

# West Adams Matters

## A Civil War Memorial Day Weekend Remembrance at Angelus Rosedale Cemetery

*Sunday, May 25, 12:30 p.m.*

*by Don Lynch*

Angelus Rosedale Cemetery, founded in 1884 and one of Los Angeles' oldest cemeteries, has long been connected to the Civil War by its many hundreds of veterans interred there. During the cemetery's earliest years, people gathered here in West Adams to remember their loved ones, in particular Civil War veterans on the occasion of Memorial Day. This year, with a nod to the conflict's 150th anniversary, a Union soldiers' descendants' organization and WAHA will gather at Angelus Rosedale Cemetery on Sunday, May 25, to once again pay tribute to those who fought in the War Between the States.

The United States as a whole has a long history of remembering its veterans, whether living or dead. The first veterans' benefits were initiated in Plymouth Colony, long before we were a nation, when the colony voted to support anyone injured or disabled in fighting the Pequot Indians.



*Decorating Civil War graves at Rosedale Cemetery, 1922*

It wasn't until after the Civil War, however, that veteran organizations and benefits became more prominent. With pensions to ensure some level of income, many veterans came to California in their retirement years where they could escape freezing winters and muggy summers. More often than not, when they passed away their families elected to have them buried in California rather than have their remains shipped home.

Union Veterans of the Civil War had easy access to one another through the organization Grand Army of the Republic, or GAR. Founded in 1866,

*(continued on page 16)*

## WAHA's Annual Preservation Brunch

**Sunday, May 18 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

**A.E. Kelly Residence, 1140 West Adams Blvd. (North University Park)**

A Victorian that once was home to theatrical productions is the setting for WAHA's 2014 Annual Preservation Brunch, as we celebrate Preservation Month. WAHA's Preservation Committee invites you to celebrate the presentation of the 2014 Martin Eli Weil Award, WAHA's highest award for preservation, with special guest speaker Christy Johnson McAvoy, founding principal of Historic Resources Group (HRG).

For the first time in decades, you will have a rare opportunity to view a restoration in progress at the landmark Victorian A.E. Kelly Residence. The Kelly Residence (pictured right) has not been opened to the public since the "Theater in Historic Sites" project presented two plays there in the early 1990s, Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap* and Seymour Matthews' *Dead Man's Hand*. (See related story, page 14.) The plays were received enthusiastically and raised money for National Register designations in West Adams. Contractor Robert Carrere will explain his restoration efforts as he informally walks visitors through a tour of the house.



*(continued on page 15)*

### The List:

## Lose/Win/Draw — 30 Years of Preservation Victories & Defeats in West Adams\*

*by Jean Frost*

*(\*Inspired by the Off-Broadway hit, Win/Lose/Draw by Ara Watson and Mary Gallagher)*

In the pursuit of preserving West Adams' historic and cultural resources, one encounters significant and troubling losses and many hard-fought-for and often negotiated wins. WAHA seeks to preserve West Adams' core cultural heritage and historic architecture – because we firmly believe that Los Angeles and its future generations will suffer permanent consequences if this history is lost. So even as we celebrate our victories in this, WAHA's 30th year, we also note that – no matter how you sugarcoat it – over the years we have suffered many losses, and we continue to have many historic resources that remain clearly endangered.

WAHA's Preservation Committee developed this month's "30 List" in recognition of WAHA's 30th Anniversary. But what started as a list of ten wins, ten losses and ten draws, has now, by dint of memory and input from others, morphed to fifteen

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## WAHA's Paint & Garden Contest

WAHA is looking for the best exterior paint finishes and gardens in West Adams, to be voted upon by those present at the 4th of July event. Any house painted between January 1, 2013 to May 31, 2014 is eligible. Any garden in West Adams is eligible (newly planted or not). In both cases, the property must be within the broad boundaries of the Historic West Adams District (generally speaking, Olympic on the north, Exposition on the south, 110 freeway on the east and West Boulevard on the west). The nomination process is simple (but *digital*) — you can nominate your neighbors' beautiful and creative handiwork, or your own. Please send digital photographs along with the specific address, homeowner name(s), and description of the restoration and/or garden planning work that was required to transform an ugly duckling into today's beautiful swan.

E-mail your submission to Elizabeth Fenner at [elizabeth\\_fenner@hotmail.com](mailto:elizabeth_fenner@hotmail.com), by June 26. We will display the visual nominations at WAHA's 4th of July Picnic, on Friday, July 4 (location TBA). ●

## Bob Bortfeld Award Nominations Sought

WAHA's highest award, the Bortfeld Award, named after WAHA co-founder Bob Bortfeld, is presented to a member who has given special service to the community in the prior year and over time.

Some three decades ago, when Bortfeld purchased his home in a long-ignored neighborhood, he had a vision for this community. Bortfeld (pictured below) felt that with strong community activism and a shared love for old houses, West Adams could be one of L.A.'s best neighborhoods. West Adams Heritage Association established the Bortfeld Award to honor his vision and inspiration after he passed away in the late 1980s.

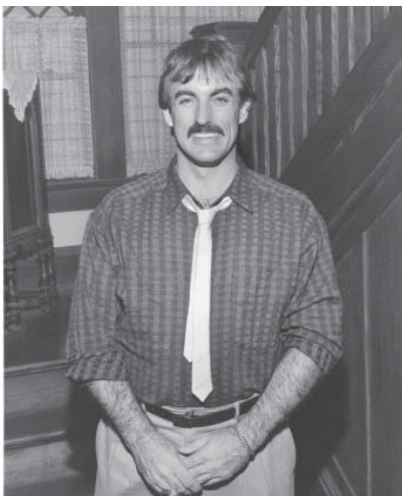
Nominations now are being sought for this annual award. The nominee must be a member in good standing who demonstrates the following qualities: 1) consistent and visible leadership in WAHA and the preservation community, 2) an obvious commitment to preservation, 3) leadership in deed, not just title, 4) notable accomplishments/contributions over a range of activities, not just in one particular activity, and 5) an ability to bring people together to address issues and resolve problems.

Typically, the candidate would not currently be a WAHA Board member.

The award has been presented in the past to Kathleen Salisbury, Harry Anderson, David Raposa, Harold Greenberg, Lindsay Wiggins, Jodi Seigner, Jon Rake, Lana Soroko, Norma Reynolds, John Kurtz, Audrey Arlington, Jim Meister, Joe Ryan, Laura Meyers, Linda Scribner, Corinne Pleger, Peggy King, Leslie Evans and Jennifer Charnofsky, Suzanne Henderson, Ed Trosper, Pat Karasick, Mitzi Mogul, Rory Cunningham, John Arnold, and Jean Cade. As you can see by this listing, all former Honorees have had leadership roles in WAHA and West Adams, and have undertaken a diverse range of activities in the organization and in the community at large.

Nominations should be submitted in essay form via e-mail (preferred) to [president@westadamsheritage.org](mailto:president@westadamsheritage.org) or letter sent to WAHA's office, 2263 S. Harvard Blvd., Historic West Adams, Los Angeles, CA 90018. Please briefly describe the activities your candidate has undertaken for West Adams Heritage Association and in the West Adams community, and explain why you believe he or she should be chosen for the Bortfeld Award. The winner will be selected by WAHA's current President, Membership Chair, and last year's winner, Jean Cade.

Deadline for submission is MONDAY, JUNE 16. ●



## *President's Message* by John Patterson

Our annual Membership meeting on April 6 provided us the forum to discuss plans for the coming year, and explore opportunities for our organization's community efforts as we move into our 4th decade. The advance launch of Jett Loe's digital iBook, "Untold LA," exemplified the pride of ownership we feel for our historic homes, and captured the preservation successes achieved over the past 30 years. Derek Japha's presentation on community efforts to combat blight on Adams Boulevard brought into vivid focus challenges we face with regard to our commercial corridors that so often hide the beauty of the residential streets occupying the spaces in between them.

The large number of members present at this meeting expressed strong enthusiasm that WAHA expand its role in the community to confront those issues that impact our quality of life, and asked that we take a more active role in bringing these issues to the attention of our members. Future WAHA e-mails will include information about community meetings on issues such as oil drilling and fracking sites, and it was suggested that WAHA inform our members about the evolution of the South Los Angeles Community Plan. In the same manner that last year's Leimert Park-West Adams-Baldwin Hills plan will impact the inevitable development of the western half of West Adams, the South LA plan will define the evolution and growth of the eastern half of our area. WAHA will keep you updated as meetings are scheduled and plans put in motion.

In the meantime, this coming year will see a renewed focus on our main commercial streets which are truly the gateway to Historic West Adams. Board member Georgia Toliver has already begun contacting numerous storeowners and has found a high level of enthusiasm to participate in making our boulevards more inviting and people friendly. WAHA's efforts will be promoted under the banner of the "West Adams Presidential Corridor's Initiative" (Washington, Adams, Jefferson) and is intended to build upon those community efforts that are already underway.

You have probably taken note of the recent sidewalk repair along Adams Boulevard between Normandie and Western that is being underwritten by LANI (Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative). UNNC (United Neighborhoods Neighborhood Council) has also invested a great deal of effort focused on developing a Specific Plan for Washington Boulevard, and Jefferson Park's HPOZ has its eye squarely on Jefferson Boulevard. It is our hope and plan that WAHA will help bring all of the neighborhood councils, block clubs, and council districts together in a concerted effort to improve these commercial corridors, with the understanding that this is a significant and long-term proposition.

The Board of Directors is pleased to welcome back four members who were re-elected to continue their service to the community – SeElcy Caldwell, John Kurtz, Roland Souza, and yours truly. We are also pleased to welcome "on board" the ever-hard-working Laura Meyers, as well as the meeting's hostess Janel Glover, who has already started working with Georgia in making contact with the many merchants who share our neighborhood and are eager to help improve it.

It looks like we're going to have a productive and exciting year ahead!

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

## **Make A Difference in Your Community: Vote May 10, NC Elections**

Are you tired of complaining about how things just don't meet your expectations in your neighborhood? Then do something about it — vote!

Neighborhood council elections are slated for May 10 for many of the neighborhood councils in and adjacent to the Historic West Adams District:

Olympic Park NC ("OPNC," which includes Country Club Park and Oxford Square) stakeholders election has been reslated as a "selection" and will be held at Queen Anne Recreation Center from 1-3 p.m.

North Area Neighborhood Development Council NC ("NANDC," which includes Adams-Normandie, Charles Victor Hall Tract, University Park, North University Park, West Adams Heights, and Expo Park/Expo Park West).

United Neighborhoods NC ("UNNC," includes Harvard Heights, Angelus Vista, Western Heights, Kinney Heights, Arlington Heights, West Adams Avenues and Jefferson Park).

Mid-City NC ("MINC," includes Lafayette Square, Victoria Park and Wellington Square, and goes west to south of Venice all the way to La Cienega) all go to the polls to vote.

### **Mark Your Stake in Your Community: Vote**

Neighborhood council participants (and voters) are called "stakeholders," and include people who live, work, do business, and/or own real property within a specific neighborhood council's geographic boundaries. For everyone else (those who attend school, worship or are otherwise connected to a community), there is a category called "Community Interest Stakeholder," defined as: "... those who declare a stake in the neighborhood as a community interest stakeholder, defined as a person who affirms a substantial and ongoing participation within the neighborhood council's boundaries and who may be in a community organization such as, but not limited to, educational, non-profit and/or religious organizations." This includes WAHA. To vote as a community stakeholder, bring your WAHA membership card, newsletter with address label, volunteer nametag/badge, or some other means to demonstrate

your participation with West Adams Heritage.

Disabled voters may request curbside voting through the Elections Hotline. Any other questions? Call the City's Elections Hotline 818-293-8683 (818-293-VOTE). ●

### **Neighborhood Council Elections Times and Locations:**

MINC: New Los Angeles Charter School, 1919 S. Burnside Avenue, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

NANDC: Loren Miller Park, 2717 Halldale Ave., 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

OPNC: 1-3 p.m., Queen Anne Recreation Center, 1240 West Blvd.

UNNC: Council District 10 Field Office, 1819 S. Western Ave., 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

## In Memoriam: Judith Hilburg, 1928-2014

Judith Hilburg, a passionate historic preservation advocate and the mother of WAHA Board member Lore Hilburg, succumbed on February 24 after a Valentine's Day heart attack. The Brooklyn-born Hilburg had spent the past several decades in Vallejo, CA, the proud owner of a famous c. 1907-1909 Julia Morgan-designed Craftsman home that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. But she had lived, another lifetime ago, in Los Angeles, working as a manager of some apartment residences in the West Adams District and elsewhere.

Judith Hilburg, 86, was also known as a crusader for women's rights, and as a key supporter of the antique and rare book collection of the McCune Room at the John F. Kennedy Library in Vallejo.

Judith was the kind of individual that any neighborhood would be lucky to have. She opened her home for events, fundraisers, and she was constant in her support of what she valued.



Indeed, if you have been to Lore's home in Lafayette Square, you'll recognize a piece of her mother's passion for preserving what's beautiful, historic, and irreplaceable: a stained glass window that survived the demolition of a West Adams mansion, thanks to Judith Hilburg.

When Lore was a teenager, her mother had her participate in a "rescue mission." Judith in her apartment management role hired on-site managers for each building. "She would ask to see where they lived to make sure they kept their own place nice," Lore recalled. "One of the managers lived in a mansion that had been subdivided into numerous apartments. Mom walked in and saw [a stained glass] dome over the double staircase landing."

The memory of the elaborate stained glass stuck with Judith. A few years later, Judith learned of the demolition of a group of West Adams mansions. Lore continued: "Mom recognized one as the house with the dome. She tried to buy it, but they weren't interested."

Determined to save what she could, Judith drove to the house. She saw that workers were smashing the windows, so "she decided to liberate the dome before it met a similar fate," Lore said. Judith "hired some local people she knew to obtain the dome and a transom window that had a similar design. But when it came time to [get it], the owner reneged and wanted a lot more money. She threatened to tell the police whereupon they agreed to exchange the windows for the agreed upon price but not directly with her.

"So, she sent me, at age 16, holding an envelope of cash with a couple of the guys in their van.... We drove off with the windows, which were so covered with black soot that I could not see what they looked like."

A few years later Judith allowed the Victoria and Albert Museum in London to exhibit the dome and transom window in exchange for restoring them and re-leading them. The windows were there for 14 years and later identified as Tiffany in a book on Arts and Crafts. Judith later built the dome into a drop ceiling in the kitchen of her landmark Julia Morgan home.

Lore added: "She later gave me the transom window which I ended up installing in my kitchen." So do remember Judith Hilburg and her legacy when you visit Lore's own historic home and see this treasure.

Along with Lore, Judith Hilburg is survived by daughter Linda Barker and granddaughter Natacha Angelini. Donations to WAHA in her memory would be gratefully acknowledged. ●

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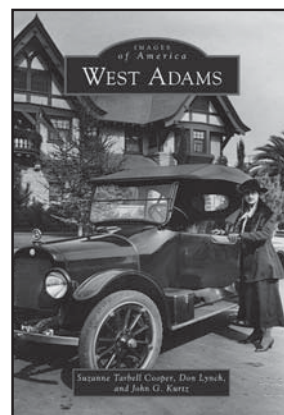
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# Membership Matters

## Newcomers' Dessert: Everyone Welcome

Thursday, June 5 7 – 9 p.m.

2102 W. 24th St. (one blk east of Gramercy Place, Gramercy Park)

WAHA has a long-standing tradition of holding Newcomer's Desserts to meet and welcome new WAHA Members to the organization. The next one of these events will be held on Thursday, June 5, from 7 – 9 p.m. Please join us as the Membership Committee hosts this event at John Kurtz's historic home in Gramercy Park. It's not necessary to bring something to share but any treats brought will be appreciated. ●

## Newly-Elected Board Members' Statements

At WAHA's Board Election in April, three people who had not submitted candidates' statements were nominated and elected to the Board. Please meet Janel Glover, John Kurtz and Laura Meyers:

### John Kurtz

So the question has been asked, "Why do you want to be on the WAHA Board?" Here is my short answer.

I have lived in the West Adams area for almost 25 years now, and I have been on the WAHA Board in the past for probably a total of 17 of those years.

I see serving on the WAHA Board as an excellent, and many times, fun way to have an ongoing impact in the West Adams community. As a member of an involved, concerned and dedicated team, long-term goals can be identified where collaborative opportunities for positive changes can be implemented. I have seen this happen in the past with the results being beneficial change in our community. I see investment in West Adams as a way I can make a contribution to the common good in some way.

I bring a lot of history with me in terms of the WAHA Board and West Adams. I have served on a number of non-profit boards in the past and have skills in terms of management, schedules, budgets and decision-making which can be successfully applied in our WAHA Board setting. I believe I make a contribution as a Board Member.

I was appointed (again) to the Board mid-term last year and have been serving as Secretary and on the Membership Committee. At the Annual Meeting in April, I was then re-elected. I look forward to continuing in these roles.

### Laura Meyers

I was a Founder of WAHA in 1983, and served on the WAHA Board in the mid-1980s. Since then I have been involved in a myriad of WAHA activities, including as the longtime editor for WAHA's publications, and also I am very active in the West Adams community (serving as the land use chair for United Neighborhoods Neighborhood Council since 2003). Currently, I coordinate the annual Living History Tour at Angelus Rosedale Cemetery, serve on WAHA's Preservation Committee (preparing numerous landmark nominations and also advocacy letters), and of course I am editor of the *WAHA Matters* newsletter. I am happy to again take a "seat at the table" as a director of West Adams Heritage Association.

### Janel Glover

Having been born and raised in Los Angeles, I moved to the West Adams area nearly 30 years ago. Over the years, I've resided in three homes in the area. This is where I chose to raise my children. I'm so proud of my neighborhood, its architecture, diversity, and rich history. It's an honor to have been nominated and accepted as a member of the WAHA board. ●



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# Community Matters

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## Update on Oil Drilling *by Leslie Evans*

Three oil company drill sites in Historic West Adams, together containing more than 100 operating underground wells, have been the center of recent citizen protests, ramped up government inspections, a City Attorney lawsuit, and complaints that the city's Zoning Administration has violated municipal code and probably state law in fast-tracking oil company expansion plans. The *WAHA Matters* newsletter has been covering these issues since the beginning of the year, striving to keep you up to date.

The recent West Adams complaints first arose around Allenco Energy's drill site at 814 W. 23rd Street in the University Park neighborhood north of USC, adjacent to Mount St. Mary's College, when neighbors smelled fumes and some were sickened. Subsequently, a drill site in Adams-Normandie kicked into high gear, with "unneighborly" behavior, including mounting trash and graffiti. And then the Jefferson Park and Kinney Heights community stakeholders discovered new drilling activities and a requested expansion of a site at Adams a few blocks west of Western.

Freeport-McMoRan Oil and Gas Co. (which acquired PXP in mid-2013) operates two drill sites in West Adams: the Jefferson Drill Site at 1349-1375 Jefferson Blvd., between Budlong Avenue and Van Buren Place, and the Murphy Drill Site at 2126 W. Adams Blvd. at Gramercy Place, descending down the hill to 27th Street.

Last year Freeport asked the City Planning Department to approve new drilling at both of its sites, along with an expansion of its natural gas facility at the Adams Boulevard location.

The Jefferson Boulevard site application went to Associate Zoning Administrator (AZA) Sue Chang, who called a Public Hearing on September 25. Community members from several local block clubs and a church attended, complaining that the company's heavy trucks broke up sidewalks; they also illegally painted extensions of the red curbs to keep them open for their trucks, left graffiti unpainted, and did not pick up trash. AZA Chang reprimanded the company for inadequate notification to the community – some property owners had not been sent hearing notices and no renters had. More serious, she discovered that the "mother case" numbers, which match specific wells with their permits and conditions of use, were totally confused in Freeport's application and, even worse, in the Planning Department files.

The application listed two wells the company was asking to redrill, but placed them in the wrong district and under the wrong mother case number, which had different limits and rules for such drilling than the correct oil district. Freeport was asking to drill one new well, but this should have required a new case number, as the one they were using did not permit that type of well. AZA Chang postponed the hearing. When she announced a new date for January 25, the company asked for a postponement. We are still awaiting a new hearing date.

Meanwhile attention has shifted to Freeport's Murphy site. As news reports of the health problems at Allenco spread, neighbors near the Murphy site heard about a gas leak there, with some smelling petroleum fumes. New drilling (seemingly without proper permits) at the site in November also raised concerns. More than 300 residents attended a January 11 meeting at the Holman United Methodist Church on Adams Boulevard, with appearances by City Council President Herb Wesson, State Senator Holly Mitchell, and U.S. Congress member Karen Bass. Council President Wesson afterward got the City Council to put a temporary moratorium on new drilling at the site, but pumping at the 33 underground wells there continues uninterrupted.

Research by concerned residents revealed that there were a number of irregularities in the permits Freeport was using to authorize the new wells, and also for an expansion of its walled enclosure on the previously-approved drill site to accommodate the installation of a new CEB800 waste gas burner on a lower, landscaped portion of the larger parcel. These traced back to apparent mistakes by Associate Zoning Administrator David Weintraub and Case Manager Jack Chiang (who is not a zoning administrator), who together had approved the company's applications.

According to documents uncovered by a resident who utilized the Public Records Act to request all applications and communications between Freeport and the Planning Department, PXP submitted the request for new drilling and the request for the gas plant expansion as one package back in February 2013. The company claims that the Planning Department approved the new drilling in May 2013, and again in June, based on approval signatures by Jack Chiang on the PXP proposal letter and PXP submitted site plan. However, in response to questioning by United Neighborhoods Planning and Zoning chair Laura Meyers, the approvals, if that is what they amounted to, were reversed and the project was put on hold. Freeport went ahead and erected an unpermitted temporary sound wall on November 15 and drilled two wells without permits, until they received a stop work order from Building and Safety on November 26. Mr. Chiang e-mailed Council District 10 staff earlier this year, stating that the drilling was not approved until David Weintraub did so in a letter of December 26, 2013.

Freeport also asked the Planning Department to approve an expansion of the active drill site with a large new walled enclosure/structure to be built outside their current walls in a sloping piece of parkland that is part of its property. However, under the conditions the Planning Department placed on the property when the site was first authorized back in 1961, this portion of the parcel was always reserved for landscaping. This condition has been reaffirmed numerous times in the last 52 years, and in 2007 an added clause required the oil operator and the property owner, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, to explore mechanisms to allow public access.

Freeport proposed adding a 29-foot-high enclosure, sixty feet long by twenty-five feet deep, to house a CEB800 gas burner to dispose of waste gas. (Natural gas – methane – is a by-product of oil production. Waste gas was defined by Freeport as being either gas that does not meet the requirements for sale to The Gas Co., or excess gas produced in a time period where it cannot be sent in the pipeline to The Gas Co. There are no storage facilities on the Murphy drill site.)

The CEB800 is a very small device, with a 4'8" X 6'5" footprint. The site plan for the existing facility shows more than ample space

where an object of this size could be located. Yet AZA Weintraub approved the enclosure in a December 26, 2013 Review of Plans letter, which he designated a "communication," a title that he then stated cannot be appealed and which does not require a formal review. After protests by residents, the City Attorney made Weintraub upgrade the decision to a "determination," which can be appealed.

As a result, two local residents filed separate appeals on the enclosure, the expansion of the drill site perimeter, and the installation of the waste gas burner. They say that oil operation expansions under city code and state law require a formal review and a new Environmental Impact Report, neither of which were conducted. Also, a more long-standing problem of the Planning Department's rulings on this site is that all construction that may damage a historic structure or pose even a small risk of environmental damage is not eligible to be exempted from the requirement for an Environmental Impact Report. Planning ignored this between the time the state's California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was passed in 1970 until 1985, and thereafter ruled that the Murphy site was exempt from the EIR requirement, a dubious stance. AZA David Weintraub did not mention CEQA in his December 26 ruling.

It was subsequently discovered that Freeport and its predecessors never had any authorization to burn any gas at any time. In 1985, the previous oil production company had been approved to treat the natural gas to remove (via a chemical process) the carbon dioxide, emitting the latter into the air (probably not a healthy option). It appears that some time after that, without any express granting of permission nor building permit, a different previous operator installed the current Microturbines (which actually were specifically forbidden) that Freeport seeks to upgrade with the CEB800.

The local neighborhood council, United Neighborhoods of the Historic Arlington Heights, West Adams and Jefferson Park Communities Neighborhood Council (UNNC for short) wrote a strongly-worded letter in mid-April after many e-mails, other communications, lack of correct permits and approvals, and other documents were revealed and discussed at UNNC's April 4 Governing Board meeting. UNNC stated emphatically that it had withdrawn any support for Freeport's proposed new oil drilling and gas plant expansion activities, and fully supported the two citizen appeals. The hearing(s) at the South Los Angeles Area Planning Commission are now scheduled for May 20 at 4:30 pm at the Constituent Service Center, 8465 S. Vermont Avenue.

The problems at the Jefferson site were caught by a sharp public servant, but the Murphy site received routine approvals that seem to ignore city and state review requirements. Allenco is an example of the risks for residents of weak oversight. The city used to have a Petroleum Department. When oil prices fell to \$16 a barrel in the 1990s, many oil companies plugged their wells. Thinking the oil business was fading away in Los Angeles, the city ceased appointing a Petroleum Administrator, though the duties remained in the city code. When oil prices skyrocketed to \$100 a barrel after 2005, the business expanded big time. There are now 5,000 active oil wells in the city and thousands more inactive but remaining a potential risk. This is a \$2.7 billion-a-year business operating with highly flammable and explosive materials, prone to health-threatening fume leaks, scattered throughout residential blocks.

There have been two significant leaks in just the past few months. On March 17, an abandoned Phillips 66 underground pipeline in Wilmington ruptured, spilling thousands of gallons of oil — left in the pipe to keep it from corroding — onto a residential street. And on November 24, 2013, a Freeport-McMoRan pipeline from its big oil field in Baldwin Hills burst under La Cienega Boulevard at Fairfax, spilling 300 gallons of toxic waste water, laced with oil and methane. It would seem the city needs to restore at least the level of specific oversight it exercised in the 1960s and 1970s.

Regarding the University Park site that first triggered the community's series of concerns, in 2009, Allenco purchased the operation and boosted production 400%. Soon, neighbors began experiencing chronic nosebleeds, respiratory problems, headaches, and nausea. By late 2013 the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) had received 251 complaints. Community protest meetings drew several hundred people. The federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) sent inspectors, who were made ill and determined that leaks of petroleum fumes from badly maintained equipment were the cause.

County Environmental Health Director Angelo Bellomo was quoted by the *Los Angeles Times* as expressing skepticism that the problems at the site were correctable. Allenco voluntarily shut down on November 22, under pressure from U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer. On January 7, Los Angeles City Attorney Mike Feuer filed a lawsuit to prevent Allenco from reopening until they comply with all applicable health and safety regulations. On April 24 the EPA announced that it had ordered Allenco to make \$700,000 in improvements and that it required a 15-day advance notice to reinspect before the site reopens. The City Attorney's suit has not yet been heard in court. ●

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# WAHA's 30th Anniversary

## The List: Lose/Win/Draw *continued from page 1*

wins and fifteen losses. And the “draws” – those that currently have no resolution – have become a separate “endangered” list. We look to the future wins and also sense that battles may lie ahead. Here are thirty: fifteen losses, fifteen wins and in a separate accounting, a list of “draws” that comprise the presently endangered.

This is by no means a complete telling of WAHA's preservation efforts of the last thirty years. Not included are all the miracles that happen when someone devotedly restores and rehabilitates their own home or property: the wonderful restorations like the Starr Dairy Farm House, the Stearns Dockweiler Mansion, Giroux Glass, the Guasti Villa and the MacGowan Mansion/Mrs. Briggs complex, the Holmes-Shannon Residence, and many others that are continuing to be restored and maintained. All of you who have restored your properties contribute as “wins” but are too numerous to mention. We also cheer the hard work that has resulted in the designation of literally thousands of West Adams District homes within the boundaries of our nine HPOZs/specific plans, and more within our seven National Register Historic Districts, but we still worry about other neighborhoods outside those boundaries. And how do you measure the long fight to restore historic streetlights to Figueroa or the successful nomination of the Flower Street California Register District that just this year successfully stalled a demolition? (More to come on the Flower Drive Historic District: it has become one of the endangered sites.)

This list is somewhat subjective and forged by both painful memories and jubilant celebrations, and as I am limited to thirty, not all-encompassing. Apologies in advance that your favorite may not be here. If that is the case, please e-mail us at [news@westadamsheritage.org](mailto:news@westadamsheritage.org) and we can consider your suggestions in future articles. Or, we welcome your own writing of a win or loss or your experience in preserving the character of your neighborhood.

### THE LOSSES

WAHA members may seem way too serious about old houses, but read on and you may see why. Unfortunately, some developers, contractors and owners have been known to be unscrupulous and hugely destructive. The losses are a rallying cry to continue to be involved, persuasive and active.

#### 1. The Childs Mansion

Built by the O.W. Childs family at the corner of Adams and Arlington, its surprise demolition in 1979 brought into view the potential for loss of historic properties. It activated a sleeping movement, first with Doug Carlton's “Keep Old Los Angeles.” The property had been used by the Children's Home Society and was sold to the LAUSD. It was not supposed to be demolished but rather considered for adaptive reuse or sold to a preservation minded entity. Just as the loss of Pennsylvania Station was a wakeup call in New York City for preservation advocacy, the loss of the O.W. Childs Mansion provoked a similar response. This demolition gave rise to a preservation movement, most notably West Adams Heritage Association and the North University Park Community Association.



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of Pennsylvania Station was a wakeup call in New York City for preservation advocacy, the loss of the O.W. Childs Mansion provoked a similar response. This demolition gave rise to a preservation movement, most notably West Adams Heritage Association and the North University Park Community Association.

#### 2. The Hodgman House

Not everyone was ethical in the wake of the riots. Bought as a site for proposed condominiums at 2377 Scarff Street, the developers were opposed by neighbors and frustrated in their attempt to demolish a modest but historic property. It was a contributor to the St. James Park National Register District. Under the guise of the building being damaged by the 1992 riots, the developer sought and was granted a quick demo permit under a process the city put in place to help owners of properties damaged by the riots. This was a painful loss, because there was simply no damage by caused by the 1992 unrest.

#### 3. The Veatch House

The two-story Italian Renaissance Revival Veatch House on 27th Street, erected in 1923, was supposed to be the centerpiece of a housing project and the community anchor for the development. After the environmental review was final, required mitigations included the preservation and rehabilitation of the Veatch House as a childcare center, library and community room. However, the contractor removed every bit of wood – windows, trim, wainscoting, the staircase and doors – claiming the lead paint needed remediating. But then all of these elements were put in a dumpster and hauled away. The developer subsequently received permission to demolish the building, since its historic character was gone.

#### 4. The Holterhoff Mansion

Another Adams Boulevard mansion, directly across the street from the Bishop Residence, was going to be restored as a bed and breakfast. It was proposed to anchor the development of a commercial site including a Ralph's market. Unfortunately, it was purchased by the developers and razed to make room for the Ralphs at Adams and Vermont. On a happier note, three other Menlo Avenue houses (called the Jesuit Houses due to their ownership) were restored and two were relocated on the same street to reinforce the Menlo Avenue National Register District while making way for the Ralph's market development.



*Holterhoff Mansion (above); vacant lot after it was razed to make way for grocery store*





## 5. The Pepperdine Mansion

Even though WAHA was successful in nominating this mansion to the federal National Register of Historic Places, at the *local* City Cultural Heritage Commission hearing, so many opponents were bussed in that the location was changed to the DWP auditorium. WAHA lost. Later City officials granted a demolition permit, saying that the National Register designation came "too late." The mansion was demolished to make room for a new community center building for the Holman Methodist Church.

## 6. The Welles House

From 1981 on, community members attempted to work with the City to bring this historic house at 2317 Scarff Street up to reasonable living conditions. It was cited numerous times, but left to rot by owner Joseph Hantman. In December 2006 it burned down by what many believe to be an arsonist. The historic property next door (the Burkhalter House) was scorched and damaged by the Welles House fire but later restored. The property contains infill student housing under construction.

## 7. The Newsom House

Located in Pico Union, this rare Joseph Cather Newsom-designed property was supposed to be moved by the developer. In order not to complicate the move, preservationists (who were in communication with the owners) did not nominate the house for landmark status. That turned out to be a mistake: the building was demolished rather than moved. Three other fine examples of Newsom's West Adams work remain: the Miller-Herriot House on 27th Street and the Seaman-Foshay House on Scarff Street, both beautifully restored, and the not-so-elegant Fitzgerald Mansion on Adams Boulevard (see Endangered List).



## 8. The Joseph Leslie Phillips Residence

The owners of the Joseph Leslie Phillips Mansion began demolishing this Prairie-style Mediterranean house on Gramercy and 25th Street, designed by John Parkinson, without permits. WAHA did an emergency nomination as an Historic Cultural Monument. However, the effort failed due to the owner's opposition and an unfortunate infestation of fleas just when the Cultural Heritage Commission attempted to tour the property. They stood on the remains of the front porch and voted NOT to designate the house.



## 9. The Train & Williams Bungalow

A completely intact bungalow on Portland Street was demolished even though it had been designed by Train & Williams, a notable architecture firm also known for buildings at USC and downtown Los Angeles, and the redesign of the Judson Studios. The owner bought the house for cash and acted quickly before neighbors could react: the usual monthly local community meeting (of the CRA Adams Normandie 4321 Project Area), where signed permits were routinely reported, was cancelled, thus denying residents the opportunity to respond to the permit issuance.



## 10. The Film Exchange Building

This historic Spanish Colonial Revival building with distinctive Churrigueresque elements, designed by architect L.A. Smith in 1925, which was an early site of Los Angeles' nascent film industry, was demolished by the LAUSD to make way for West Adams Preparatory High School. While an adjacent corner at Washington and Vermont contains strip-malls, and vacant commercial properties sit on the north side of Washington, LAUSD unfortunately chose the corner which contained this and other historic commercial properties, including the Lyons Storage Building. WAHA sought a compromise that would incorporate the building and save its street façade as part of the school's design, but was not successful.



## 11. Frank M. Tyler House

Prolific architect Frank M. Tyler's own home on Westmoreland at Washington, with distinctive characteristics including multiple gables and half-timbering, could not be protected even though Tyler designed scores of West Adams homes. The Harvard Heights community could not prevent the demolition of Tyler's prominent home since this was before the community had protections as an HPOZ. Today it is a parking lot.

## 12. The Obee Cottage

The last remaining Victorian at New England and Washington Boulevard simply disappeared from its lonely perch on Washington Boulevard at New England Street during the week of February 4, 2008. One day there, the next – poof! Gone. While trying to find a location to move the structure, driving by on the way to yet another hearing, WAHA members noted it was being removed. Permits were not issued for several more weeks, retroactively. We were told a contractor carefully numbered and retained its pieces, to reconstruct it somewhere, someday. Today, a new apartment building stands on the lot.



*(continued on page 10)*

# WAHA's 30th Anniversary

## The List: Lose/Win/Draw *continued from page 9*

### 13. Manhattan Place Houses

Three houses were lost in the fires of the 1992 LA riots, all on Manhattan Place at Venice Boulevard, consumed when rioters torched the adjacent mini-mall. One of the houses, the Mary Chase Residence, had been on a WAHA tour. (Pictured: smoldering homes in ruins.)



### 14. Arapahoe and Magnolia

Two dozen grand old homes and mansions were lost at Arapahoe and Magnolia to make way for the Leo Politi School in Westmoreland Place. Other LAUSD projects that have shorn the West Adams area of scores of character, historic residences in the past 30 years — Carson Gore, Arlington Heights: 27 residences demolished, one saved and moved; West Adams Prep, Pico Union: 17 residences demolished, but two saved and moved. WAHA did save Bronson Avenue from an effort to expand Mount Vernon Junior High (now Johnny Cochran Middle School) in Arlington Heights.

### 15. Mansions at Venice and Western

Back in the 1980s, July 4th fireworks set three mansions ablaze. Neighbors watched in disbelief as three grand old ladies at Venice and Western – all owned by the owners of the Boys Markets grocery chain – simultaneously caught on fire. No punishment ensued.

## THE WINS

Now the good news. Losses often teach us how to do better “next time” and these following properties represent how we have been able to organize, strategize and work to save our architectural and cultural heritage.

### 16. The South Seas House

Thirteen years of effort by the community and WAHA came to fruition when it was reopened in 2003 as the centerpiece of the Benny H. Potter Memorial Park. The South Seas House project brought the community together in efforts to plant a garden, plan for the repair and restoration of the house (before and after photos below), and to raise funds.



## Endangered Historic Resources

**We've had losses, we've had wins—we always need to be vigilant and keep our eyes on our historic structures.**

### Roger Williams Baptist Church/Bishop Residence

WAHA has challenged the City's use of a categorical exemption (CE) for approval of the project affecting the historic Roger Williams Baptist Church and Bishop Residence at 1342 West Adams Boulevard. WAHA seeks adequate environmental review that will serve to guide the project in its restoration and rehabilitation of the Bishop Residence as well and analyze impacts to the other Church buildings. WAHA first became aware of the endangered state of the buildings when the developer's contractor gutted the Bishop Mansion without permits.

### Fitzgerald Mansion

WAHA and others are monitoring proposals at the Fitzgerald Mansion, 3115 West Adams, HCM No. 258, also known as the “Elegant Manor.” It was nuisance abated under a prior ownership, not been rehabilitated, and the current ownership is a version of the investment group that bought it at a foreclosure auction. The West Adams Avenues neighborhood association has complained repeatedly to the Office of Historic Resources about the City's failure to force the owners to repair and properly renovate the structure, expressing fears that the owners are stealthily seeking its demolition, writing: “The owner appears to be waiting for it to fall down so that he can proceed with his development plans...[and] the neglect of this historical structure is an absolute disgrace.”

### Royal Street

A notice of preparation (NOP) was circulated regarding preparation of an EIR that would involve demolition of three historic properties on a largely intact CRA-surveyed historic block. 3014 Royal Street was targeted for demolition by USC years ago to create a parking lot. After much objection from preservation parties, USC did not pursue the demolition. Now, USC is proposing this location for an interim childcare center. WAHA seeks to find an alternative that does not involve demolition of historic properties.

### Casa de Rosas

Also known as the Sunshine Mission, Casa de Rosas is located at 2600 South Hoover on the corner of Adams, across from a park and a school, and adjacent to USC housing, Fraternity Row and the Art of Living. This National Register Property fell into foreclosure and was then under the control of the Community Redevelopment Agency. CRA issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for its reuse, seeking a purchaser who would properly restore the buildings and create a positive community use. The awardee, an organization providing housing and counseling services to mentally ill parolees, did not complete their plans before CRA itself was ordered to cease its activities, so its proposal was deemed “dead.” Now the property has been transferred to the City's housing unit, and WAHA

## 17. The Nolte Garage

This crumbling but historic commercial garage in University Park was the subject of multiple requests for demolition over the decades. The garage was built when the automobile came into fashion in the 1920s. Much of the neighborhood was developed in the 1880s when transportation was horse-drawn. The Nolte Garage housed the automobiles of the middle class when horse-drawn carriages were no longer the fashion. Fortunately it was eventually purchased by a developer who wanted to anchor his 14-unit residential development by restoring the Nolte Garage and creating live/work lofts. Researching historic photos, the architect restored the historic property and won awards for his work.

## 18. On the Move: The 23rd Street Move-Ons

House moves are an important way to save historic resources. 1239 and 1235 23rd Street in University Park were houses moved onto vacant lots by developer Kristin Belko in 1989 when they were no longer able to remain at a soon-to-be-developed Pico Union site. The houses moved from the Pico Union CRA project area to the Adams Normandie 4321 project area. The parcels in Pico Union were developed for affordable housing. The 23rd Street houses were sold to homeowner occupants when finished, and the historic character of the block face was enhanced. Unfortunately a third house burned and was no longer available for moving. Moving to Pico-Union in 2006 were two important turn-of-the-century homes from Arapahoe Street to an empty lot on Alvarado Street: The Jevne Residence was designed in 1904 by architect Frederick L. Roehrig, known for many Pasadena and West Adams landmarks including the



Hotel Green in Rose City and the Rindge Mansion here; and the Newmark Residence, designed by Sumner P. Hunt, who is also responsible for the AAA Automobile Club building on Figueroa. The Newmarks were one of Los Angeles' founding Jewish families. Pictured above before being set down on new foundations, both are being rehabbed by the Pico Union Housing Corporation as "Casas Alicia."

## 19. The Forthman House

This magnificent Victorian was moved from 18th Street in 1988 to the former site of the historic Clark House on Hoover and 28th, which was demolished by USC to make way for an apartment project. The North University Park Design Review Board insisted that the house be replaced by a historic property of equal or greater caliber. The Forthman House is now USC's Community Outreach Office.



*(continued on page 12)*

understands that a second RFP will be issued. The first awardee is asking to be reinstated, despite community protests about that use. The Casa de Rosas was designed by the famous architect Sumner Hunt as an institution of learning.

## West Adams Heights

One small neighborhood pocket has multiple current challenges. The properties at 2200, 2218, and 2215 Harvard Blvd. are still being advertised for sale as "tear downs." However, the zoning is unusual in this neighborhood. It has a "Q" or "Qualified" condition that basically does not allow new multi-family housing, and supports the retention of existing older homes, in order to encourage preservation. Meanwhile, the two residences at 2205 and 2217-19 Hobart were subject to an abatement proceeding in court, due to dismal living conditions for the disabled individuals living in these group homes – the latter of which once belonged to famed actress Louise Beavers. The judge ordered a Court-appointed Receiver to handle the relocation of the residents and the repair of the properties, but later reversed the decision and removed the Receiver as of April 4. Now the two properties are boarded up, and will be left to the nuisance owner himself to rehab. Needless to say, neighbors, and WAHA, are concerned.

## Washington Irving Library

When the City decided to build a new library, officials promised to save the historic Washington Irving Library building, and find a good new use. It clearly hasn't happened and, without a use, the building is endangered. There's a constant battle with weeds and graffiti.

## 20th Street National Register District

The character of this district is endangered in that a current proposal threatens to overwhelm the neighborhood — a massive three-story development is planned adjacent to it that would be five feet from the National Register District and overlooking its back yards and creating a new scale for the area.

## 510 W. 31st Street

The Shammass Group has development plans for this area, and the historic property is endangered. WAHA seeks to see the two-story residence moved to a historic area where it can be restored and preserved. Also threatened by the development plans are the iconic 1958 Felix the Cat sign and Chevrolet showroom.

## 2067 Hobart

The West Adams Heights Neighborhood Association is seeking to have this property's designation in the Harvard Heights HPOZ historic resources survey changed from non-contributor to contributor or contributor-altered. WAHA is helping prepare the L.A. City Planning report to facilitate this change. The issue of the accuracy of historic resources surveys within the HPOZs is a continuing subject of discussion in many of the West Adams HPOZs. Meanwhile, WAHA asked Council President Herb Wesson to nominate the house as an individual Historic Cultural Monument, and the Cultural Heritage Commission will eventually hear the pending HCM nomination of this property.

*(continued on page 12)*

# WAHA's 30th Anniversary

## The List: Lose/Win/Draw *continued from page 11*



### 20. The Swim Stadium

WAHA and the Art Deco Society of Los Angeles (ADSLA) fought a proposal to completely demolish the historic 1932 Swimming Stadium in Exposition Park, famed in the Olympics. Working with the developer, the Weingart Center, WAHA and ADSLA saved the historic façade and shell, and the building was brought into the 21st century as a community sports and recreation center.

and identified as historically significant. It was moved in 1999 by CRA onto 1965 Bonsallo Avenue, rehabbed, and sold by lottery as affordable housing to a moderate-income family. The restored house is pictured, right.

### 21. The Burkhalter House

The Burkhalter residence at 2309 Scarff Street was damaged by fire when the Welles House next door burned to the ground in suspected arson. After WAHA had several discussions with the City, it was deemed restorable and sold to a new owner who restored the house to its former glory (pictured left).



### 24. Raphael Soriano/Glenn Lukens house

WAHA saved this important mid-century residence from a City-sponsored nuisance abatement demolition. When the Cultural Heritage Commission inspected the site, the commissioners had to step around mountains of debris (below left). Fortunately the Commissioners saw the potential. It was designated a landmark, and eventually the City went to court to get a Receivership, and the house was sold. The new owner, Michael Chapman, with Barry Milofsky as the architect, restored it in award-winning fashion (below right). It has now become the most honored single family home in California, with a California Preservation Foundation Award, a Los Angeles Conservancy Preservation Award, and an award from the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce.

### 22. Wells-Halliday Mansion

As a result of WAHA's successful HCM nomination, the Wells-Halliday Mansion was incorporated into a development for the Carl Bean AIDS hospice. The rear of the property was developed with a new state-of-the-art building with the historic residence anchoring the front of the property on Adams Boulevard.



### 23. Staples House on Bonsallo

A Victorian on Bixel Street threatened by the Staples Center project was the only house saved (of dozens) from the Staples Center construction site. It had been surveyed

## Endangered *continued from page 11*

### Vintage Hollywood – “Stan’s Kite” coffee shop

Located at 4000 West Washington Boulevard, this Google style structure built in 1964 as Stan’s Kite restaurant now houses Hollywood Film memorabilia of black history and hosts special evenings at the site. It was designed by Robert O. Clements, son of architect Stiles O. Clements (famous for his association with Morgan, Walls & Clements). While Stiles Clements is noted for his Art Deco buildings in Los Angeles, his son took the firm into a more modern stylistic mode. This is the only building designed by the Clements firm in the Google style. Sited on the corner of the Washington Square shopping center, there have been several out-of-scale developments proposed that included demolition of this precious resource where WAHA celebrated Preservation Month a few years ago.

may come to light. And WAHA will monitor the South Los Angeles Community plan as its moves forward to see that protections can be afforded our neighborhoods.

### The “Orphan Neighborhoods”

All of Arlington Heights and Angelus Vista, the University Park “donut hole Six Blocks” (Adams, 24th and 25th Streets between Hoover and Vermont) and all of the other Orphan Neighborhoods not yet protected by HPOZ designation remain at risk of insensitive rehabs and development proposals. As WAHA continues to research and review neighborhoods and its assets, more “orphan neighborhoods

### The Flower Drive Historic District

WAHA was cheered when this District was placed on the California Register of Historic Places in 2008, an accomplishment that required three hearings and two trips to Sacramento. However, in November of 2013, a demolition permit was sought for 3931 S. Flower Drive (a historic contributor to the District) by Cast Real Estate Holdings LLC (a limited liability corporation owned by the family that also owns the Orpheum Theater and numerous parcels on Flower and Figueroa). They claimed demolishing just one historic building within a district of 21 parcels, 19 of which contained contributing buildings, had no environmental impact. WAHA disagrees as did the City’s OHR. Also curious is that the requested permit is for demolition with no replacement development. At the exact same time, prospective developers are meeting with the City about developing this site and surrounding parcels outside the District. It appears that there is more to this than a single demolition.



## 25. Engine Co. No. 18

This Mission Revival Firehouse on Hobart in the Charles Victor Hall Tract has reopened as a restored arts center. WAHA was very involved advocating to keep it as a community-based use (versus housing) and it has now been restored by the Exceptional

Children's Foundation as one of its adult art centers.

## 26. DWP Distributing Station

When the Water and Power building on 24th Street in University Park was announced as signed-off for a demolition permit, WAHA and other community members objected. As a



result of our protests and advocacy, it became a Los Angeles Historic Cultural Monument and was purchased by a preservation-minded developer, Ann Merelie Murrell, for adaptive reuse.

## 27. Second Church of Christ, Scientist/Art of Living

This once-magnificent Adams Boulevard landmark church was rundown, water-damaged and in

need of major repairs. Purchased by an investment company, student housing developers were sniffing around – one even proposed building a spaceship-like inner tower with sleeping pods – until the day Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, founder and leader of the Art of Living Foundation, saw the gleam of the

## The Sports Arena

The Los Angeles Memorial Sports Arena was opened in 1959 by then-Vice President Richard Nixon. It's been the site of many famous politicians' appearances notably that of Senator John F. Kennedy on July 14, 1960, where he appeared at the rostrum and was nominated for President by the Democratic Convention. It has been targeted for demolition to make way for a 22,000-seat soccer stadium.

## Bekins Building

AT&T is proposing to upgrade the wireless cellular installation on this Art Deco former Bekins building at Pico and Crenshaw with antenna units attached to the very visible parapets of this iconic building. WAHA is seeking a less visible rooftop alternative that would meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. The original approval for the cellular installation in 1996 required that "the facades of the existing building will not be altered." The Case is on appeal to the South Los Angeles Area Planning Commission and will have a future hearing.

## Manhattan Place and Venice Boulevard

The historic Art Deco residence on St. Andrews and the Tudor Mansion on Manhattan Place (both at Venice Boulevard), were purchased together recently by a developer. The Deco building was designed by Milton J. Black, an important architect of that era/genre. Both residences have been identified as historic by the City's Survey L.A. project. ●

copper dome. WAHA met with organization leaders and local members, to assess the structure and assure the members of the viability of the historic building and its neighborhood. The Art of Living, an educational NGO focused on yoga, breathing and meditation, restored this landmark building.

## 28. The Zanja

The Last Zanja (Woolen Mills Zanja on Figueroa) was identified by WAHA as this last above-ground remnant of Old Los Angeles's original irrigation system located between the Stimson Mansion and St. Vincent's Cathedral. WAHA organized neighbors to strongly respond to a development proposal which would have eradicated the Zanja, built over the Sabichi site, and changed the face of this historic district. WAHA challenged the development's environmental impacts to the Chester Place National Register Historic District's massing, scale and setting. The developers sold the property to the adjacent college. (Pictured today, below left, and in the 1890s, right.)



## 29. The John S. Vosburg Residence

The Vosburg Residence at 1201 Hoover in the Westmoreland Place neighborhood was threatened with demolition when an adjacent congregation wanted to create a church parking lot. WAHA quickly researched the house's genealogy and learned of its association with an important Tombstone, Arizona pioneer silver miner and husband of Kate Slauson Vosberg. A zoning administrator had initially approved the demolition and parking in the residential zone, but neighbors appealed – and then worked out a "win-win" solution by securing parking for the church at a nearby school. The house was saved.

## 30. 1st AME Zion Church

An arson fire did not dampen the spirits of the members of 1st AME Zion Church, on Adams Boulevard, which suffered major damage in 1997. WAHA helped with efforts to publicize the Church's needs and with fundraising efforts; Disney Corp stepped in and provided the multi-million dollar grant to restore the historic structure. ●



# Preservation Matters

## FULL CIRCLE *By Jim Childs*

Recently I was abruptly confronted with my past when my neighbor Sergio Gutman told me his house at Monmouth and Adams was in escrow. I had mixed feelings about the news. I was happy for Serge now that his long-term anxiety of what to do with the house was over. I was concerned that another home was becoming more USC congregate housing. I was comforted by the fact that his home, the Kelly House, was a Los Angeles Historic Cultural Monument (HCM) and that all the permitted work needed to be reviewed and approved by Lambert Giessinger of the city's Office of Historic Resources. I was further relieved to learn that contractor Robert Carrere would be doing the restoration-rehabilitation work.

I was not however prepared when Serge told me that the new owners needed me to remove the three-dozen or so wooden theater-seats from the basement, ASAP. The theater seats were the last lingering physical remnants from our THEATER IN HISTORIC SITES fund-raising events. Raphael Garcia and Serge had carefully stored the seats in the basement after our last play, *Dead Man's Hand*, closed, in anticipation of some other future show.

Somehow that didn't seem so long ago. But it was. It was in 1989 – which thus marked this year as the L. A. Stock Company's 25th Anniversary. Our Silver Anniversary! Wow! The memories of the plays' overwhelming success for both the audiences and the performers far outshined all the efforts in mounting the shows. In fact, looking back now on that summer-camp type of work camaraderie, makes it seem like it was so much fun, just like in the old movies: "Hey, I've got an idea on how to raise the money! Let's get the gang together and put on a show. My uncle has an old barn we can use." We did just that.

The "money" in question was needed to pay for our historic preservation consultant, Carson Anderson's work on the St. James Park & Twentieth Street National Register Historic District nominations. As the chair of ADHOC, the advocate for the nominations, it had fallen on me to find the money. In cooperation with NUPCA we had held the perfunctory "Community Garage & Yard Sale" and a "Historic House Tour & Tea" events. But even with a grant from WAHA we were still short.

The "gang" in question were the members of the L. A. Stock Company and some friends. The Stock Company was founded in 1977 by alumni from the Los Angeles City College Theater Arts Department. Their mission, in part, was to preserve theatrical traditional performance styles such as "Commedia del Arte." Lacking any permanent performance space and having an ever-changing cast necessitated a gypsy-esque existence of performing in available theaters across the city. When Stock Company president Jean Frost suggested that their own interest in theater history also shared a synergistic relationship to architectural-cultural preservation needs, they came on board with all hands on deck.



The "uncle" with the old barn was in reality NUPCA founders Raphael Garcia and Sergio Gutman. The "old barn" turned out to be two of the few surviving grand mansions left in University Park: Raphael's 1891 Queen Anne "Salisbury House" (HCM No. 240) and Sergio's 1892 Queen Anne "A.E. Kelly Residence" (HCM No. 295).

The unique challenge for the Stock Company and director Frost was to mount a triptych of murder-mystery plays adapted to be performed within existing historic structures. It is said that limitations result in creative solutions and we were very creative indeed. There may not have been any smoke but we used many mirrors. The results were three memorable productions: Agatha Christie's *A Murder is Announced* at Salisbury House, followed by Ms. Christie's classic *A Mousetrap* at the Kelly Residence, and concluding at the Kelly with the American premier of *Dead Man's Hand* by playwright Seymour Matthews.

It was gratifying indeed to read the review in the *Downtown News*: "A delightful, involving mystery with the requisite twists and then some, *Dead Man's Hand* integrates so naturally into its multi-space setting that its hard to believe it wasn't written with the Kelly house in mind." Being any part of a successful performance piece has its own inherent rewards, but showcasing University Park's historic assets to the public while paying the bills was something very special.

When I collected the theater-seats and walked through the empty house undergoing a new renovation, it was like another play was being readied. The owners have agreed to let us all see their work in progress on May 18 for the Preservation Committee's Annual Brunch. I am arranging for some of the Stock Company (pictured on the steps of the Kelly House, 25 years ago) to join us as well. There's no admission charge, just some wonderful company.

I take this moment to thank Raphael, Sergio, the L.A. Stock Company players, NUPCA, WAHA, and all the audience members for their help in making the National Register Districts a reality. A special thanks to Judy Garland and Mickey Rooney for making us all understand that some dreams can come true (if you have an old barn or two). ●



## Preservation Brunch *continued from page 1*

WAHA's special guest, Christy McAvoy, will discuss the "big picture" of preservation efforts in Los Angeles and ensuing challenges, with emphasis on the West Adams area as well as CEQA and the importance of historic designation. In addition, the Martin Weil Award for excellence in preservation advocacy will be announced and presented to the deserving recipient.

The A.E. Kelly Residence was declared Los Angeles Historic Cultural Monument (HCM) #295 on July 12, 1985. It is also a historic resource which contributes to both the North University Park Specific Plan area and the North University Park National Register District. The Kelly Residence is a Queen Anne mansion constructed in 1892 for A.E. Kelly. The mansion was featured in the 1896 edition of "Comfortable Los Angeles Homes," compiled by the Brown Heating Company, Inc.

The Award is named for Martin Eli Weil, its first recipient in 2006, and WAHA continues to honor him each year as a worthy recipient is selected. Weil was a leading preservation architect and a founding member and former president of the Los Angeles Conservancy. He was one of the leaders in the effort to preserve the Los Angeles Central Library downtown. Since 1985 and until his death, he lived in one of the only Greene & Greene-designed craftsman homes in South Los Angeles, and the only one still standing in the City of L.A. Through the years he was never too busy to help with preservation issues in West Adams and he always gave generously of his time. Last year's Weil Award recipient was Laura Meyers and the 2012 award was presented to long-time West Adams resident Alma Carlisle.

McAvoy has been at the forefront of historic preservation since the late 1970s. She has wide knowledge of the regulatory and incentive environments for historic resources combined with expertise in urban and social history. At HRG, she successfully developed creative and integrated approaches to a wide variety of preservation efforts including the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic buildings, historic resource identification, preservation planning, environmental review, community outreach, and heritage education.

McAvoy has received numerous awards for her efforts. Her work has won recognition from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the American Institute of Architects, the California Preservation Foundation, and the Cultural Heritage Commission of the City of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Conservancy, the Los Angeles City Historical Society, the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, and the Hollywood Arts Council. This year Governor Jerry Brown awarded her the Governor's Historic Preservation Award for over three decades of volunteer and professional contributions to historic preservation, from local grass roots advocacy in Los Angeles to national policy initiatives, including nine years as an Advisor to the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Locally, HRG has worked with the City of Los Angeles in damage assessments of historic properties after the 1994 Northridge earthquake; with USC on their historic inventory nomination of twelve USC Historic Cultural monuments and the submission to the SHPO of the USC historic district; and with Mt. St. Mary's College in the infill development of a new student dorm on the Chester Place campus with architect Tom Michali, reviewed by the University Park HPOZ Board. For over a decade, she served as Adjunct Professor in the USC School of Architecture, in addition to helping found its program in historic preservation. McAvoy's long-term commitment to preservation is outstanding and we are delighted that she can join us on May 18.

Please come celebrate Preservation Month, enjoy a mimosa and join with friends to learn about the A.E. Kelly house restoration with Contractor Robert Carrere, meet the amazing Christy McAvoy, celebrate the performers, and congratulate the newest winner of the Martin Weil Award. ●

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**PRESERVATION BRUNCH SCHEDULE**

11 a.m.	Refreshments (including Mimosas) and Continental Breakfast
Noon-1 p.m.	Presentation and Award
2 p.m.	That's a Wrap!

## Civil War Memorial at Angelus Rosedale Cemetery *continued from page 1*

almost immediately after the war's end, it created both a fraternal and political organization that gave the veterans community and power for many decades. Different chapters were labeled "posts" and each was often named after a Union officer of note.

In May, 1868, General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, proclaimed the first "Decoration Day," and flowers were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers alike at Arlington National Cemetery. It took decades for every state to recognize the Memorial Day holiday (and some Southern states still have separate remembrance days for the Confederate war dead), and after World War I Memorial Day became a time to remember those who died fighting in any American war, not just the Civil War. But at Angelus Rosedale Cemetery, Memorial Day became a time to honor and respect Civil War veterans – not just those who died in war.

The GAR organization formally ceased to exist in 1956 with the passing of the last Union veteran.

With the knowledge that the GAR's existence was limited, and with the forethought to continue its traditions and purpose, in 1881 the Grand Army of the Republic formed a second organization, the Sons of Veterans of the United States of America. In 1925 this became the organization that continues to this day, the Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War. Its male-only membership is made up of descendants of Union veterans, while anyone with a genuine interest in the organization or the Civil War may join as an associate.

Among the many activities of the GAR, one was to commemorate fallen veterans on Memorial Day each year. Angelus Rosedale has an enormous veterans' section toward the northeast corner of the cemetery. In that area alone 450 Union veterans of the Civil War rest, with hundreds more, Union and Confederate alike, in private plots throughout the rest of the grounds. In the early years, Memorial Day remembrances were elaborate affairs. The Stanton Post,

named for Edwin Stanton, President Lincoln's Secretary of War, would assemble downtown, march for several blocks, and then take streetcars out to then Rosedale Cemetery. Bands would perform, schoolchildren would wave flags, and the ladies of the Women's Relief Corps (WRC) would decorate the graves. Songs were sung, and speeches were made. It was not unusual, even in 1890s Los Angeles, for a thousand people to gather at Rosedale for such an event.

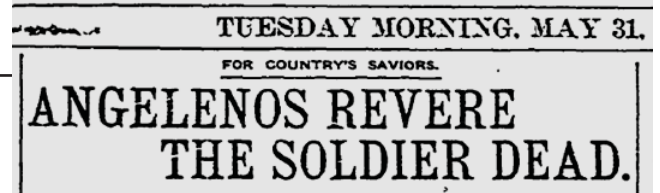
The Memorial Day services in 1908 were exceptional in that a cannon was presented by the war department and unveiled in the cemetery that year. "This was one of the old-style rifled guns," the *Los Angeles Herald* stated, "and was presented to the post on behalf of the government by Capt. Amos A. Fries."

"This gun is a fitting emblem to rest here, overlooking your dead," said Captain Fries. "It is made of iron, as were you men, and it saw service in the same battles that many of you did." Captain Fries, who had served in the United States Army in the Philippines, was addressing a crowd of over a thousand, a third of whom were Civil War veterans.

Another dedication took place in 1914 when a memorial to the Spanish American War was dedicated. Little Thelma Moyer, the daughter of Commander Moyer of the United Spanish War Veterans (USWV) released a flag which had flown over the U.S.S. Bennington — a ship which several years earlier had exploded and sank in San Diego Harbor, reminiscent of the U.S.S. Maine which had done the same in Havana Harbor in 1898. The monument was then unveiled, a bronze tablet cast from parts of the actual U.S.S. Maine. The GAR and SV were co-organizers of the event, which included a reading of the Gettysburg Address.



*Vintage "Decoration Days" at Rosedale Cemetery: Top left, GAR memorial Day event in 1952; bottom left, Decoration Day in the 1890s; above right, the GAR monument*







*Women decorating graves of Spanish American War veterans in 1946*

As the men of the GAR aged and passed on, the Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War took over the Memorial Day services. Another monument was dedicated by this organization on Memorial Day in 1957, this time in memory of the GAR, which had ceased to exist the year before. The General Rosecrans Camp of the SUVCW continued their annual remembrances at Angelus Rosedale until just a few years ago. However, with the 150th anniversary of the Civil War and the SUVCW's dedication to the memory of those who served, this remembrance is being reignited this year, here at Angelus Rosedale where so many Civil War veterans are buried.

WAHA is also devoting this year's Living History Tour to the Civil War anniversary on Saturday, September 27 (the last Saturday of September). We invite all of our members to attend this year's Memorial Day Weekend event at Angelus Rosedale Cemetery on Sunday, May 25, to learn more about this historic cemetery and to honor those who gave so much for this country. ●

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## **TAKING PAUSE TO REMEMBER THOSE WHO FOUGHT IN WAR: A CIVIL WAR MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND REMEMBRANCE EVENT AT ANGELUS ROSEDALE CEMETERY**

**Sunday, May 25**

**12:30 p.m.**

**Angelus Rosedale Cemetery, 1831 West Washington Blvd.**

The Historic Angelus Rosedale Cemetery, founded in 1884 and one of Los Angeles' oldest cemeteries, has long been connected to the Civil War by its many hundreds of veterans interred there. This year, with a nod to the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, a Civil War descendants' organization and WAHA will gather at Angelus Rosedale Cemetery on Sunday, May 25, starting at 12:30 p.m., to once again pay tribute to those who fought in the War Between the States.



WAHA is collaborating with the Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) General Rosecrans Camp and its Women's Auxiliary, along with the Daughters of the Union Veterans of the Civil War, for a traditional Memorial Day remembrance event (but on SUNDAY, not Monday) at the Grand Army of the Republic section of the cemetery, where 450 Union veterans are buried. Angelus Rosedale is also home to other Civil War veterans, Union and Confederate alike, along with veterans of later wars, and after the formal program is complete, WAHA volunteers will lead some walking tours of the cemetery highlighting those graves and others of historical interest.

Other participants include the Los Angeles H.S. Junior ROTC and Band of the California Battalion (pictured above), which will perform authentic Civil War music (using accurate instruments of the era). Along with traditional presentations, Annette James-Rogers will speak about "My Great-Grandfather and the 26th U.S Colored Troops, N.Y."

We invite all to attend. The event is free, but please do RSVP to [events@westadamsheritage.org](mailto:events@westadamsheritage.org) so we can provide enough chairs and beverages.

It may be a hot day; please wear lightweight/layered clothing, a hat if appropriate, and comfortable flat shoes if you would like to participate in a walking tour.

If you would like to VOLUNTEER, please e-mail WAHA's Living History Tour committee at [tours@westadamsheritage.org](mailto:tours@westadamsheritage.org). ●

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



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## WAHA's 2014 Calendar

### MAY

- ✓ Neighborhood Council Elections  
*Saturday, May 10*
- ✓ WAHA's Annual Preservation Brunch  
*Sunday, May 18*
- ✓ Memorial Day Weekend Remembrance at Angelus  
Rosedale Cemetery — *Sunday, May 25*

### JUNE

- ✓ Newcomers' Dessert  
*Thursday, June 5*

### JULY

- ✓ WAHA's 4th of July Picnic  
*Friday, July 4*

### SEPTEMBER

- ✓ Living History Tour at Angelus Rosedale Cemetery  
*Saturday, September 27*

### DECEMBER

- ✓ Holiday Historic Homes Tour & Progressive Dinner  
*Saturday and Sunday, December 6-7*

# Calendar ✓

## Upcoming Events

### MAY

#### Annual Preservation Mimosa Brunch

Sunday, May 18, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

(see story, page 1)

#### Oil Drilling Public Hearing —

Tuesday, May 20 (see story, page 6)

#### Civil War Veterans Remembrance at Angelus Rosedale Cemetery

Sunday, May 25, 12:30 p.m.

(see story, page 1)



### JUNE

#### Newcomers' Dessert —

Thursday, June 5

7-9 p.m.

2102 West 24th Street

(see story, page 5)

### JULY

#### WAHA's Annual 4th of July Potluck

Picnic — Friday, July 4

## Two Heritage Events in May

### WAHA's Annual Preservation Brunch

#### Mimosas & Continental Breakfast at Landmark Victorian

Sunday, May 18

11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

1140 West Adams Blvd. (North University Park)

WAHA celebrates Historic Preservation Month each May. This year, you will have a rare opportunity to view a restoration in progress at the 1892 A.E. Kelly Residence when it opens its doors to the public for the first time in 25 years. Please join us as WAHA gives its annual Martin Eli Weil Preservation Award to a very deserving recipient. (see story, page 1)



### A Civil War Memorial at

#### Angelus Rosedale Cemetery

Sunday, May 25

12:30 p.m.

1831 West Washington Blvd.

The Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War, Rosecrans Camp, along with WAHA and several other organizations, salute the soldiers who served, in honor of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. After a program that includes a musical performance by the Band of the California Battalion, WAHA will lead walking tours of the cemetery. Be sure to join us for this very special afternoon. (see story, page 1)



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

The WAHA Matters Newsletter is a publication of the West Adams Heritage Association. Members and supporters of WAHA are invited to submit articles to the Newsletter. Letters will be published subject to space constraints and will be cut for length if necessary. Articles will be published subject to acceptance by the editors of the WAHA Board. Advertising is subject to the approval of the publishers. Although the Association appreciates its many fine advertisers, the Association does not accept responsibility for claims made by advertisers. Services and products are not tested and appearance of advertising does not imply, nor does it constitute, endorsement by the West Adams Heritage Association. Copyright 2014. All rights for graphic and written material appearing in the newsletter are reserved. Contact Director of Publications for permission.



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### ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



The A.E. Kelly Residence, where WAHA's annual Preservation Brunch will be held on Sunday, May 18, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.