

# West Adams Matters

## 2013 Holiday Tour: "A Jolly Holiday in Historic Oxford Square" Saturday, December 7 and Sunday, December 8

Holiday Greetings to all! It's time to celebrate the Holiday Season with WAHA's 27th Annual Holiday Historic Homes Tour and Progressive Dinner -- a wonderful opportunity to wine and dine in featured homes of the past. This year, in the spirit of giving, we're assisting a pocket neighborhood on WAHA's northern border launch their interest in preserving their architectural and cultural heritage. What better way to bring neighbors together to launch their new organization than to host a tour?



"About two years ago we were approached by a few residents of Oxford Square, hoping that their WAHA neighbors would be willing to assist them in developing their nascent neighborhood organization," explained WAHA President John Patterson. "When Lore Hilburg and I attended that first meeting, we were well impressed with the beauty of the homes in that neighborhood, the quality of restoration, and the pride of ownership exhibited. We determined back then to figure out the best way to assist them in launching their new organization and what better way to bring their neighbors together than to host a tour, and for them to participate in helping to organize it."

*(continued on page 5)*

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## CREATING OUR FUTURE BY PRESERVING OUR PAST 30 Milestones of WAHA's First 30 Years

*by Laura Meyers*

WAHA is celebrating its 30th Anniversary of historic preservation advocacy and community engagement. All in all, it's been a good three decades.

WAHA members have restored hundreds and hundreds of homes.

And we have worked together to focus attention on the importance of historic preservation, restoration, and cultural heritage in West Adams, and throughout Los Angeles.

WAHA was founded in 1983. Bob Bortfeld had turned off the Santa Monica Freeway a year or two earlier, found a home, and stayed. He and a small core of dedicated urban pioneers started West Adams Heritage Association. We said our mission was:

"to support preservation of the West Adams community's architectural heritage and beautification activities, and to educate Los Angeles's citizens and others about cultural heritage and restoration techniques."

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## Bishop Mansion Update: City Council Denies WAHA Appeal; WAHA Retains Counsel

*by Jean Frost, Vice-President, Historic Preservation*

The Los Angeles City Council on September 17 denied WAHA's appeal of the Categorical Exemption (CE) for the Roger Williams Baptist Church/Bishop Residence project. By relying on a categorical exemption, WAHA believes the City improperly avoided the careful analysis of impacts to this historic resource that is required by the California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"). WAHA seeks an adequate and legally sufficient level of environmental review. To permit a CE in this case would create a dangerous precedent for review of significant changes to this and other historic properties.



As WAHA has exhausted all administrative appeals to the South Area Planning Commission and then to City Council, the matter is now in the hands of our attorney, Amy Minter of Chatten-Brown & Carstens LLP, to prepare a petition to the Court for judicial review. As President John

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**Bob Bortfeld Award Presented to Jean Cade -- Story on page 2**

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## Newsletter Staff

**Laura Meyers**, Editor and Layout,  
ph: 323-737-6146, Lauramink@aol.com

**Hilary Lentini**, Art Director,  
ph: 323-766-8090, hilary@lentinidesign.com

**Georgia Toliver**, WAHA Communications Chair

## Welcome New WAHA Members:

Antoinette Brooks-Floyd  
Brenda & Robert Cooke  
Sandra Goodson  
Ed Licht & Paula Carbone  
Andrea Mauk & Shirley Mauk  
Flora Pierce  
Nancy Ann Rhinehart  
Ian Sinnott & Robin Purcell  
Dean & Charlane Smith  
Jennifer & Dave Still  
Nan Williams  
Ned Wilson & Carrie Yutzy

## Newsletter Committee Forming

Here's another way to volunteer for WAHA. If you are interested in contributing news, photos, or even ideas to the *WAHA Matters* newsletter, please join us on **Monday, November 4** at 7:00 p.m.

Georgia Toliver's home  
1915 Virginia Road (Wellington Square)  
323-733-4964

## Bob Bortfeld Award Presented to Jean Cade

Leadership comes in many forms and the Bob Bortfeld Award recognizes this fact. A long time resident of the West Adams Community who has been a leader in so many ways is Jean Cade.

Having moved into Lafayette Square in 1974, Jean raised her family here and restored two houses in the Square, one of them her current home, known to so many of us as the Paul Revere William's redesign on Wellington Road where Robert Kennedy spent his last night. Jean has graciously opened this beautiful home and spacious grounds to WAHA tours multiple times. A host to so many WAHA and Lafayette Square parties that she probably can't even remember how many! In addition, Jean has opened her home for numerous community and WAHA meetings as well.

Jean consistently captains a house on WAHA's Holiday Home Tour where her management and organizational skills, along with her gleeful smile and bursts of laughter create a perfectly efficient and congenial environment.

Jean has been active in her neighborhood of Lafayette Square serving on the HOA Board for many years and often hosting meetings and cooking for them as well. For years she has headed up the Annual Lafayette Square Block Party and of course she is an integral component in the Square's community planning process and other activities.

As a member of the Board of Directors of WAHA for many years, Jean has helped shape the policies of the organization and continues this service now as treasurer.

When facing issues where people of diverse ideas may not agree, Jean has the unique ability to shed light on their common concerns and help to form a consensus for compromise. She is an example of someone who gets things done regardless of who and what is involved. She is a prominent leader in the community and an ambassador with a strong and cheerful leadership style.

For all of these reasons, and so many more, [we nominated] Jean Cade for the 1913 Bob Bortfeld Award. *Respectfully submitted, Rory Cunningham and Lisa Schoening.* ●



*WAHA President John Patterson presents the Bortfeld Award to Jean Cade at Doheny Mansion during WAHA's 30th Anniversary party.*



## *President's Message* by John Patterson

As we begin the year-long celebration of WAHA's 30th Anniversary, we are especially proud to announce the launch of our newly-updated WAHA website! Please be sure to visit [www.WestAdamsHeritage.org](http://www.WestAdamsHeritage.org), and take a look. Our members and guests should find it not only visibly attractive, but much easier to navigate and explore.

And, perhaps of even greater significance to so many of our readers, we're putting the final touches on the 30th Anniversary printing of our updated Membership Directory!! We know that you've all been clamoring to be able to put aside your well-worn and very dog-eared copies, so a fresh new version will be available quite soon!!

Our big celebration on Saturday, October 19 at the Doheny Mansion on Chester Place was a wonderful success. We enjoyed a sumptuous array of delicious hors d'oeuvres accompanied, of course, by wine and champagne, and musical entertainment performed on the Doheny's beautiful Steinway grand piano. It all took place in one of the most unique rooms in all of Historic West Adams, under the Tiffany stained-glass dome of Carrie Estelle Doheny's famed Pompeian Room. Thank you, Mount St. Mary's College and its president, Dr. Ann McElaney-Johnson, for opening your doors to us.

I also want to express my appreciation to the local West Adams artists who gave so generously to the silent auction. WAHA raised over a thousand dollars from the auction alone with contributions from:

Shelly Adler  
Rory Cunningham  
Art Curtis  
Denice Lewis  
Jett Loe  
David Pacheco  
Georgia Toliver

In addition, I want to thank the restaurant BacaroLA for its generous support of this event by providing at its cost the wine and champagne.

And, thank each and every one of you very much for your support now, and during all the years we have worked together to bring WAHA to its 30th year.

*John Patterson may be reached by e-mail at [President@WestAdamsHeritage.org](mailto:President@WestAdamsHeritage.org)*

## **WAHA's 30th Anniversary Celebration, at the Doheny Mansion**

*WAHA kicked off its year of 30th Anniversary celebrations with a soiree at the Doheny Mansion on Saturday evening, October 19. Many toasts were offered to members, present and departed, who helped grow this incredible organization from its early beginnings, in 1983, to the lauded preservation organization it is today.*

*WAHA President John Patterson reflected on thirty years of change in the Historic West Adams District, and the impact West Adams Heritage Association itself has had on our community. Here we share his words with you:*

Welcome to all of you! This incredible turn-out speaks volumes about how we all feel about our neighborhood organization. Thank you for coming to celebrate WAHA's 30th Anniversary.

I would first and foremost like to thank Mount Saint Mary's for their generosity in opening the doors to this magnificent West Adams landmark. It is my distinct pleasure to introduce the President of Mount Saint Mary's College, Dr. Ann McElaney-Johnson. Thank you, Madame President!

This evening's celebration is truly a milestone for our organization and Historic West Adams. This neighborhood began its life at the dawn of the last century, when Angelenos began moving away from Bunker Hill into the wilds of West Adams. These pioneers were essentially West Adams 1.0.

Fast forward several decades, and the 10 Freeway cuts through our neighborhood, cleaving it in two. The grand manses and beautiful homes fall on hard times and into disrepair. Enter the likes of Bob Bortfeld and many other original founders of WAHA, as they move into the area and begin to reclaim the former glory of West Adams. WAHA 2.0 is born.

Today, WAHA moves into its thirties, and we begin WAHA 3.0.

We have done battle with many who have sought to tear down or otherwise defile our architectural treasures. From nominating buildings for Historic Cultural Monument status, to going head-to-head with developers who want to drastically alter our landscape, WAHA has become a powerful preservationist organization to be reckoned with.

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*Photos of the 30th Anniversary Celebration by Natalie Neith*





# Preservation Matters

## Bishop Mansion Update: WAHA Retains Counsel

*continued from page 1*

Patterson expressed: "it is imperative that we confront the blatant disregard of the laws that provide us some of the most basic protections of our preservation advocacy efforts."

At the WAHA General Membership meeting in April, WAHA's membership voted to pursue all legal means to assure proper CEQA clearance for this project. On September 10, by unanimous vote, the Board voted to retain counsel, aware that the issues in this case may affect not only this historic site but also the manner in which changes to historic properties are reviewed in the future.

CEQA sets a low threshold for not permitting a CE, namely that it should not be used where there is a reasonable possibility of the activity having a significant effect. We believe that the appeal by WAHA has met that bar and, combined with numerous expert comments, WAHA has made a more than reasonable argument that the current plans will have a significant effect on this historic resource.

WAHA has stated repeatedly, and not just relative to this individual case, that we are concerned about the Planning Department's new internal guidelines (expressed openly but never published, never adopted by City Council) that attempt to minimize environmental evaluations by declaring nearly every project filed today as "categorically exempt." Planning staff has explained that it is new policy and procedure to exempt most projects with "only one" entitlement, and that it is not within their scope to require applicants to actually reveal all their plans and to apply for all their entitlements at the same time. The developer withdrew their February 19 second entitlement request for a lot line adjustment to meet this "one entitlement" criteria. This does not comport with our understanding of what CEQA requires.

This project involves multiple historic structures which apparently are being redeveloped over time; changes that are not compliant with Secretary of Interior Standards, according to numerous qualified historians; a significant change of use that may permanently change the historic nature of at least one of the structures on the property, that is, the Bishop Mansion; the complete gutting and removal of all (or vast majority) of the character-defining interior features in the publicly-accessible portions of a National Register Eligible historic resource, an action specifically not allowed as a Class 31 categorical exemption under CEQA; and segmentation of the development of this site.

This proposed conversion of two of five major structures that sit on and straddle over seven legal lots in a single ownership (Stuho, the Applicant) and literally touch each other, is only a part of the eventual total project, a project that has already been partially described by the developer as "returning the Roger Williams Baptist Church back to the church congregation" in separate ownership, but without any parking. Not described, is the end use of the Gymnasium and Social Hall, another very large building attached to all of the other structures.

The applicant has segmented the project. This segmentation of a portion of a project is specifically prohibited by CEQA; the whole of the project must be considered. And the whole of the resource is the entire Roger Williams Baptist Church/Bishop Residence compound. What all these questions and issues together should have meant to the decision maker, the Los Angeles City Council, is that this project is not legally exempt from CEQA review. Said review and evaluation would answer questions and help define the project (or phases of the project) and enable the City to make legally defensible and fact based decisions.

We are appreciative that Councilmember Parks staff allowed that comment be taken at the City Council meeting on the WAHA appeal. Jim Childs, Laura Meyers and I spoke in favor of WAHA's appeal. Rob Glushon, Stuho's attorney, spoke against the appeal. WAHA lost at Council and the City Council permitted the use of a categorical exemption to stand as the level of environmental review.

It has been a long and difficult path for WAHA since January 22, 2013, when member David Raposa happened to drive by the Bishop Mansion and found that much of the interior had been gutted and that many exterior changes were being made to original windows without any permits. Subsequent to that action, Building and Safety issued stop work orders and the developer began the permit process.

WAHA's appeal to the South Area Planning Commissions incentivized the developer to make some positive changes to the original project and we applaud that action. But WAHA has made no secret of its opposition to the use of a categorical exemption given the complex facts of this case. WAHA's goal is not to stop a project on this site but to see that, through analysis and not exempting this project from CEQA, an environmentally superior project is achieved. ●



## Annual Holiday Tour Plans Underway — Helping Hands Are Needed for December 7-8 Event!

WAHA will ring in the holiday season with **A Jolly Holiday in Oxford Square**, at the 27th Annual Holiday Historic Homes Tour and Progressive Dinner, on Saturday, December 7, and Sunday, December 8. We'll make merry amid bright lights and bedecked homes, toasting the season with champagne and an enticing holiday feast.

WAHA has been dressing up and opening our holiday doors to visitors for a quarter century. Since the Holiday Tour's inception a quarter century ago, we have created, cooked up, and dished out not only 26 main courses, but also at least 50 different appetizers, 25-plus desserts, a score of delicious salads, and countless variations (from curried to gingered) of pumpkin and other pureed soups -- served up each year to some 600 visitors and volunteers.

As always, many, many, many volunteers are needed for this year's Holiday Tour. All the houses and kitchens need to be staffed on the nights of the Tour. And we rely on Tour Shepherds to escort our tour guests from house to house. But in addition there are lots of volunteers who assist behind the scenes in other roles, and on other days. Can you help with any of these tasks:

- Prep Cook – cook or bake in your own home the week before the Tour
- Volunteer Dinners - pick up and deliver volunteer dinners on Saturday 12/7 and Sunday 12/8, tentatively from 4 to 6 p.m. both days
- WAHA Holiday Party – decorate, set-up and otherwise assist with this party (for our members and wonderful volunteers) on the weekend following the tour
- Crafty types – we need your creative skills (and possibly your glue guns) to make tourgoer badges and ornaments
- Shopping - Trader Joe's, 99 Cent Store, Smart & Final, Von's, the Flower Mart — they'll all get a WAHA visit or two
- Holiday decorating – some of our tour properties can use a helping hand hanging ornaments, garland and other seasonal "attire" during the week before the Tour
- Street decorating - install signs at Tour houses on Saturday 12/7 by 1 p.m.

If you are available any of these times, please raise your hand and volunteer. Contact us at [volunteer@westadamsheritage.org](mailto:volunteer@westadamsheritage.org). ●



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Our Thanks to the Smyrna SDA Church  
for the use of their parking lot

**JOIN US EVERY  
SUNDAY 9 AM TO 1 PM**

### 2013 Holiday Tour *continued from page 1*

Oxford Square was established more than a century ago, advertised as a "refined and aristocratic" area with its wide boulevards and parkways lined with palm trees and deep lots. The Pico electric line flanked the neighborhood's southern border and by 1909 home construction was underway. Oxford Square originally was bounded by Wilshire Boulevard on the north and Pico on the south, lying just west of Crenshaw, but when Olympic Boulevard was widened into a major thoroughfare, the two neighborhoods split into "Windsor Village" on the north (which is already an HPOZ), with its southern neighborhood retaining the "Oxford Square" name.

For this year's Holiday Tour, we are showcasing homes exhibiting pride of ownership and quality restoration. As always, WAHA's holiday tour event features a sumptuous progressive dinner, with each course served in one of the featured properties. We also present a walking tour on Sunday afternoon -- without the food.

The tour will raise funds for WAHA, which since its founding in 1983 has used revenues from a variety of tours to support preservation of the community's architectural and cultural heritage.

Tickets are available online at WAHA's website, [www.WestAdamsHeritage.org](http://www.WestAdamsHeritage.org). Prices for the Progressive Dinner Tour: \$65 for WAHA members (limit two tickets at this price, please); \$75 for non-members until November 15th. (After November 15th - \$85 per person.)

Please contact [tours@westadamsheritage.org](mailto:tours@westadamsheritage.org) to inquire about group tours; WAHA needs to know about your interest in booking a group tour as soon as possible.

On Sunday, from Noon until 3 p.m., WAHA will also host a self-guided Walking Tour of Oxford Square's holiday tour houses – minus the food. The cost is \$30, with tickets also available online, or at the "door" (the check-in location TBA.) Doors will CLOSE by 3 p.m., please plan accordingly. ●

## 30 Years, 30 Milestones

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Since WAHA was established, some 104 new Historic Cultural Monuments have been designated in our area (the Historic West Adams District currently has 138 designated Historic Cultural Monuments, with another dozen pending), and thousands more homes and buildings have been protected in historic districts. We've won many honors and awards, including the Governor's Historic Preservation Award.

In 1983, Carol Harris, WAHA's first president, said: "I thought I was buying a home. But really I was buying a whole community."

Together from then until now, we have worked together to not only rebuild that community, but we have also recreated the idea that... West Adams is the PLACE for Dreams.

As part of our look back and look forward this anniversary year, we are publishing lists of "Thirties" – and in this issue, we look at 30 of WAHA's Milestones.

**1. Historic Homes Tours:** WAHA began presenting historic architecture and home tours right from the start, which started focusing attention on West Adams as a place with historic homes to save. *The Los Angeles Times* wrote about our events, and our community.

**2. Fundraising:** our first two Historic Homes Tours raised monies for AIDS Project LA, and funds to restore and replace historic windows on the landmark Washington Irving Library. (It's since been abandoned by the City, and sits boarded up on Arlington, awaiting a preservation advocate – YOU? – to save it.)

**3. Tom Sawyer Days:** in the early years, WAHA members cleaned up trash-filled lots, painted out graffiti, and supported local social services organizations, during a period when the Historic West Adams District was even more underserved by City services than it is today.



**4. Bronson Avenue** was threatened by a proposed LAUSD expansion of Mount Vernon Junior High (now Johnnie Cochran Middle School) – but this beautiful street of single-family homes was saved from those expansion plans through our members' efforts and WAHA's support.

**5. Don't Mess with Menlo!** The west side of Menlo south of Adams was saved from becoming a huge CRA-financed shopping center, when WAHA members turned out in large numbers at meetings to protest. Instead, it became a National Register District. WAHA and its members brought the public out in droves to see it at that year's tour.



**6. Good Neighbor Awards:** Over the years, WAHA has recognized both businesses and individuals who do good in our community. For a time we awarded official "Good Neighbor Awards." Recipients included Anne-Merelie Murrell, who has restored many buildings in the University Park area and who is the owner of the Giroux Glass Co.

**7. Designating Landmarks:** In WAHA's early years, there was very little sympathy at City Hall for making our buildings landmarks. But in early 1989, we were able to designate the Walker/Barker Mansion (HCM No. 419) on Adams Boulevard, the first of many successful nominations that have followed over the years. In August, 1989, a bulldozer was literally parked in front of the Wells-Halliday Residence (HCM No. 458) on Adams Boulevard. We did an emergency nomination and also helped find a buyer—the AIDS Hospice Foundation, starting a precedent

allowing sensitive adaptive reuse of some of our mansions. Usually reluctant to designate its historic properties, the Los Angeles Catholic Archdiocese worked with WAHA to nominate the Polish Parish/Lycurgus Lindsay Mansion (HCM No. 496).

**8. Demonstration Days:** Back when WAHA members were all Do-It-Yourselfers, WAHA organized many Demonstration Days to show members and neighbors how to do all kinds of restoration activities – and, sometimes, to help our neighbors do work on their houses. We focused such things as stripping wood and repairing wood windows.







**9. History Comes Alive:** 23 years ago, Joe Ryan and the Los Angeles Historical Society presented the first Living History Tour at Rosedale Cemetery. Over the years – and spearheaded by many WAHA leaders, including Corinne Pleger, Audrey Arlington, Lyn Gillson,

Cat Slater, Sally Turner, Don Lynch, and Laura Meyers, among so many others – the Living History Tour at what is now Angelus-Rosedale Cemetery has become one of WAHA's most popular events, with its strong focus on cultural heritage and our diverse local history. For this tour each year, WAHA presents actors, in costume and with sets/vignettes at graveside, portraying (to date) more than 100 of the historic personages buried or interred at the cemetery.

**10. Monumental Monuments:** West Adams is indeed now home to scores of designated Historic Cultural Monuments, but we have a few that mark more “monumental milestones” than others. In 1990, the Joseph B. Kane Residence at 2122 Bonsallo (nominated by Jim Childs) became the City's HCM No. 500. In 2011, the Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Building and its murals at 1999 West Adams (nominated by the Los Angeles Conservancy with support from WAHA) became the City's HCM No. 1000. We don't know if we'll get HCM No 1,500 or 2,000! But the Historic West Adams District is edging toward our own milestone: we are about to reach 150 HCMs (we'll tell you more about that next month.)



**11. WAHA convinced the City to downzone** most of our area in the late 1980s. To do that, 50 of our members walked door to door from Figueroa to West Blvd. and Pico to Jefferson, counting utility meters and mailboxes, and checking permits for bootleg units. We successfully convinced the city that our area was best served with single family and duplex zoning.

**12. The Riot of 1992:** Two houses burned down on Manhattan Place, including the Mary Chase Residence, which had been featured on a WAHA tour. West Adams is still recovering more than two decades later from the destruction that occurred. WAHA members Joe Ryan and Corinne Pleger brought banking officials to West Adams, and through their efforts (and the work of others) a fund for economic recovery was established.



**13. Christmas in April:** The spirit of giving is year-round. Working with Christmas in April/South Los Angeles, an organization that after the 1992 riots was fixing up homes for needy low-income, elderly and disabled people, WAHA, with the leadership of Jodi Siegner, Tom McCurnin and Mitzi Mogul, helped spearhead repairs and painting at one of our Jefferson Park neighbors' home. The neighbor was elderly and on a fixed income, and was a deserving recipient of this aid. Christmas in April was a nationwide movement, and in the mid-1990s the Los Angeles chapter rehabilitated more than 75 homes, five schools and seven community centers.

**14. The South Seas House** project also brought the community together during these bad times. By 1994, the community had come together to haul away 110 bags of trash, and we started to bring the house back to life. We planted a garden, brought in water, painted the first floor, brought arroyo stone in to use in the restoration, and raised \$18,000.....

And after 13 long years of hard work, the South Seas House was restored and reopened in 2003.

WAHA and the neighbors garnered two preservation awards (from the California Preservation Foundation

and from the Los Angeles Conservancy) for the community effort to save the house. (Pictured above: Before and After.)



**15. Historic Districts, part one:** We eventually realized that we needed to save hundreds or thousands of our character homes. We started nominating entire neighborhoods to the National Register, because we had a more receptive audience at the State Office of Historic Preservation (SHPO). Today we have eight National Register Districts.

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## 30 Years, 30 Milestones

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**16. WAHA Award Season:** WAHA honors two of our important early members with awards in their names: the Martin Eli Weil Award for Preservation, and the Bob Bortfeld Award for Outstanding Community Service.

One of the founders of West Adams Heritage Association was Bob Bortfeld, who passed away in 1987. WAHA soon afterward established an award for outstanding service to West Adams to honor his vision, inspiration and dedication to the West Adams community. The Bortfeld Award is presented annually to a person who has given special service to West Adams over a period of time, in both deeds and spirit, with unflinching love for old houses. (Our most recent recipient, earlier this month, is Jean Cade; see story on page 2). Martin Eli Weil was a noted preservation architect who not only worked on major projects throughout Los Angeles but also worked tirelessly for the preservation cause in West Adams, his home since the early 1980s. In recognition of his preservation efforts, the organization



*Bob Bortfeld*



*Martin Eli Weil*

created the Martin Eli Weil Preservation Award and named him the first recipient in 2006. The award recognizes his legacy and recognizes an individual who has by their endurance and activism furthered the cause of historic preservation in WAHA's neighborhoods. It is the highest award WAHA presents for

preservation advocacy.

**17. Historic Districts, part two:** When the atmosphere changed at L.A.'s City Hall, WAHA also succeeded in getting many of our neighborhoods designated as HPOZs. Today we have nine HPOZs plus one Specific Plan with historic preservation at its core.

**18. Tree Plantings:** in 1998, 77 people, including local residents, WAHA members, TreePeople staff and other volunteers gathered on Westmoreland Boulevard to plant 22 magnolia trees in the parkways. Eileen Ehmann and Steve Wallis organized this event, and other WAHA members have over the years organized other tree-plantings, including 100 trees on Washington Boulevard (thank you, Andrea Dunlop and UNNC), 5th Avenue just south of Washington, Western Heights, Wellington Square, and 4th Avenue. Much earlier, in 1991, Mitzi Mogul, Rory Cunningham, David Saffer and their Bungalow neighbors organized the first tree-planting in Jefferson Park.

**19. Richardson Family Park:** In 1999, WAHA joined with other community stakeholders to raise funds and create a pocket park at Budlong and 27th Street. WAHA continued to support the Park over the years.



**20. Adopt-A-School:** WAHA's Adopt-A-School Program awarded certificates to 500 graduating students and financially supported year-end special events for students. WAHA also prepared instructional videos about our architecture and history for local schools, and awarded several college scholarships, and over the years hosted learning events for school children at our historic homes.

**21. Freeway Signs:** Thanks to the efforts of Norma Reynolds, Historic West Adams signage was installed throughout West Adams on the 10 Freeway and at each neighborhood exit from that thoroughfare in 2002.



**22. Preservation Forum:** Ever wonder what other preservation organizations are doing while we go about our West Adams business? How does Hollywood Heritage handle threatened tear downs of historic buildings? How does the Highland Park Heritage Trust raise money? What's the history of similar groups in Long Beach? What successes have they had in Altadena? Do they even have graffiti in Orange? What challenges do they face in Monrovia? WAHA sponsored a Preservation Forum, organized by Jennifer Charnofsky, in 2003 (a forerunner, somewhat, of the much larger Los Angeles Heritage Alliance that sponsors the annual Heritage Day today – WAHA, of course, was a founding member.)

**23. Moving Houses:** WAHA and its members have played an important role in saving many houses over the years by moving them, including three on Menlo (given new life as senior housing), the Forthmann House (pictured when it was on its way, resting for a day; it is now USC's Community House), and a beautiful home that was moved from school site at Washington and Vermont to St. Andrews Place – just a few great examples.







**24. WAHA Paints A House:** In 2005, WAHA took on a major volunteer task – more than 75 WAHA members and neighbors painted a two-story home in Harvard Heights for one of

our elderly community members, Ellsworth Walker. Eric Bronson convinced local paint and supply companies to donate all the materials, and dozens of volunteers spent a weekend sanding, scraping, priming, and painting the two-story house. Benjamin Moore & Company donated all the paint, thanks to Shilpark Paint Co. Shilpark itself provided all the other painting supplies. McBride & Co. donated the chemical stripping products. Rejuvenation Hardware added a porch light, house numbers, and a period-style mailbox.

**25. Community Unity Day:** In June, 2005, WAHA served as a co-sponsor and organized docent-led tours of two landmark Adams Boulevard properties, Apostolic Faith Church (now a charter school) and the Peace Awareness Labyrinth and Gardens at the Guasti Villa (the Busby Berkeley estate)

**26. Governor's Award for Preservation:** WAHA won this prestigious award in 2007 for our Evening Strolls, which combined historic walking tours with neighborhood outreach. WAHA designed a series of Strolls to highlight the cultural heritage and architectural gems of our various diverse historic neighborhoods. For each Stroll, WAHA printed a neighborhood walking tour brochure, for members and neighbors to use to explore their own pocket enclaves, while sipping espresso drinks from a WAHA coffee cart. According to the award description: "[The] Program used a low key, no cost approach to historic preservation requiring only that community members step outside their doors. Members lead tours or contribute historical anecdotes to strollers happy to discover their neighborhoods are safer than they thought."

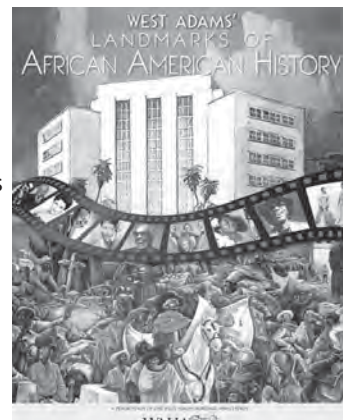
**27. David versus Goliath:** In 2008, WAHA nominated Flower Drive, a street lined with 21 Mediterranean Revival style multi-family homes built between 1920 and 1927, as a California Register District, which some USC-related interests opposed. Against all odds, we succeeded, and today the residences on the west side of Flower Drive between 39th and Martin Luther King are protected.

**28. The Great Walk Los Angeles:** WAHA joined with the sponsors of the annual Great Walk Los Angeles to guide its walkers in 2009 from the Shrine Auditorium through University and North University Park, and along a zig-zag route of our neighborhoods between Washington and Adams, introducing a new group of Angelenos to the Historic West Adams District. (This year's Great Walk, on Saturday, November 23, tackles Sunset Boulevard, starting at Echo Park Lake at 9 a.m. More info at <http://greatwalk.blogspot.com/>.)



**29. Garden School:** WAHA donated some seed money funds to the Garden School Foundation (organized by several West Adams neighbors) to help create learning gardens at the 24th Street Elementary School. (You can still help support this fine organization at [www.gardenschoolfoundation.org](http://www.gardenschoolfoundation.org).)

**30. Landmarks in African American History:** In 2005, WAHA joined with AFTRA and then-Sen. Dianne Watson to produce a tour of properties in our community associated with African American entertainers and celebrities. And we published a special brochure, *Hollywood in Black & White: Black Entertainers at Home in West Adams*. In 2011, we undertook a major effort to expand that brochure, resulting in our much-lauded publication, *West Adams' Landmarks of African American History*, a compendium of photos and brief biographies of more than 70 prominent African Americans who lived in the West Adams area of Los Angeles and their homes. Also included are many buildings of historical importance to



the African American community. Inside the pages of *West Adams' Landmarks of African American History*, you'll learn about religious and civic institutions that play significant roles in West Adams' (and Los Angeles') black heritage, along with civil rights leaders, entertainers, sports figures, wartime heroes, and trailblazers

in their fields and who all helped change the face of Los Angeles. We are now planning to publish an updated second edition.

*This roster of WAHA milestones is a partial list and members are welcome to submit other milestones to [preservation@westadamsheritage.org](mailto:preservation@westadamsheritage.org).*

*As you can see, a spirit of volunteerism runs through all of WAHA's three decades. Our members have always rolled up their sleeves, and jumped right in to save our architectural heritage, preserve our beautiful neighborhoods and help our community. We can only hope that our record of the past 30 years will inform our path for the next 30 years. ●*

## 30th Anniversary Celebration

*continued from page 3*

To continue these efforts moving forward, I am pleased to announce the initiation of a significant fundraising effort, which we are calling the WAHA Preservation Advocacy Fund. These will be monies that will be kept separate from our general fund, and spent only on preservation activities. While we have set an aggressive goal of raising \$30,000 over the next few years, I am honored to be able to announce this evening that this fund will soon be receiving a significant initial bequeath from the estate of our much beloved Robert Leary. Let's raise our glasses to his memory -- I know he would be proud of the milestone this organization celebrates today.



I am also very excited to announce to all of you that WAHA has recently launched a new, and beautifully re-designed website, and I encourage all of you to visit [www.WestAdamsHeritage.org](http://www.WestAdamsHeritage.org) as often as possible to stay on top of everything that WAHA is doing. Today, we can purchase tickets to our events and tours online, and there is now a special new Preservation Portal to support WAHA's fundraising efforts. Special thanks go out to Hilary Lentini, and the incredibly creative design team that make up Lentini Design. Thank you Hilary!!

And [lastly] now I have the distinct honor of returning to our roots, with the presentation of WAHA's highest honor, the Bob Bortfeld Award [to Jean Cade -- see story, page 2]. ●

*Photos of the 30th Anniversary Celebration by Natalie Neith*

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You're invited for an evening of conversation and collaboration among the area's top preservation associations and artisans. Meet and mingle with experts who are protecting our shared architectural legacy and helping SoCal homeowners revive and restore their historic homes.

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- \* Claremont Heritage
- \* Pasadena Heritage
- \* Long Beach Heritage
- \* Hollywood Heritage
- \* Highland Park Heritage
- \* Windsor Square-Hancock Park Historical Society
- \* Art Deco Society of LA
- \* Alhambra Historical Society
- \* Pomona Heritage
- \* San Marina Heritage
- \* Society of Architectural Historian SoCal Chapter
- \* Los Feliz Improvement Association & History Center
- \* Echo Park Historical Society
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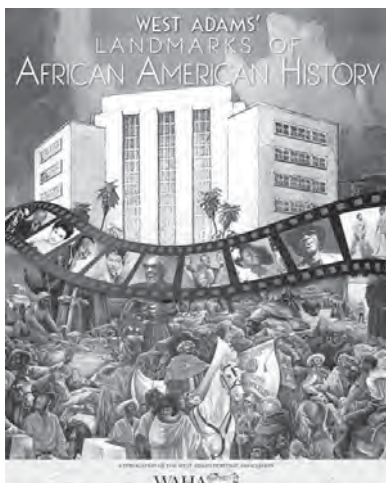


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WAHA presents *West Adams' Landmarks of African American History*, a compendium of photos and brief biographies of more than 70 prominent African Americans who lived in the West Adams area of Los Angeles and their homes. Also included are many buildings of historical importance to the African American community.

Inside the pages of *West Adams: Landmarks of African American History*, you'll learn about religious and civic institutions that play significant roles in West Adams' (and Los Angeles') black heritage, along with civil rights leaders, entertainers, sports figures, wartime heroes, and trailblazers in their fields and who all helped change the face of Los Angeles.

44 pages, 8-1/2 X 11, glossy, full color throughout. \$10.

Purchase at [www.WestAdamsHeritage.org](http://www.WestAdamsHeritage.org) (click on "WAHA store" — "WAHA books").



# History Matters

## History Came Alive, to Much Acclaim

*Just a quick note to say how much my friends and I enjoyed our tour this year! (As we really do each year.) The Cast did wonderfully and our tour guide Michael [Smith] was interesting and eager to “be there” with us. We appreciated the water and fans too! You all are so amazing, I can’t wait until next year! -- Melinda Smilgys*

The Living History Tour at Angelus Rosedale Cemetery is one of WAHA’s signature events, focusing on both local history and historic architecture at one of Los Angeles’s oldest cemeteries. This year’s event, held on Saturday, September 28, was a success in so many ways: the personages portrayed each told an interesting (and mostly unknown) chapter in Los Angeles and American history, the actors’ performances were outstanding, each and every volunteer excelled at their roles in bringing the day together, and the event was a sell-out!

We were also very excited to host the relatives of three of the personages we were portraying: Orion Thomas, a Union Army cavalryman from Indiana whose great-great grand-daughter lives

in Orange County; Boer War veteran Daniel de Villiers, whose descendants were represented by a niece (de Villiers’ grandson and great-grandson live in Baltimore), and Aurelius Winfield Hutton, a Confederate cadet who became one of L.A.’s first City Attorneys and a founder of Pasadena, whose extended family -- more than 30 people -- attended the tour, some from as far away as Texas.

This event (like so many WAHA tours) requires the helping hands of dozens of volunteers -- too many to list here. But we really want to acknowledge some of our key helpmates:

**The Tour Organizing Committee** -- Chris Eisenberg, Elizabeth Fenner, Don Lynch, Laura Meyers, Rina Rubenstein, Michael Sonntag, Lana Soroko, Marius Stelly, Christie Webb, Lindsay Wiggins

**Reservations Coordinator:** Elizabeth Fenner

**Costumes:** Celeste Hong, Laura Meyers; Maura Feely, L.B. Nye

**Actor Coaching:** Michael Sonntag

**Historical Research:** Don Lynch, Laura Meyers, Mitzi March Mogul

**Volunteer Coordinators:** Rina Rubenstein, Lana Soroko

**Volunteer Support:** Liz Cooper, Lora Davis, Kathy Lewis

**Docent Training:** Don Lynch

**Scripts:** Leslie Evans, Jean Frost, Laura Meyers, Mitzi March Mogul

**Floral and Sets:** Elizabeth Fenner, Laura Meyers, Lana Soroko, Roland Souza (planning and design); Chris Eisenberg, Nick Kasperek, Lauren Schlau, Deb Shadovitz, Terry Speth, Chris Taylor (set-up)

**Tour Guides:** Christie Webb, Shepherd Coordinator; Ansley Bell, Paul Brynan, Paula Brynen, Rory Cunningham, Martha Gruft, John Kurtz, Don Lynch, Kim Michener, Danny Miller, Hunter Ochs, David Pacheco, Lanna Pian, David Saffer, Michael Smith, Chris Taylor, Georgia Toliver, Ed Trosper

**Chapel Wrangler:** Sally Turner

**Parking and Greeting:** Mel Embree, Margaret Strong

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**Brochure Cover and Design:** Hilary Lentini, [LentiniDesign.com](http://LentiniDesign.com)

**Advertising:** Marius Stelly



*Photographs on this page by Ansley Bell*

# History Matters

We gratefully thank our hosts:

John L. Hill III, President, Angelus Funeral Home; Kim E. Hill, General Manager, Angelus Rosedale Cemetery, Mortuary & Crematory; Sameerah W. S. Muhammad, Tour Coordinator; Angelus Rosedale Cemetery, Mortuary & Crematory; and Luis Lopez, Grounds Supervisor, and crew.

Additional Thanks to: History for Hire, prop house; Jen Kim, Conroy's Florist Leimert Park; and United American Costume, costume makers and rentals

And to our advertisers: Blu Elephant Cafe; Desly's Pet Groomers; El Cholo Cafe; and Papa Cristo's Taverna

And we absolutely cannot forget our wonderful actors, without whom there is no Living History Tour. Pictured clockwise on facing page, starting top right:

- Lee Gale Gruen as Jennie Allen Bovard (1854-1932)
- Kito Buni Robinson as Ivie Anderson (1903-1948)
- Bill Ladd as Aurelius Winfield Hutton (1847-1924)
- Craig Weber as Orion Theodore Thomas (1846-1917)
- August Robinson as Merle Evans (1894-1913)
- Louis Emile as Dr. Oner Bell Barker (1920-1998)
- Nicole Stanton as Marjorie Zier (Zears) Page (1909-1952)
- Max Lichtig as Daniel de Villiers (1877-1913)

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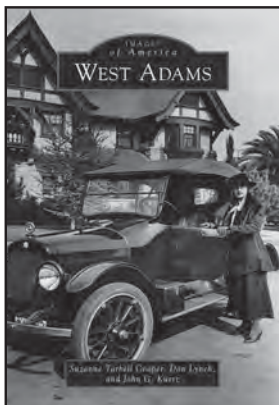
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# Calendar ✓

## Upcoming Events

### NOVEMBER

**Wellington Square Bi-Annual U\$ed \$tuff Yard Sale** — Saturday, November 2, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Many participating households -- Wellington Square is located just west of Crenshaw and south of Washington.

**Newsletter Committee** — Monday, November 4 at 7 p.m. (see page 2)

**Rejuvenation's Preservation Mixer**— Tuesday, November 5, 6-8 p.m. (see page 11)

### DECEMBER


**WAHA's Annual Holiday Tour: "A Jolly Holiday in Historic Oxford Square** — Saturday and Sunday, December 7 and 8 (see page 1)

### JANUARY

**WAHA "After" Holiday Party** — Saturday, January 4  
(Hold the Date: Time & Place TBA)

**WAHA Steps Out:  
Open Mike at Blu Elephant Cafe**  
Sunday, November 17  
2 to 4 p.m.  
2024 West Washington Blvd. (Harvard Heights)

Please join WAHA in supporting our local business, the Blu Elephant Café, located on Washington Boulevard in Harvard Heights (look for the blue elephant!) Drop by between 2 and 4 p.m. on Sunday, November 17, for coffee, tea, sandwiches or desserts. We will have an open mike. Share a song or two or a poem and get acquainted. This newer local venue is getting great reviews on Yelp. Come see what people are talking about. ●



## WAHA....Creating Our Future by Preserving Our Past

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