

West Adams Matters

WAHA Preservation Brunch to be Held at Historic Chester Place *by Jean Frost*

The Historic Preservation Committee's traditional Mimosa Brunch will be held this year in conjunction with the presentation of the Martin Eli Weil Award and the annual WAHA Board Election. Mount St. Mary's College (MSMC) is graciously sharing their unique historic campus setting with WAHA for this special triple event, which will begin at 11:30 a.m.



The entrance to Chester Place in 1888



Tom Michali

WAHA will be brunching on the south lawns, set along the Adams Boulevard frontage, of the magnificent Mission Revival Style, Lee W. Foster Residence, at 17 Chester Place. This year's Preservation Committee's special guest lecturer is the renowned architect Tom Michali of M2A-Architects. Michali will be explaining as a case study the complex process of adaptively reusing a historic property, the John L. Garner Residence, 785 West Adams, located adjacent to the picnic site.

The mimosa brunch will from 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., when Michali will begin his discussion on adaptive reuse and historic preservation criteria requirements. The presentation of this year's Martin Weil Award will be at 1:15 p.m. The WAHA Board Election will take place at 1:30 p.m. If the (then) current onsite construction conditions allow, an exterior walk-through of the Garner Residence will be permitted after the election.

Chester Place traces its beginnings to 1876, when Nathan Randolph Vail bought 20 acres of

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WAHA Preservation Brunch and Elections

Sunday, April 17

11:30 a.m. (Brunch)

12:15 p.m. (Lecture)

1:15 p.m. (Martin Eli Weil Award)

1:30 p.m. (WAHA Board Elections)

Mount St. Mary's Chester Place Campus (Enter through security gate at St. James Park)

The annual Board of Directors election for West Adams Heritage Association will be held right after the Preservation Brunch, Tom Michali lecture and Martin Eli Weil Award on Sunday, April 17. We have received some candidates' statements (you'll read them on page 4), but it is not too late to add yourself to the roster. All Board candidates will be asked to present themselves at the election meeting in a very short (one- to two-minute) speech. At that time candidates may ask to be added to the ballot on a write-in basis. ●

9th Annual Los Angeles HPOZ Conference

Saturday, May 7 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

McCarty Memorial Church, 4101 West Adams Boulevard (West Adams Avenues)

Join the Los Angeles Conservancy and the Los Angeles Department of City Planning at a landmark West Adams church for a day of workshops, tours, and networking to learn more about how to protect the unique character of Los Angeles' historic neighborhoods. The conference is open to anyone interested in the City's Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZs). It will also include the Office of Historic Resources' second HPOZ Awards luncheon, honoring outstanding projects within L.A.'s twenty-seven HPOZs.

The HPOZ Conference is for you if:

- You live in, or own property in, an HPOZ and want to learn more about preservation in your neighborhood; or
- You are a current HPOZ Board member; or
- You are interested in forming an HPOZ for your neighborhood.

The Conference venue is McCarty Memorial Christian Church, which was erected in 1932,

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The Civil War began 150 years ago this month. One little known story of the era involves the military's camels of the desert. (See page 12.)

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Jefferson Park Moves Forward as an HPOZ

For nine years residents in Jefferson Park have worked hard to have the City of Los Angeles recognize the community as a culturally and historically significant neighborhood.

In response to these community efforts the City is now in the process of designating Jefferson Park as a Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ). A well-attended public hearing was held on March 8, and with only a single exception attendees all testified in favor of the HPOZ. City Planning staff is now working on its reports and recommendations for both the Cultural Heritage Commission and the Planning Commission, which need to approve the HPOZ Survey and preservation Plan before Jefferson Park's HPOZ moves forward to City Council.

At press time, the Cultural Heritage Commission has scheduled its tour on April 21, and hearing on May 5.



Jefferson Park's houses, built mostly in the Arts & Crafts style in the early 1900s, are recognized for their craftsmanship and beautiful details. But Jefferson Park also has a rich and important cultural history that is woven into houses in the neighborhood. Famous past residents include actress Hattie McDaniel (the first African-American to win an Oscar), jazz musician Melba Liston, the Mills Brothers, and other great artists.

For more information about the proposed Jefferson Park HPOZ, or to sign up for e-mail updates, go to www.JeffersonParkUnited.org, and click on "History," or call 323-606-8177. ●

PRESERVATION ON THE EDGE

2011 California Preservation Conference to be Held in Santa Monica May 15-18

Join fellow preservationists in the beachfront community of Santa Monica for the 36th Annual California Preservation Conference Preservation on the Edge from Sunday, May 15 through Wednesday, May 18.

Stand on "the Edge" as participants explore the future of preservation and its essential role in sustainability, economic development, and community character in a region with a rich and diverse history. This annual conference brings together a gathering of professionals, cultural resource specialists, government representatives, property owners, and non-profits engaged in preserving historic buildings and sites from across the state of California.

Learn from more than 100 professionals who will lead over 30 educational sessions and workshops in five major tracks:

- Gaining the Technical Edge: Innovative Preservation Practices
 - Peering Over the Edge: The Future of Historic Preservation
 - Redefining the Edge: Conserving Community Character
 - The Cutting Edge: Partnerships, Development, and Incentives
 - On the LEEDing Edge: Sustainability, Preservation, and Rating Systems
- Register for the Conference at www.CaliforniaPreservation.org. ●



President's Message by John Patterson

It is with a heavy heart that I share with you news of the passing of our fellow WAHA Board member Lisa Berns, having succumbed on March 19th to a recently-diagnosed cancer. This was a sudden and shocking loss for our WAHA family, falling on the heels of the passing in February of Robert Leary, as well as to me personally, having lost my father in January.

A good number of Lisa's WAHA friends and neighbors made the trek to Orange County on Saturday to attend her service at her father's church – every pew was filled to capacity with family and friends. I learned much about Lisa's varied interests that went far beyond her love of old houses, animals, and nature, as her uncle, Gen. Colin Powell, spoke light-heartedly following the service, of her ever-changing focuses while growing up.

Most recently, Lisa served as co-chair of our Events Committee, and will be well remembered for organizing the numerous author/book-signing gatherings that so many of us enjoyed. Lisa's un-timely passing is a reminder that we must always make the most of our time here, and to quote a poem that was read at her service, *"it is the knowledge that our years are limited which makes them so precious."*

Lisa always had a ready smile to share; let's remember her, by doing the same, each and every day.

John Patterson may be reached by e-mail at President@WestAdamsHeritage.org

In Memoriam: Lisa Berns (1956-2011)

With a huge heart and giving soul, Lisa Elaine Berns leaves a wonderful legacy of eclectic, artistic, loving friends in West Adams, at Hollywood movie and TV studios, and indeed throughout Southern California and across the country.

Lisa served on the WAHA Board for three years, organizing social fetes, creating the first Books in Historic Places author reading and signing events, and helping on WAHA's many tours. Lisa took a leadership role with the annual Living History, helping with research into the historic personages, costuming and, on event days, make-up, her special expertise.

Lisa's interests ranged from acting and fashion to make-up, meditation and cooking. She worked at Neiman-Marcus and Nordstrom in cosmetics and was involved with the Newport Theater Arts Center. Lisa practiced Siddha Yoga meditation and traveled to India. She created beautiful, artisan cakes and began a business, Sweet Camille, named for her niece. She also catered dinners and events, most notably for Georgia Frontiere, owner of the Los Angeles Rams.

She was also passionate about gardening. Lisa cultivated beautiful flowers and edibles (visiting Tomatomania was a favorite annual field trip) and sponsored gardening classes for friends and neighbors in her own yard.

Lisa was born and raised in Buffalo, New York and then made Southern California her home for nearly four decades. She attended Orange Coast Community College and the University of California/Irvine.

"Lisa was a people person," recalled her father, Norman Berns, at Lisa's funeral. "And your presence here today is testament to that." Her sister, Leslie, noted, "from an early age Lisa already had ideas about what looked good." Lisa gave Leslie the latter's first haircut when Lisa was 5 years old, Leslie was a toddler, and their parents had already announced "lights out." Later in childhood, Lisa, who loved to play with make up, concocted a cream mixed from lotions and Jean Nate cologne, insisting to her loving parents that there was a market value to the product.

Many of Lisa's friends first grew to know her and each other when they worked at the cosmetic counters at Nordstrom's Westwood in 1985. Encouraged by her other make-up artist friends to get into film and television, she joined the Make-Up Union's Local 706 in 1998 as an associate member after working at Fox Digital. She was incredibly dedicated to her artistry and loved to learn new techniques and skills that constantly expanded her knowledge and craftsmanship. Her love of the make-up craft and thirst for knowledge kept her actively expanding and growing with every year. She became a Trainee in 2001 and throughout her career she continued working at KTTV, Fox Digital and Fox News, but she also worked regularly on such television productions as *The Lot*, *Arliss*, *The Bernie Mac Show*, *American Dreams*, *The Best Damned Sports Show*, *Scrubs*, and on numerous commercials.

In 1970, one of Lisa's favorite songs was the Diana Ross version of "Ain't No Mountain High Enough." Lisa was very proud to have worked as a make-up artist on the 2006 movie *Dream Girls*, a roman à clef of the histories of the Motown record label and The Supremes.

Always eager to volunteer her time to various causes, she dedicated herself to rescuing abused dogs, The Shadowland Foundation, and the Motion Picture Television Fund (MPTF). Last year Lisa coordinated the make-up department for "A Fine

(continued on page 5)



WAHA Board Elections April 17: Candidates' Statements

Eric Bronson

I have been on the Board for 12 of the past 13 years and would like to be able to continue the effort to preserve West Adams' historic neighborhoods and buildings as a member of WAHA's Board. We have accomplished a lot as a Board but much remains to be done.

SeElcy Caldwell

I have happily served on the WAHA Board since 2000, helping with events and the Holiday Tour. I have also arranged fun field trips to historic places. I think it is really important to combine socializing and historic preservation – I also think it is really important for WAHA and West Adams residents to become more involved with community issues. I am especially concerned about our families at risk, and would like to see us more involved with these issues. I do hope to be able to serve again on the WAHA Board.

John Patterson

Having served on the WAHA Board of Directors since 2008, this most recent one as President, I would be honored to be able to continue in service to the West Adams community. I am hopeful that my organizational skills have been apparent; having participated in a very hands-on capacity in almost every event and tour that WAHA has produced during these past few years, as well as widening my presence at City Hall and other area meetings in support of numerous preservation actions.

While I have succeeded in implementing a few innovative ideas over the course of 2010, I am hopeful and excited at the possibility to have an even greater impact on this exemplary neighborhood association as it reaches its 30th anniversary. I would be most appreciative to receive your vote of confidence to continue my efforts on behalf of this wonderful organization.

Roland Souza

I would enjoy an opportunity to again serve on The WAHA board. This year I would like to expand our potluck format to include more speakers who could expand our knowledge about the unique histories present in the West Adams community. I would also like to resurrect the "how to restore your historic home " workshop that we have sporadically presented in the past. I hope that we can continue to engage our long term members as well as add new members this year. I hope to continue my participation in the important historic preservation committee. Finally I would like to continue to give support to the tours that highlight, for so many Southern Californians ,the beauty of the many neighborhoods that make up West Adams. Thank You.

WAHA Events Committee Seeks Your Help

Love WAHA events? Want to make them even better? Please consider volunteering for the Events Committee.

I have enjoyed revitalizing WAHA events this past year and have appreciated the many great compliments we have received about them.

With the sad passing of my friend and co chair of Events, Lisa Berns, I could really use some help with the Events Committee.

This is a committee that is more about doing, than attending meetings. Most communication is done by e-mail. Depending on the responses I get, we might have a brainstorming session, but this would be a rare occasion.

Of course, I would love another co-chair, but I would be thrilled to have volunteers, even for just one specific event. Love the ice cream social? Volunteer to help with that event only.

Our three biggest events in terms of help needed are the 4th of July Party, the Ice Cream Social in August, and WAHA's Holiday Party, which is usually the second weekend in December. Having a few committed people to assist me in organizing those events would be fabulous.

I also could use help with the other potlucks, which are much less labor intensive. Or perhaps you have ideas about events you would like to see.

I look forward to hearing from you at events@westadamsheritage.org.

With your help, we can have even more fun.

Thank you, Suzie Henderson ●

In Memoriam: Lisa Berns

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Romance" which is the largest annual fundraiser for MPTF. The Fund sent an e-mail wishing condolences and expressing their fond memories of working with Lisa, her giving of time and talent, and help recruiting other volunteers. We in West Adams were perhaps more familiar with her dog-rescuing; each of her three "girls" were rescued and just before New Year's Eve, Lisa led a heroic (and ultimately successful) effort to save "Boscoe," a dog that was literally on an animal shelter's death row, slated for euthanasia had Lisa not stepped in and enlisted the help of rescue groups.

Her infectious laugh and impish sense of humor touched everybody on some level – she was fun and adventurous. She corralled her friends (and even an 80-year-old neighbor) to join "Full Moon Hikes" adventures in the Malibu mountains led by a ranger with a flashlight. They protested all the way because it was a work night, only to find that at the top of the ridge the world was magically quiet and lit only by the moon and the stars.

Lisa's personal spiritual quests once led to her India, where she studied at an ashram. She went door-to-door with The Artists Coalition for Justice to register more than 2,000 people in Central L.A. to vote, attended a rally at the L.A. Coliseum conducted by Farrakhan when he called for a truce between the gangs, and worked as a fundraiser for local elections.

"Lisa B" was always busy, but always took time for friends and family. Even when things were less than blissful, she found humor, had ice cream socials and tea in her garden called "Paris." She loved her union and was at every meeting and every class she could attend.

Sadly, Tia Lisa was just recently diagnosed with ovarian cancer but it was already stage four. Although her dear friends thought she would have a few months to fight the disease, she passed away on Saturday, March 19, 2011.

Lisa Berns is survived by her father, Norman Berns who lives in Orange County; her sister, Leslie, of Washington D.C.; and her uncle, Colin Powell, former U.S. Secretary of State, along with extended family and many friends. Lisa was preceded in death by her mother, Marilyn Powell Berns, and they now lie together at El Toro Memorial Park in Lake Forest, CA. ●




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Stepping Out

**Esotouric presents:
Weird West Adams, A Crime Bus Tour
Saturday, May 14 11:30 a.m.**

Esotouric, the offbeat bus adventure company that unearths fascinating criminal skeletons from L.A.'s civic closet, offers its occasional neighborhood true crime tour, WEIRD WEST ADAMS. West Adams locals and interested bystanders won't want to miss the chance to hear all the newly-unearthed dirt.

On this guided tour through the Beverly Hills of the early 20th Century, Crime Bus passengers thrill as Jazz Age bootleggers run amok, marvel at the Krazy Kafitz family's litany of murder-suicides, attempted husband slayings, Byzantine estate battles, and mad bombings, visit the shortest street in Los Angeles (15-foot-long Powers Place, with its magnificent views of the mansions of Alvarado Terrace), discover which fabulous mansion was once transformed into a functioning whiskey factory using every room in the house, and stroll the haunted paths of Angelus Rosedale Cemetery, site of notable burials (May K. Rindge, the mother of Malibu) and odd graveside crimes. Featured players include drunken ice cream men, the most famous dwarf in Hollywood, mass suicide ringleader Reverend Jim Jones, wacky millionaires who can't control their automobiles, human mole bank robbers, comically inept fumigators, kids trapped in tar pits, and dozens of other unusual and fascinating denizens of early Los Angeles.

There are even some celebrity sites along the route, including the death scenes of Motown soul sensation Marvin Gaye and 1920s star Angels baseball catcher Gus Sandberg. And the architecture too is to die for, as the Crime Bus rolls down the elegant streets of old West Adams, lined with gay mansions, adorable bungalows and signs of a century's decay which only enhance the neighborhood's charm.

Passengers on this eye-opening, funny and informative tour will forever see the West Adams district in a new light. It is highly recommended for natives and newcomers alike, crime and history buffs, and anyone who likes to seek out the unexpected.

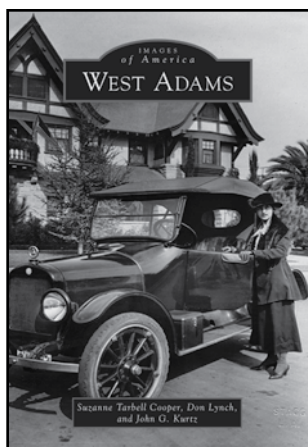
COST: \$58/person

WAHA DISCOUNT: Members of WAHA can snag an advance ticket for just \$40 when they contact Esotouric with the secret phrase "Gus Sandberg's ghost sent me!"

Tickets can be ordered online until the morning of the tour. For last minute bookings, please feel free to call 213-915-8687 after 8 a.m. on tour day, and if there are seats available, you can reserve a spot and pay with cash at the bus. If you'd like to reserve a spot and pay on tour day, call or e-mail with your info.

There are no paper tickets: your name will be on a list at the bus door. Check in is at 11:30 a.m. for a 12 Noon sharp departure from the Benny H. Potter West Adams Avenues Park at the intersection of 3rd Avenue and West 25th Street in West Adams, one block north of Adams Blvd and two blocks west of Arlington Avenue.

INFO: <http://www.esotouric.com>, 323-223-2767. ●



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HPOZ Conference

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and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This English Gothic Revival church is named for its founders, Dr. Isaac McCarty, a surgeon, and his wife, Ona Bell. Dr. McCarty helped established Riverside Hospital, and then, in 1927, the childless couple moved to Los Angeles. There, they determined to erect this church to establish their own legacy and to demonstrate their dedication to the Christian Church and the Disciples of Christ.

Issac and Ona McCarty traveled widely in Europe, sketching various examples of ecclesiastic Gothic architecture. The architects they commissioned, Thomas P. Barber and Paul Kingsbury, designed this edifice to be evocative of Medieval church hall construction, but they built it in steel and reinforced concrete. McCarty Memorial Church's singular character-defining Decorative Gothic style steeple is 130 feet tall, and features vertical buttresses, an elaborate open belfry and open Decorated style tracery. Inside, stained glass windows are dedicated to Christian liturgy and serve as a memorial to McCarty family members.

HPOZ Conference morning sessions include:

- Community Outreach in an HPOZ: Shining a Light on the Merits of Preservation
- Drought Tolerant Landscaping in a Historic Neighborhood: How Historic Is That Front Lawn Anyway?
- Historic Property Research: Finding the Records, Permits and Drawings You Need to Restore Your Building
- HPOZ Surveys: Why Can't They All Be Contributors?
- The HPOZ Project from Inception to Completion: What Happens After the Board Meeting?
- Code Enforcement: Efficient Results, Fair Process, Open Communication
- Board Member Successes and Lessons: Case Studies and Tips from Seasoned Board Members
- Practical Application of Restoration Principles: Tips on Addressing Common HPOZ Projects
- HPOZ 101: The Basics of L.A.'s Historic Districts

Afternoon walking tours include your choice of:

- The West Adams Terrace HPOZ
- The pending Jefferson Park HPOZ
- The Joseph Starr Farmhouse (1887) rehabilitation in Jefferson Park - space is limited

Cost: \$20, includes continental breakfast and lunch.

Register by April 22 by visiting www.laconservancy.org/neighborhoods, and follow the links for the HPOZ Conference. If you have any questions, please contact Flora Chou of the Los Angeles Conservancy at fchou@laconservancy.org. ●

Stephen Orr on Tomorrow's Garden: Design and Inspiration for a New Age of Sustainable Gardening

Wednesday, April 20

6 p.m. Reception, book sale and signing

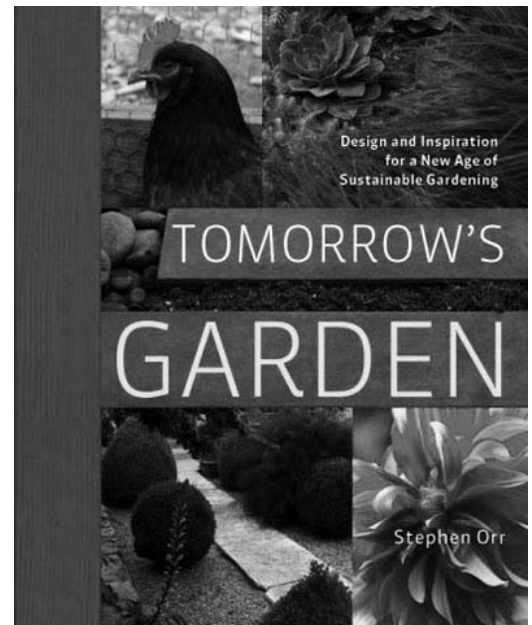
7 p.m. Illustrated talk

The Ebell of Los Angeles, 743 S. Lucerne Blvd. (Windsor Village)

With a keen eye for aesthetics matched by a strong concern for the environment, garden expert Stephen Orr has developed a sense of what a modern garden should be: manageable, visually pleasing, and responsible. In this lecture, sponsored by the Garden Conservancy and hosted by the Ebell of Los Angeles, Orr will present an array of gardens throughout America that have been scaled back and simplified without sacrificing beauty or innovative design.

Orr is the editorial director of gardens for Martha Stewart Omnimedia, and the author of *Tomorrow's Garden: Design and Inspiration for a New Age of Sustainable Gardening* (Rodale Press, 2011). He was the former garden editor at *Domino* and *House & Garden* magazines and has written for various publications, including the *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal*. He lives in New York City and the Catskills.

\$35 General admission \$30 Members of the Garden Conservancy and the Ebell of Los Angeles. Register online or call 845-265-2029 (Cold Spring, NY) to order by phone. For more information, visit gardenconservancy.org. ●



Stepping Out

USC Hosts the L.A. Times Festival of Books

Saturday, April 30 and Sunday, May 1

Expect traffic. Walk, bike or take the bus. But do “book it” and plan to attend the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books right here in West Adams at the end of this month.

After 15 years in Westwood on the campus of UCLA, the Los Angeles Times Festival of Books is moving to USC’s University Park campus. As the largest and most prestigious book festival in the country, this event had attracted 130,000 book lovers each year to UCLA. At its new home at USC, it will feature 400 authors and some 300 exhibitor booths, a nonstop schedule of readings, book signings, literary discussions and panels, writing workshops, storytelling, comedy, and more. Live entertainment will take place on eight stages, including a children’s stage, a cooking demonstration stage, a poetry stage, a Los Angeles Times stage, and two USC stages.



Organizers have said the book festival is moving to University Park because it “allows for increased attendance due to USC’s central location, proximity to public transportation, abundant parking and newly enhanced campus facilities,” according to the Sept. 22 Los Angeles Times article announcing the change of venue.

The University Park campus allows for collaboration with other downtown cultural institutions and is easily accessible for a greater number of Angelenos. Some other practical advantages over Westwood include more usable space for sponsors and exhibitors; better sampling, pouring and concession opportunities; more public transportation routes and options; and more restrooms and dining options.

As Times publisher Eddy Hartenstein said when the move was announced:

“Attendees and exhibitors can expect more to see, do and experience in addition to great access and a refreshing change of scenery.”

Program highlights include the Target Children’s Stage, featuring appearances by Mo Willems, Jamie Lee Curtis, Mallory Lewis and Lamb Chop, The Okee Dokee Brothers and R.L. Stine; the Cooking Stage showcasing Duff Goldman from “Ace of Cakes” and master chef Thomas Keller; the YA stage with such Young Adult luminaries as Gayle Forman, Judy M. Blundell and D.J. McHale; and The Times editorial staff will make appearances on the Los Angeles Times Stage and Pavilion. Dozens of indoor venues will host lively panel discussions on everything from the Middle East and the economy to the bright lights of Hollywood.

General event information can be found at www.latimesfestivalofbooks.com or by calling 1-800-LA-TIMES, ext. 7BOOK. Admission is free. Tickets are required to attend panel discussions and lectures due to limited seating. Writer’s workshop tickets and \$30 panel passes will be available beginning Monday, April 11. Individual panel tickets will become available on Sunday, April 24th for a nominal fee. ●

Culver City Historian and Film Industry Expert Will Present Their New Book: MOVIE STUDIOS OF CULVER CITY

Julie Lugo Cerra, official Culver City historian, and Marc Wanamaker, noted film industry author and consultant, will present images and commentary based on their recently published book, *Movie Studios of Culver City* at the Culver City Historical Society’s general meeting Wednesday, April 20 at 7 p.m. in the Multi-Purpose Room at the Veterans Memorial Building, 4117 Overland Avenue, Culver City.

The program will feature many of the book’s hundreds of photos and descriptions of the motion picture and television studios that made Culver City “The Heart of Screenland” and will offer a vintage tour through the legendary movie lots of Thomas Ince, Hal Roach, Goldwyn, Lorimar, MGM-UA, Columbia, Sony Pictures, DeMille, RKO-Pathé, Selznick, Desilu, Culver City Studios, Laird International, The Culver Studio and mini-factories as the Willat Studios.

Published by Arcadia Publishing, the book is part of the Images of America Series, and will be available for purchase and signing by the authors after the meeting.

Cerra, a sixth generation Californian, was born and raised in Culver City, and is the author of more than 300 magazine and newspaper articles about Culver City as well as four books on local history including *Culver City*, the *Heart of Screenland* and *Images of America, Culver City CA*.

Wanamaker was born in Los Angeles and grew up Hollywood. In 1971 he formed Bison Archives, a research and information archive on the history of the motion picture industry, which supplied the images for the book. Bison Productions, his adjunct production company, has assisted in the production of more than 100 documentaries and feature films.

The CCHS Archives & Resource Center (ARC) will be open following the meeting. Entrance to the meeting is through the back parking lot of the Veterans Memorial Building.

For more information, please call the Society at 310-253-6941 or inquire by e-mail at info@CulverCityHistoricalSociety.org. Visit the CCHS at www.culvercityhistoricalsociety.org. ●

Community Matters

WAHA Helps Green Adams Boulevard

West Adams is home to six of the city's twenty-seven Historic Preservation Overlay Zones, a unique treasure of early twentieth century houses. Detracting from the beauty of these lovely old homes, however, are some of the neglected commercial corridors, most notably along Adams Boulevard in the Adams-Normandie HPOZ. In 2009 several WAHA members in local block clubs enlisted Mayor Villaraigosa's Million Tree project to plant 26 trees on Adams Boulevard between Vermont and Normandie Avenues. When fully grown years from now they will provide a leafy canopy that will transform the look of this tired thoroughfare -- and hopefully encourage some historically sensitive development as well.

The trees were free, but local groups had to agree to pay for regular watering and maintenance for the first three years. The trees went into the ground in April 2009. The planting and care is done by the Koreatown Youth and Community Center, a nonprofit that has planted more than 4,000 trees for the city. Block clubs and the local neighborhood council paid for the first year of care. WAHA contributed \$400 directly to the second year.

Now we are about to begin the third and last year. Amazingly all 26 trees have survived. They are Magnolias, to match the sparse planting of now-mature trees from earlier times. Still thin little babies, the new trees have escaped accidents, vandals, and just bad luck. The cost for regular watering and maintenance for the third and last year is \$3,120, or \$260 per month. WAHA is contributing \$520 of this, covering two months of care. The remainder is being donated by the Empowerment Congress North Area Neighborhood Development Council, the Van Buren Place Community Restoration Association, and the Adams Normandie Neighborhood Association. WAHA and Van Buren member Jennifer Charnofsky has overseen the

project, aided by her husband and WAHA webmaster Leslie Evans. ●



WAHA member Jennifer Charnofsky with one of the trees WAHA has helped plant and sustain on Adams Boulevard



David Raposa • Broker/Owner
323-734-2001

City Living Realty has been selling architectural treasures in Historic West Adams since 1981.

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Skyline Views, Hillside Living in Baldwin Vista — Great Mid-century home with views of Downtown, Hollywood Hills and snow-capped mountains beyond. Same family has owned for 50+ years. Original details include paneled & beamed living room, step-up dining room + updated kitchen. \$635,000. *David Raposa*

Rare Offering: L.A.'s only Greene & Greene Residence. The Lucy E. Wheeler Residence, c. 1905., is the former home of noted restoration architect Martin Eli Weil. Protected by a conservancy easement, the Wheeler Residence is located in the Harvard Heights HPOZ historic district in West Adams. Original lighting and built-ins, 2,600 square feet, 4 bedrooms, 2.5 baths. New lower price: \$649,000. *David Raposa*

Coming Soon! Gorgeous Traditional in West Adams Avenues — Contributing Structure to West Adams Terrace HPOZ. *David Raposa*

IN ESCROW

Cute Jefferson Park Bungalow — Needs some TLC. Probate, needs court approval (no contingencies). *David Raposa, seller's agent*

Wilshire Crest Spanish — *Adam Janeiro, seller's agent*

Spacious Jefferson Park Bungalow — Probate, needs court approval (no loan contingency). *David Raposa, seller's agent*

Jefferson Park Craftsman — *Adam Janeiro, buyer's agent*

Our agents live and work in Historic West Adams

*David Raposa,
Suzanne Henderson, Adam Janeiro, Darby Bayliss,
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Preservation Matters

Preservation Brunch in Chester Place *continued from page 1*

land west of Figueroa Street between 23rd Street and West Adams Boulevard. Vail built a Victorian-style home, planted pepper trees and erected an imposing gate that opened on West Adams Boulevard. In 1885 Vail sold his spread to Judge Charles Silent, a retired Arizona Supreme Court judge. Silent moved in and also began to subdivide some of the acres as St. James Park. A decade later, Judge Silent subdivided the remaining 15 acres, establishing Chester Place as an exclusive residential park.

The Mount St. Mary's College's Doheny Campus is located within the Chester Place National Register Historic District and for over 50 years has served as a definitive working example of the challenges of adapting existing historic structures to updated uses. In this instance residential houses are often adapted for a new institutional use as classrooms and administrative offices. This process occurs in compliance with the goals and objectives of historic preservation and compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).



The Lee W. Foster Residence, 17 Chester Place

The Lee W. Foster Residence, built in 1899 and designed by architects Hunt & Eager, itself has been adaptively modified from a single-family home into its current use as the Early Childhood Development Center. Its rear carriage-house at 17 1/2 Chester Place has been modified into the W.M. Keck Center for Toddlers. The Keck Toddler Center reuse was completed in the spring of 2004 and reviewed for CEQA and the City's Preservation Ordinance compliance by the University Park HPOZ Board. At that time Michali served as the Board's Architect (and was not the architect for the project.)

Michali is a graduate of the Southern California Institute of Architecture (B. Arch 1977). With a specific interest in the preservation and reuse of historic structures, Michali served as chairman on the Preservation Committee on the Board of Directors for the Los Angeles Conservancy, and has lectured on the subject at local and regional conferences. He was also a guiding voice for the development for the University Park HPOZ Preservation Plan.

The Case Study, the Craftsman style Garner Residence, was constructed as a single family home in 1909, and designed by architects Hunt, Eager & Burns. When restoration and alterations are completed it will house the new MSMC Student Services Center. Since the historic structure is also within the University Park HPOZ review was additionally required by the University Park HPOZ Board. Given its status as a National Register listed building a rigorous oversight for complying with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines was mandated. This action included a specific historic assessment report, which was prepared by the Historic Resources Group.

The Historic Preservation Committee wishes to thank Mount St. Mary's College and in particular President Jacqueline Powers Dowd, Barbara Tell and Carlos Garcia for their cooperation in making this event possible. Coincidentally MSMC will be celebrating its Student-Parent Day simultaneously with our celebration so parking will be restricted to the adjoining surface streets. Entrance to the event will be through the main security gate located on St. James Park, just north of Adams Blvd and east of Scarff Street adjacent to the historic St. James Park.

The Martin Eli Weil Award is traditionally presented at the Preservation Committee Member event and is named after longtime WAHA member and preservation architect Martin Weil, its first winner. It is the only WAHA award that is given strictly for preservation efforts. In year two, the award was presented to Jean Frost and Jim Childs; in year three, to David Raposa. Please help us celebrate on April 17 the winner of the Martin Eli Weil award in year four. It is a great pleasure that we continue to honor Martin Weil and his herculean efforts in preservation with this Award. ●



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Opportunities for Kids (and Their Parents) in West Adams

Daycare (Ages 2-4)

Gramercy Family Center: The licensed childcare center of Gramercy Housing Group, provides full day care and developmentally appropriate curriculum for children ages 0 to 5. The 1,700 square foot center is divided into two separate age-appropriate play rooms (3 months to 2 years and 2 to 5 years) and an outdoor play yard. Five full-time teachers supervise and care for the children. Newly renovated and re-opened in September 2006, the Gramercy Family Center is open to the children at GHG and to community children as well.

Gramercy Family Center is now enrolling children ages 2-4. For more information, including a tour, please contact Joey Solomon, Executive Director at 323-737-7351 x 13.

Girl Scouts - West Adams Daisy/Brownie Troop

A Girl Scout troop is forming in West Adams. We all want our girls to become self-confident, strong, and compassionate. Joining a Girl Scout troop in your community can help your daughter become her best self and form life-long connections. We are looking for girls entering K-2nd grades this summer who want to be in a Daisy/Brownie combined troop. This is a child-directed troop that will have highly involved parents that are essentially interested in being co-leaders with the other parents by hosting meetings a few times a year and attending and organizing special trips with their child. Help her discover things about herself, connect with her community, and feel empowered to make a difference in her world. And, through her journey she will have tons of FUN being a Girl Scout!

Contact Heidi Rudd (Gwendolyn's mom) at Heidi@Ruddnet.net if you are interested in joining us. Space is filling up quickly!

Charter School

Many of us have been talking about the need for a charter school in our area for some time and a group of parents are trying to see if there is community interest in a K-6 elementary school modeled after Open Charter Magnet School and/or Larchmont Charter School.

If you're interested e-mail me (at the address listed below):

Your name (and spouse), address, e-mail address, children's name, birth date and date entering kindergarten. Please specify if you would like to volunteer.

This is time sensitive so please respond asap and also please tell anyone you think may be interested.

Much thanks, Mia Marano

miamarano@gmail.com

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History Matters

Camel Caravans of the American Deserts

by James M. Guinn, in 1901

The story of the experiment made in the mid 1800's to utilize the Arabian camel as a beast of burden on the arid plains of Arizona, New Mexico and the deserts of the Colorado River is one of the many [little known] chapters in the history of the Southwest. A few fugitive locals in the newspapers of that time and the reminiscences of some of the camel drivers who survived the experiment are about the only records of a scheme that its originators had hoped would revolutionize travel and transportation over the American deserts. The chief promoter of the project was Jefferson Davis of the Southern Confederacy.

During the last days of the session of Congress in 1851, when the army appropriation bill was under consideration, Davis, then a Senator from Mississippi, offered an amendment providing for the purchase and introduction of 30 camels and 20 dromedaries (two-humped camels,) with ten Arab drivers and the necessary equipage.

Davis alluded to the extent to which these animals were used in various countries in Asia and Africa as beasts of burden; and among other things, stated that they were used by the English in the East Indies in transporting army supplies and often, in carrying light guns upon their hacks; that camels were used by Napoleon in his Egyptian campaigns in dealing with a race to which the Comanche and Apache bore a close resemblance. Davis thought these animals might be used with effect against the Indians on our Western frontier. Drinking enough water before they start to last for one hundred miles; traveling continually without rest at a rate of ten to fifteen miles an hour, they would overtake these bands of Indians, which our cavalry could not do.

They could have been made to transport small pieces of ordnance with great facility; and they were accustomed to eat the hardest shrubs and to drink the same kind of brackish water which existed in some portions of our Western deserts. Thomas Ewing of Ohio expressed the opinion that our climate was too cold for the camel, Robert Rantoul of Massachusetts had no doubt the camel might be useful, but thought \$200 apiece sufficient to pay for the animals. The amendment was lost -- 19 yeas and 24 nays. The appropriation of \$30,000 to buy camels with was a reckless extravagance that the Senators could not sanction.

Then, the newspapers of California took up the scheme, and the more they agitated it, the mightier it became. They said that it was possible to form a lightning dromedary express to carry the fast mail and to bring eastern papers and letters to California in 15 days.

It would be possible, too, to import camels and dromedaries to have fast camel passenger trains from Missouri River points to the Pacific Coast. The camel, loading up his internal water tank out of the Missouri River and striking straight across the country regardless of watering places, and boarding himself on sage brush on the plains across, would take his next drink of the trip out of the Colorado River; then after a quiet stroll across the desert, he would land his passengers in the California coast towns in two weeks from the time of starting. No more running the gauntlet of Panama fevers and thieving natives on the isthmus. No more dying of thirst on the deserts. No freezing to death in the snows of the Sierras; no more shipwrecks on the high seas. The double-decked camel train would do away with all these and solve the transportation problem until the Pacific railroad was built.

Although beaten in his first attempt at camel importation, Jefferson Davis kept his scheme in view. While Secretary of War under President Pierce from 1853 to 1857, he obtained reports from army officers stationed on the Southwestern frontier in regard to the loss of animals on the plains, -- the cost of transporting supplies, and the possibility of utilizing the camel in hunting Indians. These reports were laid before Congress, who authorized the sending out of a commission to ascertain the military uses to which camels could be put in the Southwest. The commission made a favorable report and Congress, in 1854, appropriated \$30,000 for the purchase and importation of camels.

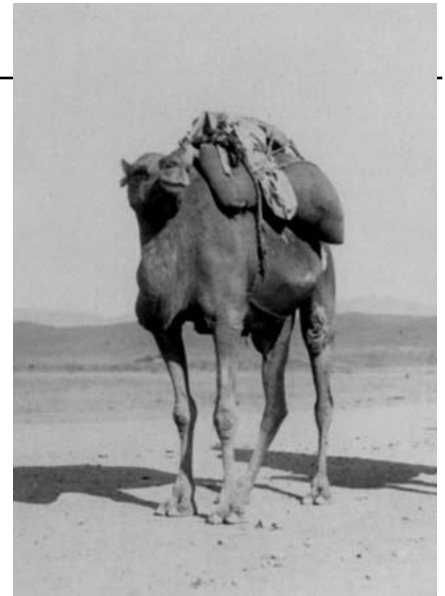
On February 10, 1857, 72 camels arrived in America.

About half the herd was employed in packing on the plains of Texas and the Gadsen Purchase, as Southern Arizona was then called. The remaining camels were taken to Albuquerque, New Mexico, where an expedition was fitted out under command of Lieutenant Edward Beale for Fort Tejon, California, the route crossing the Mojave Desert. The expedition consisted of 44 citizens, with an escort of 20 soldiers, the camels carrying the baggage and water. All arrived safely at Fort Tejon and the camel caravan made several trips between Fort Tejon and Albuquerque.

The first caravan to arrive in Los Angeles reached the city on January 8, 1858. The *Star* thus notes its arrival:

"A drove of fourteen camels under the management of Lieutenant Beale arrived in Los Angeles. They were on their way from Fort Tejon to the Colorado River and the Mormon country, and each animal was packed with one thousand pounds of provisions and military stores. With this load they made from 30 to 40 miles per day, finding their own subsistence in even the most barren country and going without water from six to ten days at a time."

It would seem that a beast of burden that could pack a ton, travel sixteen miles an hour, subsist on sage brush and go from six to ten days on one drink would have supplied most effectually the long-felt want of cheap and rapid transportation over the desert plains of the Southwest. The promoters of the scheme, to utilize the camel in America, made one fatal mistake. They figured only on his virtues; his vices were not reckoned into the account.



Another mistake they made was in not importing Arab drivers with the camels. From the very first meeting of the camel and the American mule-whacker, who was to be his driver, there developed between the two a mutual antipathy.

To be a successful camel driver, a man must be born to the business. Indeed, he must come of a guild or trade union of camel drivers at least a thousand years old; and, better still, if it dates back to the days of Abraham and Isaac. The first disagreement between the two was in the matter of language. The vigorous invective and fierce profanity of the former mule-driver irritated the nerves and shocked the finer feelings of the camel, who never in his life, perhaps, had heard anything more strenuous than the softest Arabic.

At first, the mild submissiveness of the camel provoked his drivers. They could appreciate the vigorous kicking of an army mule in his protest against abuse. But the spiritless dejection and the mild-eyed pensiveness of the Arabian burden-bearer was exasperating. They soon learned that in pure meanness one lone camel could discount a whole herd of mules. His supposed virtues proved to be his worst vices. He could travel 16 miles an hour.

Abstractly that was a virtue; but when camp was struck in the evening and he was turned loose to sup off the succulent sage brush, either to escape the noise and profanity of the camp or to view the country, he was always seized with a desire to take a walk of 25-30 miles before supper. While this only took an hour or two of his time, it involved upon his unfortunate driver, the necessity of spending half the night in camel chasing; for if he was not rounded up there was a delay of half the next day in starting the caravan. He could carry a ton -- this was a commendable virtue -- but when two heavily laden "ships of the desert" collided on a narrow trail, as they always did when an opportunity offered, tons of supplies were scattered over miles of plain and the unfortunate camel pilots had to gather up the cargo of the wreck; it is not strange that the mariners of the arid wastes cursed the whole camel race from the beast the prophet rode, down to the smallest imp of Jefferson Davis's importation.

The army horses and mules shared the antipathy of the drivers for the Arabian Desert trotters. Whenever one of the humpbacked burden bearers came trotting along past a corral of horses and lifted his voice in an evening orison to Mohammed, every horse of the herd was seized with fright and broke loose and stampeded over the plains.

All of these little eccentricities did not endear the camel to the soldiers of Uncle Sam's army. He was hated, despised and often persecuted. In vain, the officers urged the men to give the camels a fair trial but no one wanted anything to do with the misshapen beast. The teamsters, when transformed into camel drivers, deserted and the troopers, when detailed for such a purpose, fell back on their reserved rights and declared there was nothing in army rules and regulations that could compel American soldiers to become Arabian camel drivers. So, because there was no one to load and navigate these ships of the desert their voyages became less and less frequent, until finally they ceased altogether; and the desert ships were anchored at the different forts in the Southwest.

No attempt, so far known, was ever made to utilize the camel for the purpose that Davis imported him -- that of chasing the Apache to his stronghold. Instead of the camel hunting the Indian, the Indian hunted the camel, as they had learned to love camel steaks and stews. So, whenever an opportunity offered the Apache killed the camels. Other camels were allowed to die of neglect by their drivers; others were surreptitiously shot by the troopers sent to hunt them up when they strayed away -- the trooper claiming to have mistaken the woolly tufts on the top of the twin humps of the camel as they bobbed up and down in the tall sage brush, for the topknot of an Apache, and in self-defense, to have sent a bullet crashing, not into an Indian, but into the anatomy of a camel.

When the Civil War broke out, some 35-40 of the camel band were herded at the United States forts -- Camp Verde, Fort Bliss, Fort Yuma and some of the smaller posts in Texas. When the eastern forts were abandoned by the government, the camels were turned loose to take care of themselves. Those at Fort Yuma and Fort Tejon were taken to the Benicia Arsenal, condemned and sold at auction to the highest bidder. They were bought by two Frenchmen who took them to Reese River, Nevada, where they were used in packing salt to Virginia City. Afterwards they were taken to Arizona and for some time, they were used in packing ore from the Silver King Mine down the Gila River to Yuma, Arizona. But, even the Frenchmen's patience gave out at last. Disgusted with their hunch-backed burden bearers, they turned the whole herd loose upon the desert near Maricopa Wells.

Free now to go where they pleased, instead of straying away beyond the reach of cruel man, the camels seemed possessed with a desire to linger near the haunts of men. They stayed near the line of the overland travel and did mischief. The apparition of one of these ungainly beasts suddenly looming up before the vision of a team of mules frightened the long-eared quadrupeds out of all their senses; so they ran away, scattering freight and drivers over the plains. The mule drivers, out of revenge, shot the camels whenever they could get in range of them. In 1882 several wild camels were caught in Arizona and sold to a circus, but a few survived to roam at large on the desert regions of Southern Arizona and Sonora, Mexico. For years afterwards boundary officials would report seeing wild camels on the alkali plains amid sagebrush and cactus. These are probably descendants of the imported ones, as those seen appeared to be in their prime. Some had grown white with age, their hides having assumed a hard leathery appearance and they are reported to have hard prong hoofs, unlike the cushioned feet of the well-kept camel. ●

2011 is the 150th Anniversary of the beginning of the Civil War. WAHA will run occasional articles in this newsletter acknowledging this seminal moment in our country's history. This article was edited by Kathy Weiser/Legends of America, for ease of the modern reader.

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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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The deadline for ad content is the 1st of the prior month.

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It's Mills Act season. Call the Mills Act Maven regarding the potential of your HPOZ contributor or Historic-Cultural Monument to receive a property tax savings as part of the Mills Act program. Applications are due May 27th at 5pm. Anna Marie Brooks 310-650-2143 or historichomesla@aol.com.

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Upcoming Events

Look for more details on upcoming events on WAHA's website, www.WestAdamsHeritage.org

APRIL

Sunday, April 17, at 11:30 a.m.:

Annual Historic Preservation Mimosa Brunch and Martin Eli Weil Award; also WAHA Elections (see page 1)

MAY

Saturday, April 7:

Annual HPOZ Conference at McCarty Memorial Church (see page 1)

Sunday-Wednesday, May 15-18:

Preservation on the Edge: Annual California Preservation Foundation Conference in Santa Monica (see page 2)

JUNE

Saturday, June 4:

WAHA's Annual Spring Homes & Architecture Tour

WAHA's Annual Historic Preservation Brunch

**Picnic (and sip Mimosas)
on the grounds of
Mount St. Mary's campus
in Historic Chester Place**

Sunday, April 17

11:30 a.m. (Brunch)

12:15 p.m. (Special Lecture)

**1:15 p.m. (Martin Eli Weil Award
presentation to this year's recipient)**

1:30 p.m. (WAHA Board Elections)

Street Parking ONLY!

**Enter Mount St. Mary's by walking in the
Security Gate at St. James Park (one block
north of Adams Boulevard)**

(See page 1 for complete information)

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 2011. All rights for graphic and written material appearing in the newsletter are reserved. Contact Director of Publications for permission.



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