strengthen our ability to protect and defend our historic places against those who want to oppose or reverse designations, as happened recently with the former Home Savings building at 26th Street and Wilshire Boulevard (learn more at www.smconservancy.org). We need your support now more than ever!

Our historic places are under siege due to intense development pressures, a voracious real estate market and new legal challenges. The demands of defending our City's historic resources have increased dramatically. When

important buildings are threatened, we need to have the means to pay for appeals and hire legal counsel and consultants if needed to help our dedicated and knowledgeable volunteers respond quickly and effectively.

Recently, we won a historic district appeal to designate the Fourth Street Corner Historic District, making it the fifth historic district in our city (see page 1).

Make a special contribution today at smc.givecloud.co/PAFund or mail a check to the Santa Monica Conservancy at P.O. Box 653, Santa Monica, CA 90406-0653.



Preparations being made for removal of the mosaic mural on June 17.

The Story of Rustic Canyon

by Libby Motika

The Uplifters Ranch clubhouse was founded by a group of Los Angeles' social elite who sought respite from city life where they could enjoy male camaraderie, entertainments, sports and all sorts of hijinks. Membership included Walt Disney, Leo Carrillo, Clark Gable and Will Rogers.

The Uplifters, named for their lofty goal to "uplift art," and no doubt hoist a cocktail, settled on a 40-acre share of the former Julia B. Edmund property in Rustic Canyon in 1921. The Edmund ranch house on the canyon rim served as the clubhouse until it burned down in December 1922.

William J. Dodd designed its replacement, which was in the Spanish Colonial Revival style and completed in September 1923. Many members built cabins nearby, a few of which still remain.

The Club was known for musical and dramatic presentations and riotous revelry. Meals were served all week in the clubhouse dining room and the days were occupied with hiking, hunting, family picnics, tennis, horse-



The Uplifters social club enjoying a picnic. Photo: Los Angeles Public Library

back excursions, and singing and dancing. Evenings often ended with barbecue feasts outdoors. Alcohol was offered secretly in the clubhouse, which acted as a speakeasy throughout Prohibition (1920-1933).

After a full-fledged polo facility with stables and stands was installed in 1927, original co-founder Harry Haldeman and several friends resigned, protesting the consequent increased debt burden.

However, the social club continued to draw members. A professional manager was hired to operate the clubhouse and grounds for profit. And with Prohibition over, liquor could be served openly in the polo lounge. Newcomers associated with Hollywood built bigger houses near the clubhouse and eventually, female members were admitted.

Rising land values affected the secluded Uplifters Ranch. In 1945, the polo field was subdivided and the lower area, including the clubhouse, was sold two years later. In 1953, the Santa Monica Canyon Civic Association purchased the 8-acre site with the help of a generous gift from Maybell Machris. The clubhouse, pool and tennis courts were donated to the LA Department of Recreation and Parks. Funds were also raised to help the city buy one of the ranch's eucalyptus groves.

While recreation at the park may lack the boozy jollity of the early days, many of the activities enjoyed by the Uplifters Club members are still available to guests today. Almost a century old now, Rustic Canyon Recreation Center continues on as a wonderful example of adaptive reuse.

National Register of Historic Places: Bay Street Beach

Adapted from *Sea of Clouds* press release

Santa Monica's Bay Street Beach Historic District was recently added to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The 53-acre district, entirely on public trust lands, recognizes this important 100-plus-year-old intact African American seaside cultural landscape. In the Jim Crow era, the beach was self-selected by African Americans as a place of recreation and leisure where its visitors felt relatively safe from harassment.

In addition to coastal planning protections secured through the listing, the Historic District maintains existing access, public



Verna and Sidney at Santa Monica's Bay Street Beach, 1931. Photo: Los Angeles Public Library

safety and visitor amenities, nearby private property rights, underlying public ownership and the area's current uses.

The NRHP is the nation's official list of

properties worthy of preservation and remembrance. It recognizes more than 93,000 properties and 1.4 million individual resources. Bay Street Beach Historic District increases the number of listings associated with communities of color, which is at this time less than five percent of the total sites represented on the list.

Michael Blum, Executive Director of *Sea of Clouds*, and historian Alison Rose Jefferson, Ph.D., developed the listing nomination, which the Conservancy supported. A dedication ceremony celebrating the listing will be scheduled for Summer 2020.

Landmarks Commission Report

by Ruthann Lehrer and Carol Lemlein,
Advocacy Co-Chairs

The fire station at 1447 7th Street was designated as a Structure of Merit in March, citing it as a rare example of the City's civic improvements in the first years after World War II, when funding became available and the City dedicated itself to constructing new facilities to service the growing population.

The Commission reluctantly took no action on the demolition permit for 1633 Ocean Front Walk (Hotdog on a Stick), citing a previous decision to allow its demolition in 2015. The Commission found that it was the business that was historically significant rather than the building, and therefore had no power to designate the building's use.

In April, the architect for 909-911 Montana Avenue, a landmark residential courtyard with a small commercial building, requested a Certificate of Appropriateness for a one-story addition to the commercial building, as well as modifications to the residential portion of the property. Residents objected most strongly to the reduction in size and usability of the courtyard. The Commission recommended reducing or eliminating expansion of the retail space to optimize space remaining in the courtyard.

A Certificate of Appropriateness for 2433 28th Street (Suntech Townhomes) for new

landscape and irrigation plans was approved on consent.

A Certificate of Appropriateness for removal of non-original features and exterior paint, and restoring the existing brick to its natural color for the 2663-2671 Main Street (the Mendota Block) was approved on consent in May.

At a public hearing resulting from the owner's submission for a demolition permit, the Commission rejected designation of 516 Colorado (the former Angel's Attic) as a Structure of Merit. The Commission had previously rejected the owner's nomination of the building as a landmark due to the significant alterations made in the decades since the structure was moved from Wilshire Boulevard.

Also in May, Council approved the owner's appeal of the Commission's designation of the Sycamore Tree at 1122 California Avenue, with the stipulation that the owner would negotiate a deed restriction protecting the tree for two years. Council instructed staff to explore options to protect trees on private property.

In August, City Council upheld the Landmark Commission designation of the John Parkinson residence at 808 Woodacres Road by a vote of 6-0 with one member absent. The property, originally nominated by the Santa Monica Conservancy, was designated June 10 by a unanimous vote of the Landmarks Commission after two lengthy public hearings.

Lost Landmarks: Part 2

by Sherrill Kushner

In our June Newsletter we noted the loss of a 19th century California Live Oak tree on 10th Street and two commercial buildings. In this issue, we explore two additional lost landmarks of Santa Monica.

Donald Parkinson Residence

The Donald B. Parkinson House at 1605 San Vicente Boulevard was built in 1922 and designated in 1984. The home was built in the Spanish Colonial Revival architectural style by architect/owner Donald B. Parkinson (1895-1945), the son of architect John Parkinson. Together, they designed such iconic buildings as the Los Angeles Coliseum, Union Station and the Art Deco Bullocks Wilshire building.

In 1985, the owner demolished it to build a larger and more modern house after the City

had exhausted its legal remedies to save it.

Shingle House

The Shingle Style House at 1127 Sixth Street, built in 1905, was unanimously designated as a landmark by the Landmarks Commission in 1996. The two-story, wood frame building was designed to reflect the elements of the American Shingle style, a tradition which originated in seaside communities in the northeastern United States. However, approximately a year later, City Council overturned the designation on appeal by the owners. On a recommendation by City staff, Council allowed demolition on the grounds that the structure was beyond repair after the Northridge earthquake and that there had been procedural errors in the processing of the landmark application.

The Conservancy is committed to advocating for and protecting our current and future landmarks.

2019 FALL PRESERVATION EVENTS

PLAY

"Save the Pier!"

**SUNDAY & MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 8 & 9
7:30 - 8:30 PM**

Come see how a grassroots movement rose up to defeat the Santa Monica City Council's plan to tear down the pier. This free annual play will take place at the west end of the Santa Monica Pier.

Save the Pier

www.facebook.com/pg/SavetheSMPier

TOUR

Hollywood Forever Cemetery
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13

9:00 - 11:00 AM

Visit the gravesites of early Hollywood stars, movie moguls and pioneers with historians and living history interludes.

Art Deco Society, Los Angeles

(310) 659-3326

www.adsla.org

TOURS

Craftsman Weekend

FRIDAY-SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1-3

Enjoy bus and walking tours and receptions in Pasadena's historic places during the largest, most comprehensive celebration of the Craftsman Movement in the Western United States featuring Pasadena's best bungalows.

Pasadena Heritage

(626) 441-6333

www.pasadenaheritage.org

CELEBRATION

Day of the Dead,
Woodlawn Cemetery

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3

11:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Celebrate the cycle of life and remembrance of ancestors with live music, dance, storytelling, workshops, altars, craft, vendors and food trucks.

City of Santa Monica

(310) 458 8717

www.smgov.net/Departments/Cemetery

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS!

Helen Corrigan

Tascha Folsos and Steve, Katha and

Jonah Nielson

Katie Hill and Will Overes

Sue McHugh

Susan Orenstein

Karen Safer

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 Matching gifts can double or triple the value of your membership donation. Please request the relevant forms from your employer and send them to us.

Thank you!

Please mail this form with your payment to:
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Photo: Steve Loeper

THE SOUTH BEACH TOUR SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20 11 AM - 4 PM

Discover the eclectic charms of the vintage South Beach neighborhood, one of Ocean Park's best-kept secrets.

Details and tickets at www.smconservancy.org.

SUPPORT OUR PRESERVATION ADVOCACY FUND

Strengthen our defenses to defend and protect Santa Monica's historic places.

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