

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

NEWSLETTER



Number 191

March 2002

Another Piece of L.A. History Threatened by LAUSD

As most Angelenos know, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) is fast-tracking plans to build nearly 100 new schools throughout the city, including West Adams. Among the construction projects the school district is proposing is a new high school combined with a new continuation high school located at Washington and Vermont, taking up more than 14 acres between Washington Boulevard and the Santa Monica Freeway, and stretching three blocks east of Vermont.

To accomplish this, LAUSD must remove nearly two dozen residential structures – at least a few of which West Adams Heritage Association argues are worthy of historic designation, and several more of which are intact, original examples of period homes. In addition, the school district plans call for the demolition of the Film Exchange Building, an important artifact from Hollywood’s “Golden Age” of moviemaking in the 1920s [see story, page 8].

But before any demolition, LAUSD must approve an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Unfortunately, in two separate draft versions of this EIR, “none of the buildings are considered an historic resource under CRHR [California Register of Historical Resources] criteria” and therefore “no mitigation is required.” Needless to say, West Adams Heritage has disputed this conclusion.

WAHA’s position is that not only are several buildings historic resources, but that they should either be saved and moved, or saved and incorporated into the final project – or failing either option, that the historic fabric of each affected structure should be salvaged and recycled within the Historic West Adams community.

Continued on page 8

Alvarado Terrace Memories

Elizabeth Kearney, author of Oh, I Can See it Now: The Story of Historical Alvarado Terrace in Los Angeles, is WAHA’s guest speaker at the March General Meeting, scheduled for Saturday, March 16. Here is an excerpt from her just-published book:

As she closed her eyes and blindly gazed off into space, she would utter these words, “Oh, I can see it now.” These words were our introduction to some of the most fascinating history lessons we’ve ever had. Our “teacher” was Lydia Riveroll Mitchell, and her memories of early Los An-

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At Home With History: Exploring Los Angeles’ Historic Preservation Overlay Zones

A Self-Driving Neighborhood & Home Tour

On Sunday, April 7, visitors will have a rare opportunity to visit seven of Los Angeles’ Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZs), tour one representative house in each of these communities, and discover why HPOZs are sweeping our city.

All around Los Angeles, unique residential enclaves with remarkable historic homes provide a special community ambiance and enhance the quality of life for local residents. Over the last few decades, a quiet revolution has been taking place in these historic communities. Across the city historic neighborhoods are banding together to become Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZs) – historic districts designated by the City of Los Angeles. In the last year alone six new HPOZs have been created, bringing the total number to fifteen with many more in the works.

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Visit Alvarado Terrace WAHA General Meeting

Saturday, March 16, 2–5 p.m.

At the home of Mary Ann Hutchison and Ben Davis
1333 Alvarado Terrace

Potluck: Think Green for St. Patrick

Contact Greg (323/734-7725) or
Alma (323/737-2060) for more information

**WEST ADAMS
HERITAGE ASSOCIATION**

2263 S. Harvard Boulevard
Historic West Adams
Los Angeles, California 90018
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**CANDIDATES NEEDED
FOR WAHA
BOARD OF DIRECTORS --
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**WAHA Committee Chairs and
Standing Meetings**

Community Outreach Contact Jacqueline Sharps if you'd like to get involved with this activity 323/766-8842

Historic Preservation/Zoning & Planning

Chairs: Eric Bronson 323/737-1163 and Tom Florio 213/749-8469 - Meets third Mondays at City Living Realty, 2316 1/2 South Union, Suite 2

Newsletter Chair: Laura Meyers 323/737-6146 Meets third Tuesdays

Membership Chair: John Kurtz 323/732-2990 - Meets the Wednesday before the WAHA Board Meeting

Fundraising Call Catherine Barrier 323/732-7233

Web Site Call Clayton de Leon 323/734-0660

Neighborhood Council Liaisons Contact Colleen Davis 323/733-0446 and Jean Frost 213/748-1656

Programs and Events Greg Stegall 323/734-7725 and Alma Carlisle 323/737-2060

The WAHA Board meets on the fourth Thursday of each month. Contact Jacqueline Sharps for location.

All committee meetings begin at 7 p.m. All WAHA members are encouraged to join one of the committees!

WAHA NEWS

In Memoriam

We're sorry to report that Harold Toliver, a long time resident of the Historic West Adams District and a former Board member of West Adams Heritage Association, died unexpectedly on February 1.

His roots in the community run deep. Harold graduated from Los Angeles High School and, later, the University of Southern California. He was Director of Marketing and Public Relations for Golden State Mutual Life Insurance, located in the heart of West Adams. He was active in many organizations, and served on the board of directors of the American Heart Association. But Harold is best remembered for his activism in his own West Adams neighborhood, Wellington Square, where he served as president of the Wellington Square Improvement Association.

"Harold would say, 'If we value our neighborhood, others such as politicians, real estate brokers and merchants would value it too.' He formed committees to make Wellington Square a safe, cohesive and beautiful neighborhood," recalled Ambrose Stevens of the Wellington Square Association. "Harold was about solving issues. He not only talked the talk — Harold walked the walk, and he made a huge difference."

Tenth District Councilman Nate Holden's office presented Harold's wife, Georgia, firstborn son, Dale, and younger son, Sterling, a Los Angeles City Council resolution and homage, which stated: "IN TRIBUTE The Los Angeles City Council extends its deepest sympathy to you in the passing of your loved one HAROLD TOLIVER in whose memory this tribute serves to honor. On behalf of the Tenth District, I join with the Los Angeles City Council in memorializing his service to the community. May it provide some measure of comfort knowing that he is reverently remembered. God's blessing on you and your family."

WAHA MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICES ON THEIR WAY

Individualized invoices for WAHA Membership renewal will be mailed out in March to members who need to renew their memberships for the 2002 - 2003 year. Memberships in WAHA go from April to April every year. New WAHA Membership Cards will be mailed out enmasse at the end of April, when the current membership cards expire. Typically if you don't renew your membership, you are taken off the Newsletter mailing list and the May or June Newsletter is the last one you receive.

New WAHA Memberships taken out late in 2001 were extended through April 2003, so for instance, if you took out a new WAHA Membership in December you will not have to renew during this upcoming renewal drive. You won't be getting an invoice so there is no need to mail a payment. You will get a new membership card in April. If you have any questions about the status of your WAHA membership you can contact John Kurtz, Membership Committee Chair, at 323/732-2990.

Garden and Paint Contests Nominees Sought

Every June, West Adams Heritage hosts a special gardens general meeting where we learn more about our own garden plots and take a look at our neighbors' efforts to beautify their homes and gardens. This year is no different.

In the meantime, WAHA is looking for entries for the annual Garden Contest as well as for the Exterior Paint Contest. The nominations deadline is April 10. The May newsletter will publish all the nominees of outstanding gardens and/or new exterior paint jobs for the year so members can view each entry. We will announce an official weekend in May when WAHA will photograph the nominated gardens, and that will be the time for members to review the nominees, so Gardeners, Heads Up! Be sure your spring garden is in its best form in May.

Please feel free to nominate any paint job completed in the past 12 months (April 1, 2001 - March 31, 2002), or any outstanding garden in your neighborhood or in the greater Historic West Adams District (Jefferson to Pico; 110 Freeway to West Boulevard). This is a good opportunity for people outside your immediate neighborhood to not only know about major improvements throughout the West Adams community but also give them a chance to see them.

All nominations, with address and homeowner's name, should go to Ed Trospen (2515 4th Avenue, Historic West Adams, Los Angeles 90018; 323/734-2010 phone, 323/730-0432 fax, or e-mail: edtrospen@aol.com). Look for details about the June garden meeting and contest awards in an upcoming issue of the newsletter.

WAHA Financial Primer

In 1992, the Membership Committee sponsored a series of workshops for a limited group about PERSONAL FINANCIAL PLANNING. Topics included budgeting, taxes, retirement planning, refinancing, basic accounting practices, investments, and estate planning.

As part of the membership benefits the committee is exploring again sponsoring these classes in the late spring or early summer. If you are interested in this type of activity, please call Membership Chair John Kurtz (323/732-2990) and let him know. (Leave your name and number if you get an answering machine.) If there is enough interest this opportunity will be scheduled for a small group of participants.

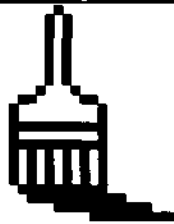
Calling All Film Stars

For a May 2002 story in the WAHA newsletter, we'd like to know if your home has had a starring role in a feature film, television series, or music video (please, no aging heavy metallists). This is a basic Who-What-When request: tell us the name of the film or other project, who starred in it, and, if you can remember, the year of release. Please send the information to Newsletter Editor Laura Meyers (lauramink@aol.com). Deadline is April 1.



Bolts and Nutz

by Linda Joshua



Hello and welcome to "Bolts and Nutz" – a column dedicated to matters of home renovation and the art of restoration within the WAHA community. If you have a question, or you have an area of expertise and would be interested in sharing your knowledge by answering the questions, please contact me at Linda_joshua@hotmail.com

Q. I bought some plexiglass that was wrapped in plastic for protection. Some time went by and now I find that the plastic is hopelessly welded to the plexiglass. What's the best way to remove it?

David, Bungalows

A. Start in the most gentle way possible by trying vinegar first. Soak an area near an edge of the plastic so you can work the vinegar under the plastic, then scrape with a plastic or wood scraper. As you do this, pour some more vinegar under it, and pull. Mayonnaise is also worth a try. The mayonnaise will begin to smell bad very quickly, but it has oil in it and this is one of the elements to soften the backing.

Heat could be another solution. Use a hair dryer to heat up an edge of the plastic so you can start to pull it off, then heat a little more and pull.

Q. I just moved into a house with white ceramic tile and disgustingly dirty grout. I want to try cleaning it. What do you suggest?

Allen, Los Angeles

A. Let's start with the basics and try cleaning it with bleach and water, scrubbing the grout with a toothbrush. If it does not come clean, apply Grout Colorant, sold in tile stores. Another option is to paint it with a dark-gray semitransparent stain; the type that goes on clapboards or shingles. Although it is not designed for grout, it

will stick quite well. The dark gray will not show the dirt and will present a nice contrast to the white tile.

If you're talking about floor tile, I would lean towards not bothering to try and clean the grout. It never comes clean, and you'll save a lot of time and heartache by staining it dark. If you must however, try sanding the grout then sealing it with a masonry or tile sealer. You could sand with a narrow piece of sandpaper without touching the tile, or even try scraping the grout to take off the top layer. The sealer will make the grout water resistant and, therefore, resistant to dirt and other stains.

Q. We sweltered last summer in our 1912 uninsulated craftsman, and we figure that now that the weather is cooler, this is a good time to get an attic fan installed to reduce the amount

of heat hanging around in the warmer months. I also understand that it will reduce condensation in winter. Where do you suggest we start?

Kelly, 5th Avenue

Why suffer and sweat when you can easily and cheaply solve the problem of unbearable heat in the summer? Attic temperatures can reach a sticky, sweltering 150°F without an attic fan. Attic fans work by creating a positive air-flow through the attic that does not rely on wind or require excessive passive venting. The attic fan is usually mounted up on the roof of the home toward the back about two feet down from the peak. It goes on and off automatically with a thermostat, so it only runs when it is beneficial. Attic fans use less than 250 Watts, and offer many benefits including lower temperatures and reduced energy costs.

For step by step instructions on the Do-It-Yourself installation of attic fans needing a power source, one site to try is:

<http://doityourself.com/attic/atticfan-e2diy0118.htm>

Solar attic fans are also available, and also worth looking into, especially considering the fact that we live in sunny California.

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Directory Updates

The following are changes to the current WAHA Membership Directory. Please update your copy of the directory if you want to keep it current. If you have any changes which need to be incorporated into this current Directory, or if you have a new mailing address please let us know! You can contact WAHA by mail, or call John Kurtz (Membership Chair) 323/732-2990, so your newsletter and other mailings get to you in a timely manner.

Update with New/Correct Information

Ali & Aisha Abdur-Rahman, (323) 734-0050

Judie & Alan Schoening - new e-mail address: schoening@attbi.com

Jane McNamara & John Oddy, 2420 5th Avenue 90018 (323) 766-9058

Add

Patricia Bauer, 940 Ridgecrest Street, Monterey Park, CA 91754-4554, (323) 283-6964

Add (and welcome) new WAHA members

Susan Adler & Bill Wolfe, 1322 S. Orange Grove Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90019 (323) 857-6676, adler@rand.org

Dwight Broadneaux, 6709 La Tijera Blvd., #623, Los Angeles, CA 90045 (323) 633-3720

Charita Carter, c/o WDI, 1401 Flower Street, Glendale, CA 91221

Michele DeVita, 1812 N. Kenmore Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90027 dgood18055@AOL.com

J. Darlene Hayes, 2531 10th Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90018, (323) 737-7492 darhay@AOL.com

Carol Jones, Peace Theological Seminary, 3500 W. Adams Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90018, (323) 737-4055

Lynn Kersey & Joshua Pechthalt, 1968 Buckingham Road, Los Angeles, CA 90016 (323) 732-8799

Kathryn Lyons, 3820 W. Adams Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90018

Candace Nims, 2324 1/2 Oak Street, Santa Monica, CA 90405-5104, (310) 450-4689 cjncats@sei99.com

Marcelle Vinsone, P. O. Box 86234, Los Angeles, CA 90086, (323) 373-0900

WAHA BOARD ELECTIONS ARE COMING

West Adams Heritage Association needs you! Annual Board elections are slated for April, and we'd like each of you to please consider running for a position on the WAHA Board of Directors. Requirements: a love of old houses, an enthusiasm for community activities, and membership in WAHA for at least six months. This election year we have five *three-year positions* plus one *one-year position* on the election roster. Generally speaking, Board members must commit to attend all WAHA Board meetings (usually held the fourth Thursday of each month) and also will be given specific responsibilities for certain of WAHA's events and social functions, on a rotating basis.

In addition, most Board members hold office or committee chairmanships. Officers of the Boards are elected by the Board Members at their May retreat meeting after the election of the Board by the general membership. What particular talents/interests are needed in 2002? Current Board members overseeing Publications and Programs/Events are taking on different responsibilities, so these positions will be available. Moreover, WAHA always needs expertise in fundraising, zoning issues, and preservation. But if you have a program you'd like to initiate, please don't hesitate discuss your ideas with President Jackie Sharps, and of course don't hesitate to join the board. Along with Jackie, any of the current members (listed on page 2 of this Newsletter) would be happy to talk to you about Board activities. All positions available **MUST BE FILLED** to keep the organization viable.

If you are interested, submit your candidate statement (a short paragraph, 100 - 200 words or so) to Membership Committee Chair, John Kurtz, by Sunday, March 17. Candidate Statements will be published in the April Newsletter.

The Board members are the heart and soul of this organization. Without a full and competent Board of Directors, WAHA cannot function effectively. So if you believe WAHA serves a valuable function in the West Adams community or if you have ideas on how the organization should be run, please step up, serve and contribute your expertise!

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Through My Eyes Only WAHA's Favorite Photographer

By John B. Deaven

Often in this column I have referred to Harry Demas as WAHA's "favorite photographer." At many of our tours and monthly socials, Harry has a loaded camera, ready to shoot, asking folks to pose here and pose there. I'm unsure when I first met Harry, but he and I have often shared many couches and side-by-side lawn chairs at monthly WAHA socials enjoying the comfort of each other's friendship. I'm always glad when I see Harry at a social, knowing I'll have a buddy to talk to. However, there is more to Harry than his love for photography, and I would like to share with the WAHA membership the details that I have learned regarding Harry's life.

Harry Demas was born and raised in Sacramento, California, where he finished high school. Then he attended Chouinard Art Institute in Los Angeles. Harry then attended Sacramento State University, Tylor Art School (Philadelphia, PA.), and eventually graduated from San Francisco State University, where he received both his bachelor's degree and his master's degree. While working on his Master's, Harry was with the original production of "Hair" during its run at the Orpheum Theatre in San Francisco.

Early in his youth, Harry was one of the top interior designers at Breuner's Decorator Galleries in Sacramento.

At the time, Breuner's had an entire floor of 32 designers. Also, Harry was one of the early members of the Society for the Preservation and Enhancement of Old Sacramento and Environs. The

group, Harry recalls, physically painted the buildings to save the old section of Sacramento, which became Old Sacramento!

Around this time, Harry Demas decided to move to New York City to seek his fortune. While there, he worked for Saks Fifth Avenue. He eventually returned to California and started teaching at San Francisco State University. Then Harry decided that he wanted to live one year in all of the major cities! He started with Los Angeles, while still maintaining his old college apartment on San Francisco's Russian Hill overlooking the Golden Gate Bridge. After the first year in L.A., Harry never moved onto another city. He was enjoying life too much in the L.A. area. Also, at this time, Harry was teaching at three places at the same time: California State University - Los Angeles, Glendale College, and East L.A. College. He designed and taught costuming, set design, stage lighting, and theatrical make-up. Harry also did some acting in stage shows, such as "Arsenic and Old Lace," "The Boy Friend," "The Man Who Came to Dinner," Noel Coward's "Red Peppers," plus shows by Chekhov and Shakespeare.

While in L.A., Harry would lust over the old houses around U.S.C. He remembers taking several early house tours, and meeting Bob Bortfeld. For a while, Harry was a regular on Bob's Sunday tours of houses that were on the market. After going on many tours, Harry decided to join W.A.H.A., realizing that "the West Adams people are the top-liners of L.A." Harry, like several of our members, does not live in West Adams, but he loves to photograph it. Many of Harry's WAHA photos can be seen on the web site: [www.neighborhoodlink.com/la/west adams](http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/la/west%20adams), under "Holiday Tours."

Harry admits freely that his true passion in life is his collection of photographs of Harry posing with movie stars. Harry attends all the old Hollywood events, dressed handsomely in his tuxedo. First, he'll ask a star to pose alone for his camera. Then he asks them to pose with him! Together, recently, at his current home, Harry and I poured over the collection, and yes, indeed, Harry is posing in photographs with Carol Channing, Elizabeth Scott, Margaret O'Brien, Debbie Reynolds, Gloria DeHaven, Cyd Charisse, Penny Singleton, Ann Miller, Betty Garrett, Jane Withers, June Allyson, Janet Leigh, Hermione Gingold, Virginia O'Brien, Patricia Morison, June Havor, Tab Hunter, Sandra Dee, and Troy Donahue.

To this day, Harry is still debating whether to give up his San Francisco apartment, which he visits from time to time. However, the Los Angeles area has a pretty good hold on him, he admits, since he keeps himself fairly active here. I'm happy. I sure enjoy his company at the monthly socials.

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BLOCK CLUB & NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS



Adams-Normandie Neighborhood Association (ANNA)

About 35 members attending the February ANNA meeting. To help facilitate getting to know the newer members, we will be wearing name tags for the next few months.

After our eight standing committee reports were given we launched into details of our El Paseo Restoration. Our next work day is Saturday, March 2nd. We will be putting in over 400 plants and invite any gardener out there to help us.

We will meet at 1658 W 23rd street at 8 AM. We expect to be there all day.

Block Club and Neighborhood News is an important and integral part of the WAHA Newsletter -- a place for us to share ideas, information, and upcoming events. To publicize future events, you must provide the information to the newsletter well in advance, no later than the first of the prior month (eg: August 1 for the September issue). To submit "News from Around the Blocks," please contact Michael S. Smith via e-mail information to mikegreg@pacbell.net, or fax to 213/894-5335 (please address to Mike Smith).

The month of February is being spent doing the cement restoration and pilaster installation.

Prett Galloway has taken the lead in finding out how to get a sound wall installed from Western to Vermont along the South side of the 10 Freeway.

All interested ANNA members will be taking the Fashion District Tour given the last Saturday of each month. We will explore the 84 block area via trolley on February 23rd.

ANNA Eats will be at Weiland's Brewery on March 14th for our monthly feed bag. Come join us.

If you'd like to learn more about ANNA please visit our website: www.westadams.com/anna

Volunteer on HPOZ Tour

The L. A. Conservancy is looking for volunteer docents to help out on its April 7th tour of seven HPOZs, three of which are in West Adams. Docents in the houses will work split shifts, between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. Contact: Jane McNamara, 213/430-4210 or e-mail, jmcnamara@laconservancy.org.

24th Street Theatre's Explorer Series for Kids

24th Street Theatre has been one of the leaders in Arts Education since its beginning five years ago. In February and March, the 24th Street Theatre offers a Saturday Explorer series, programs which may be of interest to WAHA members, their families and their teachers, including:

BEAKMAN IN PERSON March 16th, 1pm

Based on the Emmy winning childrens science educational TV show Beakmans World, this series of simple yet fun science demonstrations has plenty of audience participation and the trademark goofy Beakman humor. Best for ages 6 and up.

JUGGLING AND SOME ANTICS March 23rd, 1pm

A funny, beautiful, thoughtful show featuring master story-teller and social satirist Sara Felder, whose gentle but incisive humor recalls Lily Tomlin or Jerry Seinfeld ... if they could juggle. Best for ages 8 and up.

BILL'S NEW FROCK March 30th, 1pm

Mark Taper Forum's P.L.A.Y. presents this light hearted and imaginative satire of gender stereotyping, adapted from the novel by Anne Fine by the acclaimed Scottish theatre company, Visible Fictions.

Admission is FREE Call to make reservations (213) 745-6516 or www.24street.org. 1117 West 24th (Corner of Hoover and 24th, right by USC).

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The Film Exchange Building: A Relic of Hollywood's Golden Era

If you look closely at the Spanish Colonial Revival -style commercial building on the southeast corner of Washington and Vermont, you might notice a folk art-like motion picture camera trade sign hanging above the entrance. This is the Film Exchange Building, a historic structure associated with an important period in the movie industry. It is also a major structure which the Los Angeles Unified School District proposes to demolish to make way for a new high school. We thought we'd share with you its description and analysis of the Film Exchange Building's significance as a Cultural Resource, as it is actually described (verbatim, below) in the draft EIR now circulating for comment:

In 1906 the original three-story building on Washington Blvd. was a fabric/bunting retail store on the ground floor with offices above. There is currently a sewing machine repair service on the ground floor with various offices above. As a result

the general use of this portion of the subject property has been consistently maintained for nearly 100-years. Building permit records from this original construction do not survive; the earliest information has been derived from Sanborn Insurance Maps.

The retail business located at the corner of Vermont and Washington consisted of an office, restaurant, and retail stores. When this portion of the subject building was either removed and rebuilt or remodeled in 1925, the corner was occupied by a bank, and the restaurant use and retail stores continued. Retail uses continue to the present day. A bank apparently continued to operate at the corner within the last ten years. While a small walk-in vault remains on the third floor, this was probably associated with the Film Exchange, rather than the bank.

Of key historic importance is that the subject building was constructed in 1925 as a "Film Exchange". Discussions with a former owner and a long time tenant, who is retired from the USC film

school, and who stored film and equipment at the building for the last 25-years, provided insight into the building's original form and use. A former building owner was able to describe the film vaults.

In the mid 1920's, sometimes considered the "Golden Age" of Hollywood, the method of sending films to theatres changed. Prior to that time many movie theatres were owned by movie studios. As a result of anti-trust legislation, theatre ownership was separated and prints of a film were sent by the studio that made the film to a central "clearing-house" or "Film Exchange" which sent the film prints to the theatres. The subject building was such an exchange.

This area of Los Angeles is close to a number of major studios, including 20th Century Fox (Fox offices and a theater were once located in a similar, now demolished, building at the NW corner of Washington and Vermont) and MGM. For this, and possibly other reasons, the area became a center for the Film Exchange business. The building south of Lyon's Moving (Building #2), now completed remodeled, was also a

Continued on page 9

LAUSD EIR

Continued from page 1

In mid-February, LAUSD recirculated an updated draft version of the EIR, with the comment period now open until March 28. If you would like to review the document itself (mind you, it's an extremely large file and difficult to access) check it out on the web at: <http://www.laschools.org/projectstatus/attach/55.98021/RecirculatedDEIRSectionsandAppendices.pdf>.

In WAHA's original response to the first draft EIR, circulated late last year, WAHA's letter stated: "Although West Adams Heritage Association supports the building of much needed schools in the area, we believe that the process should be done in good faith with the community. The draft EIR (DEIR) is deficient in several areas, including the impacts the project will have on cultural resources, traffic circulation, and parking issues. Although the DEIR properly identifies the potential historically significant properties, it fails to provide proper factual evidence for the conclusions that 'The impact would be less than significant.' We find that the discussion is insufficient and the conclusions on the 12 potentially CRHP eligible buildings is incorrect. Many of the buildings are identified on the survey as 'could become eligible for the National Register.' In fact, we believe they are eligible."

Catherine Barrier, a WAHA Board member and professional architectural historian, explained that the first version of LAUSD's EIR "was incomplete. The first version failed to evaluate properties properly in terms of their eligibility to be listed on the California Register." In the second version, she added, "They are still saying that none of these are cultural resources. The revisions just went back and inserted new conclusions."

In both versions of the document, the EIR preparers examine the possibility of creating an HPOZ in this small pocket neighborhood, and then reject it. According to the draft EIR, because there are nearby but not exactly adjacent designated HPOZs with similar homes but a higher concentration of those historic structures, it is not necessary to designate or save this cluster of properties. "The single-family houses which comprise this District are now an isolated remnant of one of Los Angeles' early suburbs," says the document. "Between 1900 and the First World War this specific area developed as part of a modest residential suburb, as seen by a number of residences dated soon after the turn of the century in the surrounding area. From the late 19th into the early 20th century the hilly areas to the north became desirable upper and upper-middle class neighborhoods, as did some areas to the south. These areas currently contain collections of single-family houses, most importantly the City

Continued on page 9

The Film Exchange Building Continued from page 8

Film Exchange. The subject building appears to have been comprised of several separate "film exchanges", as noted on the Sanborn Maps and what appears to be an original lobby identification board which states "The Film Exchange Building Gore Bros., Inc." and has room to identify a number of businesses. The Sanborn Maps also indicate that the ground floor facing Vermont Ave (excepting the corner on Washington Blvd.) also contained "film exchanges". This ground floor space was converted to retail use sometime after 1955, based on Sanborn Maps.

The Gore Brothers (Abraham L. and Michael "Mike") were major theatre owners in Los Angeles in the 1920s. In 1920, they along with Sol Lesser (a pioneer in the motion picture production business), formed West Coast Theatres, Inc. This chain ultimately numbered 175 theatres and was eventually sold to Mann Theatres in 1962. The subject building was clearly the main distribution point for movies to the Gore Brothers' theatres.

The "Southwest Builder & Con-

tractor 11/14/1924". p55, col. 3 states "L. A. Smith, 301 S. Western Ave has prepared preliminary plans for two 2-str, reinf. concr. and brick office and film exchange bldgs. on Vermont Ave between Washington and 20th Sts. for M. and A. L. Gore. One of the bldgs. will be 270 X 130 ft. and the other 150 X 130 ft.; stucco exterior, tile rf., stone trim, wrought iron, plate glass and marble store fronts. Work to start Jan. 1, 1925."

L. A. Smith is an important designer of theatres in southern California during the 1920s. L. A. City Library catalog files attribute 20 theatres to him between 1920 and 1927, including the Beverly Theatre at 206 N. Beverly Dr. and the Rialto Theatre at the northeast corner of Fair Oaks Ave. and Okley St. in South Pasadena.

Unfortunately, records of the 1924 or 1925 building permits have not survived. The first L. A. City Building Permit records for the subject property date from 1928 and pertain to office remodeling by Allan Christopher Balch, architect (1864-1943) and Floyd E. Stanbury, engineer. Balch and Stanbury designed well over one hundred movie theatres throughout the southern half of California during the 1920s and '30s, including the Boulevard Theatre at 4549 E.

Whittier Blvd., the El Rey Theatre at 5519 Wilshire Blvd., and the Fox Theatre at the southwest corner of Garey Ave. and 3rd St. Work on "The Film Exchange" appears to be one of their few non-theatre projects, although it can be assumed they were chosen because of their work on Gore Brothers, i. e. "West Coast Theatres" projects. No clear association was discovered in Library has been identified between A. L. Smith and Balch and Stanbury, although they were both in the business of designing primarily movie theatres in the 1920s and both designed a number of theatres for the Gore Brothers.

While no mention could be found of the building's contractor, however, it may have been Lilly-Flecher Co. who was the contractor for a number of the Gore Brothers theatre projects (ref. L. A. City Library catalog listings).

Because early movie film was highly flammable, it had to be stored in a fire proof location, hence the elaborate, now completely removed, previously described film vaults located adjacent the eastern side of the subject building. The portions of the building which remain were used for busi-

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LAUSD EIR Continued from page 8

of Los Angeles Adams-Normandie Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ) to the southwest, Harvard Heights HPOZ and Western Heights HPOZ to the west, and University Park HPOZ to the southeast."

However, "The construction of the Santa Monica Freeway (1961-1966) severely impacted the subject residential neighborhood, (as well as other nearby neighborhoods) severing prior connections to the south and reducing it to W. 20th St. and a few perpendicular stubs sandwiched between the Freeway and arterials," says the draft EIR. "Numerous similar residential neighborhoods, many considerably more compete, are found throughout the State there are four City of Los Angeles defined Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZ) in close proximity to the subject area. These Zones contain literally hundreds of residences similar to those addressed here.

"Given the fact that this is a small remnant of a much larger collection of neighborhoods, and that much larger and more cohesive similar neighborhoods are protected in the surrounding area, there does not appear to be an overriding need to provide the subject area with an individual district designation and as it is not directly contiguous with any of the four HPOZs it would not result in a simple extension of an existing preservation area," the report concludes.

In any case, several structures appear to be individually eligible for local historic designation, according to WAHA's own experienced reviewers. For example, the triplex at 1932 Ellendale, as a "surviving multi-family Queen Anne style-structure" [is] much rarer in Los Angeles than single-family Queen Anne style structures," according to Barrier. Too, the restored, late-Victorian two-story single-family residence at 1528 West 20th Street "appears to be essentially intact and exhibits the sim-

plified Victorian forms common to turn-of-the-century transitional structures, where Victorian ornamentation and forms are greatly simplified. It is a well preserved example of its type," according to the EIR preparers, and yet the document fails to find this residence historic.

Last but not least, the Film Exchange building may be not only locally eligible for historic designation, it may well be National Register eligible as well.

At press time, WAHA had not yet formulated its written response, but intends to create an appropriate legal record. At minimum, WAHA hopes LAUSD will mitigate its impacts on what WAHA considers important cultural resources in the Historic West Adams District.

Alvarado Terrace Memories

Continued from page 1

geles and the fascinating homes wrapped around tiny Alvarado Terrace Park were made all the more interesting because she and a number of our neighbors had lived in their houses since the turn of the 20th Century.

Perhaps the easiest way to share the rich tapestry of history she shared with us is to take you around this little park for visits with the owners of these homes all of which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and as Historic-Cultural Monuments of the City of Los Angeles.

Let's start with Lydia's (or "Mitch's" as we all knew her) home at 1406 Alvarado Terrace. This columned, three-story Colonial Revival house was built by a speculator in 1905-1906, and her father bought it from the builder and moved his family in 1906. It remained in the family until the late 1980's when Lydia left the house and moved in with one of her five children.

Spry, bright, and fascinating, Lydia remembered it all very well, and each answer she gave to our questions gave us another insight into a period that grew more and more fascinating as we listened to her tales of early L.A.

A trip to the Rindge estate in the West Adams District prompted us to ask her if she had known the family that had built the gorgeous mansion with its towering ceilings, carved pediments, massive hallways, private apartments, and semi-circular rooms. Why weren't we surprised to learn that she not only knew them, but her family used to travel by carriage from Alvarado Terrace for Sunday afternoon teas or take a longer ride to Malibu to visit them at their beautiful seaside estate? As she described these visits,

we could almost see ourselves riding along to visit these famous people.

Beauty and beautiful things were part of Lydia's life, yet we were quite surprised to learn that the lovely miniature ivories that graced her mantle were of her parents. Fascinated by them, Liz asked, "Mitch, would you tell me more about those paintings and the people in them?" "Of course, dear, those are my parents with the Emperor and Empress of Mexico." Startled, Liz and Rick turned questioningly to hear the rest of the story, and it was even more amazing than learning who was in the picture.

Lydia's grandfather, Theodore Riveroll (the first governor of Lower California to be elected by popular vote) had given her father a fleet of sailing vessels, but because of an edict laid down by Emperor Maximilian, they were unable to enter or exit the ports of Mexico. Unable to get the needed permission for entry and exit, her father took matters into his own hands — literally. He waited for the Emperor's carriage to come by and tossed a small stone through the window. The guards grabbed him and pulled him toward the carriage. Whatever he said must have been truly amazing, for he ended up in the carriage with the Emperor, convinced him to open the ports to his ships, and ended up as a life-long friend — hence the little miniatures that sat on the mantle of this turn-of-the-century home in downtown Los Angeles.

Copies of Oh, I Can See it Now: The Story of Historical Alvarado Terrace in Los Angeles may be purchased by writing to P.O. Box 1090, San Leandro, CA 94577, Attn: E. Kearney. When ordering, please include a check or money order for \$7.95 + \$1.95 for S&H.

The Film Exchange Building

Continued from page 9

ness offices, film viewing and entertaining. There was a small theatre/entertainment room located on the top floor at the southwest corner of the building. The elaborated plaster coffered ceiling in this room remains, although in a slightly damaged state. There is another simple ornamental plaster ceiling in an adjacent room.

Generally, a resource is considered to be "historically significant" if the resource meets the criteria for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources (Pub. Res. Code § 5024.1, Title 14 CCR, Section 4852). In this case the subject building meets State criteria (A), (B) and (C), and would appear to warrant inclusion on the California Register of Historic Place, for the following reasons:

(A) "Is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage": This building is closely associated, and was once an integral part, of the southern California movie industry; an industry, which to this day, cannot be overstated in its importance to the region.

(B) "Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past": The building's original owners and occupants, the Gore Brothers (along with Sol Lesser) were responsible for the presenta-

tion, and in some cases production, of numerous movies in the 1920 - 1940 period. The building's architects, as described below are also of importance.

(C) "Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values": A number of similar buildings in the general area have now been destroyed (most notably one directly across the street). This building is closely associated with perhaps the largest single early theatre chain in southern California. It still maintains a high level of integrity despite various alteration (notably the main offices on the upper floor are largely intact. Although the film vaults themselves are now gone, they were separate and distinct from the office portion of the building. The architects, both A. L. Smith the original (1924/25) designers, as well as Balch & Stanbury who were responsible for interior remodels during the 1920s and 30s, built numerous theatres in California (including drive-ins) for the Gore Brothers West Coast Theatre chain, as well as for United Artists, Laemmle and Fox. The three "theatre-like" ceilings in the subject building attest to their work. Many of the theatres from this period have been lost. In addition, this is one of the few non-theatre buildings which can be attributed to them and which, despite various "improvements" still retains principal components of both the exterior and interior.

HPOZ Tour

Continued from page 1

On the tour, which runs from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., seven of these diverse historic communities will be showcased on "At Home with History," an event organized by the Los Angeles Conservancy, the HPOZ Alliance, and the featured HPOZs. This self-driving tour will allow participants to visit as many of these communities as they like during the day. While there, they can tour a representative historic home and meet "neighborhood ambassadors" who will answer questions and provide more information about the HPOZ. Each tour participant will receive a map guide focusing on the seven featured HPOZs, as well as a special booklet with information about all fifteen of the city's HPOZs for more exploring on their own.

The featured HPOZs and houses are:

Angelino Heights, which contains some of the best remaining examples of Victorian architecture in LA. The featured house is an 1888 Eastlake restored by the great grandson of its original owner.

Banning Park, a South Bay neighborhood developed by William Wrigley Jr. known for its Period Revival architecture. The featured house, one of the first in the development, is in the Spanish Colonial Revival style.

Miracle Mile North, a residential community in an area that was originally part of Rancho La Brea. The featured house is a Paul Williams-design Tudor Revival.

South Carthay, a neighborhood known for the integrity of its Spanish Colonial Revival architecture. The featured house is in this style with many original details and finishes from the 1930s.

University Park, a south LA district that contains one of the highest concentrations of Historic-Cultural Monuments in the city. Featured is a Classical Revival home by

architect John Parkinson.

West Adams-Normandie, which was one of LA's most prestigious communities at the turn of the century. The featured house is 1908 Craftsman designed for the area's major developer.

Western Heights, a West Adams neighborhood with a diversity of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century design styles. The featured house is a classic 1909 Craftsman.

Tickets for the tour are \$30.00 for the general public and \$25.00 for Conservancy members. Ticket order forms are available on the Conservancy's website at www.laconservancy.org, or the public can call the Ticket Hotline at 213-430-4210.

The Los Angeles Conservancy, the largest membership-based local historic preservation organization in the country, is dedicated to the recognition, preservation, and revitalization of the architectural and cultural heritage of greater Los Angeles. Established in 1978, the Conservancy grew out of the community-based effort to prevent demolition of the Los Angeles Central Library. The organization has grown to a membership of over 7,000 households, including more than 400 volunteers. With a two-fold mission of advocacy and education, the Conservancy works to preserve existing architectural resources by developing preservation strategies and by raising public awareness of the value of those resources through tours, lectures, publications and major programs such as Last Remaining Seats.

The HPOZ Alliance was created two years ago by members of the existing HPOZs who realized the value of speaking with one voice in order to participate more effectively in the legislation and enforcement of the city's HPOZ Ordinance, and to partner with the city in the preservation of our irreplaceable historic districts.



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HISTORIC PRESERVATION OVERLAY ZONES

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Sunday, April 7, 2002 @ 10:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.

Historic Preservation Overlay Zone sounds like a mouthful, but it's really just LA's way of saying "historic district." In HPOZs – there are now fifteen around the city – neighbors have banded together to protect the historic character of their community and preserve the city's past for all of us.

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Along the route are:

- ☞ An 1888 Eastlake house that was moved to the Victorian-rich neighborhood **Angelino Heights** by the great grandson of its original owner.
- ☞ A 1920s Spanish Colonial Revival home in the city's newest HPOZ, **Banning Park**, which was developed by the chewing gum magnate William Wrigley, Jr.
- ☞ A Paul Williams-designed Tudor Revival house in **Miracle Mile North**, a neighborhood known for its period revival homes.

- ☞ A 1935 Spanish Colonial Revival home with original decorative painting and stained glass in the **South Carthay** HPOZ, an area rich with Spanish style homes.
- ☞ A turn-of-the-century Classical Revival home in **University Park** designed by John Parkinson, architect of City Hall, the Coliseum, and Union Station.
- ☞ The 1908 home of the developer of Van Buren Place in **West Adams-Normandie**, one of the city's most prestigious streets during the early twentieth century.

- ☞ A classic 1909 Craftsman home in the **Western Heights** district of Historic West Adams, an area known for its stately homes and preservation ethos.

All tourgoers will also receive a special guide to all fifteen of the city's HPOZs – for more exploring on their own.

Sponsored by
 the Los Angeles Conservancy,
 the HPOZ Alliance, and the featured HPOZs
 Support for the tour provided by Councilwoman
 Janice Hahn, Councilman Ed Reyes, Councilman
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To order tickets please complete the form and send it with a **self-addressed stamped envelope** and a check (payable to the Los Angeles Conservancy) or your credit card authorization to:



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DATE: SATURDAY,
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Celebrate St. Patrick's Day with music and Irish supper and libations at the historic Durfee House, 1007 W. 24th Street, on March 16, 2002. (corner of Toberman and 24th Street, one block east of Hoover. Parking is available.)

Back by popular demand is the group VoiceOver (Monte and Claire Montgomery, Tina Saddington) the trio who dazzled guests the last two years.

◇ Suggested donation \$40.00 per person (tax deductible as allowed by law.)

Please respond by using the form below and mail with your donation to: Casa de Rosas Inc., 2600 So. Hoover, L.A., Ca. 90007, Att. Steve Knight.

Your donation helps provide housing and supportive services for homeless and at risk women in a safe and supportive environment.

Event sponsored by the Casa de Rosas Inc. Staff and Board Members: Carole Auteri, Cletus Arnold, L. Shanti Blanton, Ed Dorr, Jennifer Holland, Susan Peck, Pamela Johnson, Jean Frost, and William and Teresa Nickleberry

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From the 10 Fwy., so. on Hoover to Adams, east on Adams one short block to Toberman, no. on Toberman two blocks to 24th and Toberman. From the 110 Fwy., w. on Adams to Toberman, no. on Toberman two blocks to 24th and Toberman

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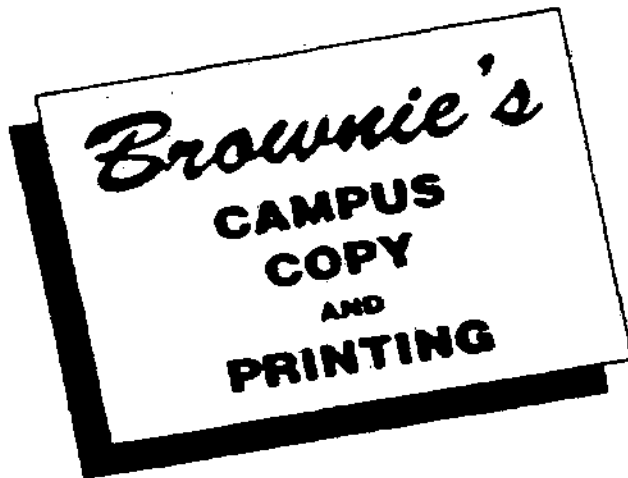
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WAHA March Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16 WAHA General Meeting - Alvarado Terrace
17	18 Preservation Zoning/ Planning Committee	19 Newsletter Committee	20	21	22	23
24/31	25	26	27 Membership Committee	28 Board Meeting	29	30

The WAHA 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 2002. All rights for graphic and written material appearing in the newsletter are reserved. Contact Director of Publications for permissions.

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