

West Adams Matters

The Historic Harvard School of Angelus Vista

by Laura Meyers

It was a time of great promise and hope in Los Angeles. The year: 1897. Just a few months earlier, the City's 1896 Western and Southern Annexation took the Los Angeles border to what is now Arlington Avenue – the "West End" of town. The City's population had exploded above 100,000. Meredith P. (Pinky) Snyder took the oath of office for the first of his four terms as Los Angeles mayor. The last horse-drawn trolley had left the stable, as the City finally completely converted to a network of electric railroads, including the line that went to Pico Heights, about 1/2 mile east of this neighborhood. But "flivers" were soon to replace the rail lines. Bicycle mechanic Sam Sturgis, an inveterate inventor and tinkerer, fabricated a four-cylinder automobile the very first car to be seen in Los Angeles – and drove it down Washington Boulevard.

Culture was a priority for the City's denizens. In 1897, the American premiere of Puccini's *La Boheme* had its American premiere in Los Angeles, not in New York, the more obvious choice. The same year, the Los Angeles Symphony was established. It was the fifth orchestra in the U.S. and the first one west of the Rockies. For the Symphony's premiere concert, tickets fetched 25 cents. Julius Bierlich, the Symphony's *concertmeister* and first violinist, eventually built his home (now a City Historic Cultural Monument) on Gramercy Place in the Angelus Vista, one of the neighborhoods featured as part of "Exploring the Heights," the June 5 tour of historic homes and architecture (see story below).

When Grenville C. Emery arrived in Los Angeles in 1897 at age 54, after a long journey from Boston, he found a

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WAHA's May Event: Celebrate Preservation Month

by Jean Frost

Preservation as we all realize is a 24/7/52 effort. However, to celebrate preservation, special times are set aside. In the month of May, The National Trust for Historic Preservation celebrates preservation week. The California Preservation Foundation kicked off celebrating preservation at its annual CPF Conference, April 28 through May 1 of this year, with a theme entitled "Building Bridges." And, the Los Angeles Conservancy held its annual Awards Luncheon at the Biltmore on May 6 (WAHA was among those honored for its efforts to save the South Seas House).

To celebrate WAHA's own commitment to preservation, WAHA's May General Meeting on Saturday, May 22 will feature the City's Preservation Officer, Jay Oren, speaking on "Designating Historic Cultural Monuments." The meeting is scheduled from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the landmark Miller-Herriott Residence, 1163 West 27th Street (west of Hoover).

Historic-Cultural Monument (HCM) designation is a city designation of historic properties based on City Ordinance, using similar criteria to the state and national designation. Since WAHA has an extremely high concentration of HCMs,

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Exploring the Heights

Historic Homes & Architecture Tour in Arlington Heights,
Angelus Vista and West End Heights, Saturday, June 5

Where, you say, is Angelus Vista? West End of what? Arlington Heights—isn't that in Illinois? If you are like most Angelenos, you may never have heard of the Arlington Heights, Angelus Vista and West End Heights neighborhoods. But - surprise - they are right here in the heart of West Adams.

Now you are invited to discover one of Los Angeles' unique historic pockets. On June 5, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., ten vintage properties will open their doors during WAHA's Spring Historic Home and Architecture Tour, "Exploring the Heights."

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Connell Carriage House: A Case Study

by Jim Childs

West Adams has several newly-declared historic landmarks, including the Connell Carriage-House in University Park. Since this is Historic Preservation Month, I thought I'd walk you through a case study on designating a monument. You can learn more about preparing historic nominations at WAHA's May General Meeting on Saturday, May 22 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the landmark Miller-Herriott Residence, 1163 West 27th Street (west of Hoover). The featured speaker is Jay M. Oren, City of Los Angeles' Preservation Officer, who will be discussing City Cultural Historic Monument designations.

On April 20th the City Council's Arts, Parks, Health and Aging Committee added their endorsement for the listing of the Michael J. Connell Carriage-House (634 West 23rd Street) as a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument. That approval will be forwarded to the full City Council for their ministerial declaration thereby finalizing the long designation process.

The successful designation of a building as a LA-HCM can be a daunting experience. The initial analysis of whether a structure may be qualified is straightforward: a). Is it over 50 years old? b). Does it still maintain its architectural integrity? c). Is there a historic personage of note connected to the site. d). Does it reflect the work of a master builder or architect? e). Did some important event take place there? When the answers to some of these questions are in the affirmative the work of filing an application can begin.

The current Cultural Heritage Commission's form, although technically demanding, is well crafted in both the requirements and format. The form reflects evolutionary changes, as more and more specific information has been required in part to insure the accuracy of the legal description. Therefore today's applicant must not only compile significant historic research but also provide documented records from City and County agencies. The application form also requires current archival quality photographic documentation of the site. There is however some latitude in the scope of material submitted. An applicant can meet the bare minimum requirements or offer substantially more information in support of the designation. Obviously the more evidence that is submitted the more persuasive an argument can be made.

I first undertook the assignment for the Connell Carriage-House for my neighbor, Fredric Frisbie, early last year. As an unpaid volunteer my available time for the project was inconsistent causing extended time delays in the acquisition of the documentation and the completion of the research. I was in the final

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Ray Charles' West Adams Recording Studio Declared a Landmark

Ray Charles' longtime recording studio was declared an official City landmark in April.

The 13-time Grammy winner's studio, built 40 years ago at 2107 West Washington Blvd. in the Harvard Heights neighborhood, received official City Historic-Cultural Monument designation during dedication ceremonies on Friday, April 30.

"I love this place," Charles said in a statement. "It's the only home I've truly had for most of my professional career and I would never leave it and I thank Councilman Martin Ludlow and his team and City Council president, Alex Padilla, for their special efforts to make the studios a special part of Los Angeles history."

The recording studio was designed and built by Joe Adams, Charles' business manager and long time friend. During the early days of construction, the pair would often visit the site, with Adams gently guiding Charles through the skeletal maze of steel and concrete that would become their long-time professional home. The building also houses his offices and RPM International Inc.

The first album recorded there was his "Country and Western Meets Rhythm and Blues" in 1965. Such classics as "Rainy Night in Georgia," "America, the Beautiful" and "Look What They've Done to My Song, Ma," were also produced at the facility. More recently, he recorded his upcoming "Duets" album featuring Norah Jones, Willie Nelson and Elton John. B.B. King, Gladys Knight, Johnny Cash and Quincy Jones are among a host of artists who have used the studio. "I guess you can't help but be a little impressed when you think of the singers and players who have recorded up in there," Charles said. ● - From AP and news wire reports



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NATIONAL REGISTER FOR THE CASA DE ROSAS/SUNSHINE MISSION

by Jim Childs

We have another successful designation of a National Register-listed historic resource in our University Park neighborhood! On Wednesday, April 28, the California State Historical Resource Commission unanimously approved the listing of the Casa de Rosas / Sunshine Mission on the National Register of Historic Places. The decision will now be forwarded to the National Parks Service for official certification.

The Casa de Rosas / Sunshine Mission nomination was prepared for A.D.H.O.C. by architectural historian Teresa Grimes who had also recently prepared the successful nomination for the North University Park National Register Historic District. The funding for this nomination was made possible through WAHA's matching grant for designation of historic resources. This program enables neighborhood organizations such as ADHOC to capitalize on their limited resources by joint venturing with WAHA in identifying local historic resources. Without this cooperation this nomination and that of the North University Park District would not have been possible.



The Casa de Rosas' Mission Revival 1893 main building was the first documented building by the renowned architect Sumner Hunt. The three additional buildings evolved at later dates by architects Hunt & Burns and Kavanaugh & Barnes. The Casa de Rosas was initially constructed as home to the City's first "kindergarten" as part of the radical educational philosophy of Fredrick Froebel. The building's use for educational training continued when shortly after the turn-of-the-century it became the facility for the private Girl's Collegiate School. In 1951 the complex was purchased by Sister Essie Binkley West, founder of the Sunshine Mission, as the new home for her women's shelter operation. The Sunshine Mission, now the City's oldest women's shelter, continues to provide critical infrastructure for woman at risk.

The National Register of Historic Places listing will guarantee that this valuable historic resource is not lost to inappropriate development and will help insure that its use as a social facility can continue. The Sunshine Mission was a recent beneficiary of a Getty grant because of the building's historic importance and its official listing will allow it to qualify for additional similar programs. The Sunshine Mission stands as a shining example of how the adaptive reuse of historic structures can provide for the present and impact the future.

As Chair of the Adams Dockweiler Heritage Organizing Committee, I'd like to extend our thanks and appreciation to the leadership and membership of WAHA for their support of this and other nominations. ●

Harvard School

continued from page 1

community of limitless possibility. Emery had been a master at Boston Latin School, the country's oldest secondary educational institution. He came to Southern California to head the Los Angeles Military Academy, which had been founded in 1895 near Pasadena. But Emery soon determined to establish his own school, to provide a superior education for the sons of Los Angeles Society. He thought that Los Angeles was ready for a school that focused on a classical education, in the best tradition of such English private schools as Eton and Winchester. And, with permission, Emery unabashedly named his new school after the best in that tradition: Harvard.

The Harvard School's original campus location was "humble in the extreme – a barley field on the outskirts of Los Angeles worth \$650 an acre," according to the institution's official history. In 1900, Emery and a partner purchase 10 acres at the intersection of what is now Venice Boulevard (then named 16th Street) and Western Avenue, the site of today's Food-4-Less shopping center. As the Harvard School history puts it:

"By any standards Emery's barley field was an unpromising beginning for a school, but especially for the sort of school he had in mind. Western Avenue was nothing but a dirt street, muddy and impassable after rain, while Venice was a railway track. One advantage was that the field was virtually level and required no grading worth mentioning. From all directions the site was approached by narrow, winding lanes. Emery spent that first summer of 1900 improving the water supply and persuading the Los Angeles City Council to repair and pave the roads in the vicinity of the school. It was not until 1903 that sidewalks and curbs were eventually put in place."

Nonetheless, Emery had chosen his location well. It was near the Los Angeles Country Club's "Pico and Western Links." The school was not inaccessible, since the Pacific Electric Red Car line ran down the 16th Street tracks to Santa Monica, and other rail lines soon ran nearby as well. Angelenos also easily found their way about town on horses, bicycles and in horse-drawn carriages.

And yet the place had a rural country feel – though not for long, as the Angelus Vista and West End Heights tracts were soon being hawked by their respective developers as "high class residences [with] the Country Club...on one side and the Harvard Military School on the other. The mountain and valley views from Angelus Vista are superbly grand. This location is swept by cool ocean breezes all summer long."

The Harvard School opened its doors in September, 1900, with one small building containing an assembly hall and classrooms. There were 42 student cadets. At first, there were no boarding facilities, but by 1901 Emery had erected three more buildings: Rugby Hall, a dormitory-dining-administration facility; Arnold Hall, a three-story classroom-dormitory-chemistry lab; and the wooden Gymnasium Hall, which included an armory and an indoor running track characteristic of East Coast school gymnasiums.

Enrollment steadily increased, and by 1905 the Harvard School boasted 197 students – "a run-away success by the standards of the time." Construction was completed on Harvard Hall, an imposing two-story Mission Revival structure with arched windows and tile roof. All throughout, Harvard Hall's stairways and hallways were paneled in oak; the

classrooms had real slate blackboards. Its original cornerstone, laid in 1905, now is cemented into a building on the present-day Harvard campus in Coldwater Canyon.

From the beginning, Harvard's course of study was rigorous. The typical day began for students with reveille at 6:40 a.m., breakfast, then inspection at 8 a.m. The cadet corps drilled three times weekly. Boarders marched to each of their meals, and were required to maintain discipline and personal appearance at all times. Their day ended precisely at 9:30 p.m. with taps.

The academic curriculum "was intended to prepare boys for admission to universities, technical and government schools,



Angelus Vista

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and for careers in business. A fundamental assumption was that each boy should be taught the rudiments of the English language, to spell correctly, to read intelligently, to cipher accurately, and to write a respectable letter."

Saturday's schedule allowed for more play, oftentimes at the nearby Arlington Theater, at Washington and Arlington, where news, shorts and films cost but ten cents. However, before the boys were let loose for sports and entertainment, they had to endure the most demanding inspection of the week. The slightest speck of dust on a picture frame



could invoke disaster, with these words from the Commandant of Cadets: "Filthy, filthy; confined to campus Saturday and Sunday."

In 1911, Emery resigned Harvard School's headmastership and retired from active teaching. The institution

itself had passed into the governance of the Episcopal Diocese. For two decades, Harvard continued to thrive. But by the end of 1920s, Harvard was no longer out in the country. Washington Boulevard had become a flourishing commercial thoroughfare, and housing developments surrounded the school on all sides. Harvard's trustees attempted to purchase a verdant site in Westwood. However, when the nation's economy collapsed in 1929, so did Harvard's. The institution lacked the money to pay the taxes and interest on the site, and lost it. By 1936, enrollment had also plummeted, and Harvard's survival was in jeopardy. A year later, the Pacific Mutual Life Insurance Company foreclosed on the Western Avenue campus. Parents were told that Harvard School would be closing.

Financial troubles had also led to the foreclosure of the Hollywood Country Club in Coldwater Canyon. A financial benefactor lent Harvard School's trustees the funds to make a down payment on that site, and in 1937 the campus was moved from the West Adams District to the San Fernando Valley. Harvard's Saint Saviour's Chapel on Western Avenue, first dedicated in 1914, was dismantled, and moved in 16 pieces to the new school property, where it was reassembled.

Today, the remainder of the Harvard School buildings at Venice and Western have disappeared from all but our memories. But nearby in the Angelus Vista and West End Heights sections of West Adams – just to the west of the former Harvard campus – homeowners are lovingly restoring their century-old homes to the grace and beauty of the days when the community lay in the shadows of the Harvard School. On Saturday, June 5, you are invited to Explore the Heights, and discover the hidden gems and forgotten stories of Angelus Vista, West End Heights and Arlington Heights, one of the City's unique historic pockets. ●

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* See next month's issue for our new Board members' names and contact information

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

Connell Carriage House Case Study *continued from page 2*

phase of completing the application in late December and clearing it from my calendar when I learned of Mr. Frisbie's passing. In respect of his memory I focused myself and submitted the application in early January.

The Cultural Heritage Commission meets twice monthly and has many responsibilities beyond those of LA-HCM review. Their agenda therefore is frequently overburdened and my case was not scheduled until the February 18th meeting. The initial hearing before the Commission is to review the file and determine whether or not the application provides sufficient information to be "taken under consideration". Should the Commissioners concur, as they did, then the administrative clock starts ticking. There are specific procedural time frames, under the City Ordinance, which must be adhered to in order to protect against long delays. Additionally the subject property is "red-flagged" by the Department of Building & Safety to insure that errors, such as the McKinley Mansion demolition, do not happen again.

The second public hearing required by the Commission was scheduled for their next meeting on March 3. This meeting is actually an on-site field inspection to allow the Commissioners to see first hand the physical condition of the property. The third public hearing by the Commission was held on March 17, coincidentally, St. Patrick's Day. I was more than pleased when the Commissioners unanimously approved the designation.

The untimely death of Mr. Frisbie had placed a unique spin on this nomination unlike any of the three dozen I had done before. Although an owner's support is not required under the Ordinance for designation an owner's opposition to a nomination weighs heavily on most of today's decision makers. Unlike prior Commissioners under the Mayor Bradley reign, the philosophy of the Commissioners appointed by Mayor's Riordan and Hahn reflect a strong belief in an owner's "property-rights." Since Mr. Frisbie died intestate the County was now the actual owner of the property. I chose to take a pro-active outreach to insure that any and all parties were aware of the nomination process. This included certified mail notification to: Building & Safety, CRA, Planning Department, the County Administrator for the case, the empowered auctioneer and personal delivery to the new owner at both the auction and the court confirmation.

It has been my experience over the years that it is important to seek consensus with community organizations when advocating for historic properties. Part of this outreach is educational as well as informational. Although a nomination application stands or falls on the merits of the case, public support, like an owner's support, can have an effect. The Connell Carriage-House was endorsed by: Bernard Parks, Councilmember CD#8; the North Area Neighborhood Development Council; the University Park HPOZ Board, WAHA, the North University Park Community Association and the Los Angeles Conservancy. My deep appreciation and thanks go out to all for this support.

The Connell Carriage-House itself is an intact early 1890's stone-veneered Victorian. It survives the demolished grand main-house that once stood were the 110 Freeway off-ramp now shuttles traffic onto Figueroa. The carriage house is dominated by a step pyramidal hipped and cross-gabled roofline which still retains its' original slate roofing. Michael J. Connell, himself, was an extraordinary philanthropist, businessman and civic-leader "of the first rank" as reported in the headline news of his death in 1935. He exemplified the ideal successful Los Angeles citizen at the turn of the 20th Century. His philanthropy, especially as a benefactor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, was a benchmark comparable with that of Dorothy Chandler in mid-century and Eli Broad today. His memory will be now be marked on the list of City Monuments.

Although not every old house can measure up to the standards for LA-HCM listing our WAHA neighborhoods have an abundance of likely candidates. Perhaps you or a neighbor may own one. If you have questions or would like an application form contact Isabel Rosas (213) 473-7720 at the Cultural Heritage Commission office. As a layman advocate I strongly recommended that you also seek the assistance of an architectural historian or other preservation professional. A list of resources is available from the Los Angeles Conservancy and several of the best on that list are fellow Wahonians.

The continuing process of identifying, researching and officially listing our historic resources is critical. Not only for the protection of those individual historic buildings but also for the collective stature they empower. A block-face that includes a LA-HCM, for example, will have other historic houses which provide the context of the historic streetscape itself. Therefore in situations when planning decisions are being made officials must, under CEQA, consider issues such as cumulative impacts on those collective historic resources and not just the monument building.

This preservation month I urge you to look at your own home and those of your neighbors and evaluate them for a possible monument nomination. If you have a potential candidate start the process now. Your actions can help define what are historic legacy will be. ●

Step Out to California's Central Coast

WAHA is stepping out a little further than usual, with an overnight trip to Morro Bay and San Simeon on Saturday and Sunday, May 22 -23. Among the historic sites we'll visit are the Cayucos Tavern and Card Room, built in 1906; and Hearst Castle (separate admission fee required). Antique shops and restaurants are in walking distance of our hotel, and you'll have plenty of free time for shopping. The price of \$94 includes the bus tour, overnight hotel stay (double occupancy), and a continental breakfast on Sunday. Lunches and Saturday evening dinner are no-host.

Reservations and advance payment is required (really!). Contact SeEly Caldwell for details -323-292-8566.

Collateral Damage: Avoided *by Jean Frost*

Recent articles in this newsletter have reported on the successful rescue of a 1904 Victorian Cottage slated for demolition by the LAUSD. The relocation of this historic house into the security of the University Park H.P.O.Z. is certainly inspirational to all preservationists. However this "preservation victory" is eerily reminiscent of the British victory at Dunkirk when we consider the wholesale losses incurred by the development project. Additionally the dozens of historic structures demolished by the Los Angeles Unified School District's new construction for Central LA High School #2 at Washington & Vermont were only part of the story. Ignored by the inadequate environmental review document was the potential impact on other "collateral" historic resources by requirements of the dislocated entities themselves. A case in point involves the relocation of the SHILPARK Paint Company.

A USC graduate, Shil Park had enjoyed a very successful business operation for over a dozen years on the corner of Vermont and 20th Street when LAUSD, using possible eminent-domain, forced the sale of his property. In addition to the final financial settlement LAUSD had also agreed to research possible new locations for the family business. Eventually an empty commercial building located on the corner of Vermont and 17th Place, only a few blocks away, was agreed upon. Although the new nearby location offered his clients similar facilities and accessibility, available parking became a significant factor. Park's solution was to acquire the residential properties behind the store on the east for demolition and construction of a parking lot.

The residential streetscape along the 1600 and 1700 blocks of Menlo Avenue consists of a remarkably intact grouping of turn-of-the-20th Century Victorian Cottages. The Vermont-Hoover / Washington-Venice residential community is comprised of predominately blue-collar Latino homeowners who have fought for years on quality of life issues such as graffiti and public safety. Even though the community was well organized it lacked experience on issues of historic preservation and land-use. The leadership of WAHA was able to come to their assistance. The Historic Preservation Committee of Eric Bronson, Colleen Davis, myself, Jim Childs for A.D.H.O.C. and others forcefully responded to the proposed Conditional Use Permit, the approval of which Park needed in order to place his commercial parking on the residentially zoned street.

The issues we raised about the project's compliance with CEQA, compatible use under the zoning restrictions, alternative designs and day-laborer impacts coupled with the community's political outreach to Councilman Ed Reyes created an environment of compromise. The demolition of three historic houses was averted and a parking solution on Vermont eventually resolved. Although this preservation victory, like so many others involving land-use variances, went largely unnoticed its importance should not be overlooked.

For every high profile crisis such as the Ambassador Hotel, the Staples Center or the Giese House there are scores of small, everyday, garden-variety preservation issues which must be positively resolved if we are to insure the perpetuation of our historic resources. We must individually take responsibility for the stewardship of our own blocks and neighborhoods. We must be vigilant when variances are sought and when non-permitted alterations are made. We must collectively respond when part of our greater community is at risk.

Every loss to the integrity of our historic fabric can have significant repercussions. Historic neighborhoods, perhaps even more than others, need resourceful leaders if they are to endure. This preservation month should be a time of commitment. Dedicate some of your personal time for your community. Join one of the WAHA active sub-committees or start your own oversight group. If you don't have the answers ask the questions. WAHA has an unparalleled membership of knowledgeable activists who can assist you. History never ends, what you do or don't do today will be tomorrow's history. Make a difference, get involved and make history. ●

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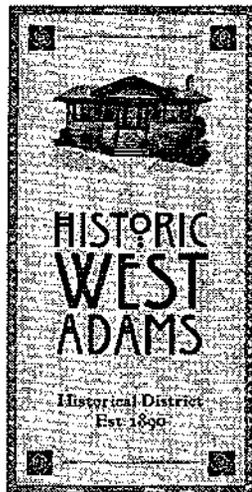
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Thank you for your support and enjoy!

Please allow three to six weeks for delivery. The remaining \$75.00 will be due upon delivery. Please include your name, address and phone number with all correspondence.



Around the House

Resources by Suzie Henderson

Still looking for that special piece of hardware? I have one more suggestion for you, Rick's Hardware in Universal City. I've been told their prices can't be beat.

Do you have a brick foundation that needs replacing? Roberta recommends Dave Tourje of Alpha Structural.

With the weather heating up, I am sure some of you have been thinking about air conditioning. A & M Refrigeration is highly recommended. Eugene Manzano was responsible and historically sensitive. They do both heating and air conditioning.

I have the answer for those piano blues. Geoff Sykes does tuning, regulating and repair.

Laura would like a recommendation for lead testing. I also have a number of requests for painters and plumbers. Please send your recommendations to WestAdamsGoddess@AOL.com. I am also planning a column on West Adams resources of all kinds of goods and services. If you have a local talent or service you want to share or know of a neighbor that does, please let me know.

Requests for resources will be addressed in this column. Please do not give my email address to non-WAHA members to ask for information. Thanks for your help. Suzanne

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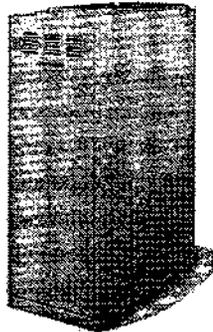
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A Hot Tip About Heating Systems

by Allen King

Now that winter is over, is it time for a new heating/air conditioning system for your old house? Perhaps my recent experience will be of some help.



My house, a 1909 Victorian with approximately 3,600 square feet of living space, including an attic, was heated by two 30-year-old gas furnaces. One, located in the basement, heated the first floor, while the attic unit heated the second floor and the attic living space.

The various contractors agreed that the house would need a 4-ton furnace for the attic and a 3-ton system for the cellar. I decided to buy the 92.3% efficient variable speed models for both installations and also to purchase two high efficiency (13 SEER) air conditioning units.

One bid from Jimmie West was \$19,000 for the entire system. Air Man, who installed a system for my next door neighbor, wanted \$13,000 after a rebate.

Why so much? It turns out to be simply because the contractors mark up the price of the equipment. Very few contractors will install a system without selling you the equipment. This is the key.

Searching the Internet, I located a Florida company, AC Direct, from which to purchase the equipment. The price for the 4-ton Goodman furnace with a 13 SEER air conditioner system was \$2,500, plus \$2,200 for the 3-ton furnace also with a 13 SEER condenser and coil. Shipping was \$500. The total price for the equipment was \$5,200. Installation by Cesar Rodriguez (323-202-7262) was \$2,800 plus parts (another \$1,500).

The entire system – two high efficiency gas furnaces, two air conditioning coils and condensers, plus parts and the cost of labor – was \$9,500, a considerable improvement over the prior \$13,000 and \$19,000 bids. It does pay to shop around. Good luck. ●



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Jefferson Park bungalow - nicely restored and under \$350,000! (Nick Mercado, seller)

IN ESCROW:

West Adams Avenues Spanish - David Raposa (Seller)
Hollywood Hills condo - Nick Mercado (Seller and buyer)
University Park fourplex - David Raposa (Buyer)

SOLD:

Harvard Heights HPOZ Craftsman - David Raposa (Seller)
Jefferson Park bungalow - David Raposa (Buyer)
Unique USC area early "Stick Style" Victorian - David Raposa (Buyer)
Out of Area Residence - Nick Mercado (Seller)

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Exploring the Heights

continued from page 1



Tour highlights include:

- A 1907 church building designed by famed architect Arthur Burnett Benton, with a later wing designed by the aptly-named Claude Faithful
- A 1905 transitional shingled Craftsman, once literally falling apart, now lovingly restored
- A 1923 commercial building now adaptively reused as affordable housing and social services for young low-income single-parent families with a program that helps them transition from near homelessness to a new life of independence
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- And a beautifully-renovated 1908 Craftsman filled on tour day with authentically-costumed volunteers, dressed in the attire of the period

To take the tour, check in at Gramercy Housing Group, 1824 4th Avenue (at Washington Boulevard). This is a self-guided walking/driving tour; visitors may go in any order, and may start at any time during the day (but don't forget: doors close at 4 o'clock). We encourage visitors to explore our neighborhood more completely. Arlington Heights' newest coffeehouse will be opened for a sneak peek, plus our own West Adams Girl Scout troop will have a lemonade/sweets stand.

To order advance tickets: Please send your name, telephone number, e-mail address, number of tickets, and a check made payable to "WAHA" and mail to: Arlington Heights Tour, P.O. Box 191918, Los Angeles, CA 90019. We'll confirm your ticket order by phone or e-mail; pick tickets up the day of event at check-in. Or, pay at the door: \$22.

We do need volunteers as docents or ticket takers. Contact Susan Jackson at 323-737-5523 or wavemusic@earthlink.net, or Laura Meyers at 323-737-6146. For more information contact HeightsTour@aol.com.

The neighborhoods of Arlington Heights, Angelus Vista and West End Heights were developed between 1897 and 1915, when Los Angeles had reached 100,000 in population. Bounded generally by Western Avenue, Crenshaw Boulevard, Pico Boulevard and the 10 freeway, these neighborhoods represent the great expansion in Los Angeles that occurred between about 1900 and 1914, when the Great War began in Europe. They are linked historically by their association with Arlington Avenue, which runs directly north and south through the center of the community.

A century later, neighbors would like to preserve their heritage. The community has been proposed as a potential "HPOZ" (Historic Preservation Overlay Zone) in the City of Los Angeles, but because of local and statewide budget shortfalls there will not be a City budget allocation for an HPOZ survey in this neighborhood in the foreseeable future. As a result, active residents have decided to begin to move the process along on a volunteer-driven basis. Net proceeds from this tour event proceeds will help fund a survey of the historic properties (some 1,500 in all) in the neighborhoods of Arlington Heights, Angelus Vista and West End Heights.

Please help support these efforts, and Explore the Heights on Saturday, June 5. ●

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In the Garden

Garden and Paint Contests

Gardeners, Heads Up! Be sure your spring garden is in its best form for the next few weeks! 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.

WAHA is looking for entries for the annual Garden Contest as well as for the Exterior Paint Contest. The nominations deadline is May 24. The June newsletter will publish all the nominees of outstanding gardens and/or new exterior paint jobs for the year so members can view each entry before our Saturday, June 12 Annual Garden Meeting.

Please feel free to nominate any paint job completed in the past 12 months (May 1, 2003 - April 31, 2004), 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; 323/730-0432 fax, or e-mail: edtrospen@aol.com). Look for details about the June garden meeting and contest awards in the next issue of the newsletter. ●



Save the date —

The MTA is now completing the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the EXPO LINE light rail, phase 1 from downtown L.A. to Culver City. They will show their finished alternatives at Friends 4 Expo Transit's next general meeting, Thursday, May 27, at 7:00 p.m. in the Hamilton High School library (second floor, main building, 2955 Robertson Boulevard, just north of the Santa Monica Freeway).

To learn more about the Expo Line, visit our website: www.friends4expo.org. If you'd like to be added to our e-mail list (or removed), please e-mail to: mail@friends4expo.org.

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WAHA Seeks Nominations for Annual Bob Bortfeld Award

WAHA's highest award, the Bortfeld Award, named after WAHA co-founder Bob Bortfeld, is presented to a member who has given special service to the community in the prior year. Two decades ago, when Bortfeld purchased his home in a long-ignored neighborhood, he had a vision for this community. Bortfeld felt that with strong community activism and a shared love for old houses, West Adams could be one of L.A.'s best neighborhoods. West Adams Heritage Association established the Bortfeld Award to honor his vision and inspiration after he passed away in the late 1980s.

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

Nominations should be submitted in writing to WAHA President Jacqueline Hill, 2229 South Gramercy Place, Historic West Adams, Los Angeles, CA 90018. Please briefly describe activities your candidate has undertaken for West Adams Heritage Association and in the West Adams area and explain why you believe he or she should be chosen for the Bortfeld Award. Deadline: July 1. The winner will be selected by Hill, Membership Chair John Kurtz, and last year's winner, Corinne Pleger.

For an idea of what we look for, here is the letter submitted last year by Cat Slater to nominate Corinne Pleger, the eventual winner:

I wish to nominate Corinne Pleger for the 2003 Bob Bortfeld Award. I believed that she has gone above and beyond the requirements that make someone so special as to deserve this honor. I am not going to list what she has achieved/accomplished by requirement. Instead, I am going to give a general listing of all the things that I have been able to find that she has done, and let everyone else choose where they fit in.

Corinne has been or done:

- Past WAHA member at large (1988-1989); past WAHA treasurer for many years (1989-1996); past WAHA President (1996-1997).
- Helped Joe Ryan create the LACRG (Los Angeles Committee Reinvestment Group) 1995-1996; gave first grant money from the LACRG to start the South Seas committee and fund 1996.
- Did a successful matching grant proposal with Public Works for the South Seas House 1997-1998; did the South Seas financial information for the grant to the city (1996); continued ongoing review of the South Seas financial statements as well as the project (1996-Present); letters campaign to the general Manager of Rec & Parks/Mayor's office/Nate Holden's office about the status of the South Seas house and other matters (1997-1998); Chairperson of the South Seas House Action Committee of the United Neighborhoods Neighborhood Council (Present); Chairperson of the WAHA South Seas Committee (1997-Present).
- Represents WAHA as an elected member of the Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of LA -Mid-City PAC (1997-Present).
- A Co-Chair of the organizing committee for the Angelus-Rosedale Cemetery Tour (1998-Present); has been the house captain of the soup house for the WAHA Holiday Tour; docent/shepherd for years (many times in costume) for any and all WAHA events.
- Delivers the newsletters in her neighborhood; has written articles for the WAHA newsletter.
- Has attended official city meetings to protest the demolition of other historic properties.
- An impressive list by anyone's standards, but moreover it is how she accomplished everything on it. I believe most people don't realize all she has done for the West Adams area and the people here. Corinne asks for no fanfare or kudos. She ruffles no feathers. She uses all the grace, style and charm of what I believe a true leader requires. She never makes anyone feel unappreciated or not needed. She is always ready to give a helping hand, answer all your questions or just stop what she is doing to listen to the problems of the moment. She will do her best to help find a solution if one is required. Corinne will even walk up to someone new at a WAHA event, put out her hand and say, "Hi, I'm Corinne, you must be new to the neighborhood." She goes out of her way to make everyone feel comfortable and welcome. This is who Corinne Pleger is and I feel she is more than deserving of this honor. She is the epitome of West Adams at its Best.

Thank you for considering my submission - Cat Slater



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Community Matters

Neighborhood Congress

The Department of Neighborhood Empowerment once again is sponsoring a Congress of Neighborhoods on Saturday, May 22, at the LA Convention Center. The Congress gives neighborhood leaders a chance to meet like-minded individuals from all over the City. And it's free – but you are asked to register in advance.

Here is the schedule of events:

Registration, Networking	7:30 am - 8:30 am
City Departments' Exhibits	8:30 am - 9:45 am
Morning Workshops	10:00 am - 11:00 am
Mayor's Welcome and Roll Call of Neighborhood Councils	11:00 am - 11:30 am
City Departments' Exhibit Time	11:45 am - 1:15 pm
Afternoon Workshops	1:30 pm - 2:00 pm

You may begin signing up for this event immediately by faxing your name, Neighborhood Council (if any), and contact information to (213) 485-4608, or e-mailing the information to done@mailbox.lacity.org. Or you can sign up quickly and easily online through DONE's Web site at www.lacityneighborhoods.com. Changes to the program and specific session times will be listed at the bottom of DONE's home page.

The deadline for registering for the sessions is noon on May 14. Of course, if you just want to come by, meet people, and visit the departments' booths, you are more than welcome to do so. A complete list is posted on the web site, but here is a sample of the sessions offered:

Emergency Preparedness: Will You And Your Neighborhood Be Ready When The "Big One" Comes?; Involving Business Leaders in Neighborhood Councils; Neighborhood Improvement Projects: Getting Them Done; How Neighborhood Councils Can Influence School Board Decisions; Networking In Alliance; Filming In Los Angeles; And Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative: Bringing Community Visions To Fruition. ●



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Sample Disclosure Letter Helps Avoid Problems

The Harvard Heights Neighborhood Association would like to share with WAHA members a standard disclosure letter it now sends to real estate agents and companies when they list a property for sale within the boundaries of our community's HPOZ. If property buyers and their real estate representatives know they are contemplating a purchase within a historic area, future problems may be avoided. Please feel free to utilize this material within your own historic district:

Dear Realtor:

The Harvard Heights Neighborhood Association wishes to advise _____ Realty that the property at _____ Avenue, Los Angeles, CA is located in the Harvard Heights Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ). The Los Angeles City Planning Department has zoned the area bounded by Pico Boulevard, the Santa Monica Freeway, Western Avenue and Normandie Avenue as a historic district. This zoning pertains to all existing structures and parcels in this area.

The zoning regulations that apply to the HPOZ require that the demolition, repair or addition involving the exterior of any existing structure or the construction of a new structure in the HPOZ require a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Los Angeles City Planning Department. The process for obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness includes project review by the Harvard Heights HPOZ Board and the Department of Cultural Affairs Historic Preservation Commission.

The City of Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety will not issue a demolition permit or a building permit until the project has received a Certificate of Appropriateness. Demolition permits and building permits are required for all demolition, repairs, alterations and additions to existing structures and construction of new structures that is valued at \$300.00 or more. Any work that is carried out without appropriate permits is subject to City of Los Angeles fines and penalties.

If you or your clients have questions concerning the HPOZ requirements and procedures that pertain to the property at _____ Avenue, Los Angeles, CA please contact Mr. K. Alam Choudhury, City Planner, Department of City Planning, 200 North Spring Street, Los Angeles, California 90012, Phone 213-978-1193, Fax 213-977-8984. ●

Sincerely, Neighborhood Association President

Celebrate Preservation Month

continued from page 1

and to see that West Adams efforts towards designation continue, members and guests are invited to learn about the HCM designation process, at the Miller Herriott House, itself a monument (Cultural-Historic Monument #242.)

The Conference coincided with the quarterly meeting of the State Historic Resources Commission, which met to review applications for National Register status, welcome the new SHPO (Milford Wayne Donaldson), honor the retiring SHPO (Knox Mellon), among other agenda items. Chaired by historian Anthea Hartig, the Commission moved approval of the Casa de Rosas (at Hoover and Adams) to the National Register of Historic Places (see story on page 3).

The setting for the commission meeting, and headquarters for the CPF Conference was the Presidio of San Francisco, a former military base, and now a National Landmark Historic District and National Park. The site contains memories of recent and distant past, reminders of those who in various wars and campaigns sacrificed themselves for our country. Of particular beauty is the Presidio Chapel, which bears plaques honoring service men and women. This moving setting provided the CPF Conference with an opportunity, as stated by CPF President Peyton Hall, "...to connect with people and places that make up the historic preservation movement in California."

Indeed as we see city budgets fail to recognize the critical importance of preservation, the commitment of so many historic preservation professionals, advocates and community members from diverse constituencies, affirmed that preservation is a movement, not a sidebar, in creating, sustaining and maintaining livable communities.

Attendees at last months WAHA general meeting may remember, the Mayor's budget process ranked quality of life in communities as a priority, just after public safety. There however seemed to be a disconnect in recognizing that preservation is a keystone in enriching the quality of life in communities.

Celebrating preservation with many friends and colleagues from across California is consistent with WAHA's preservation mission. The CPF Conference provided opportunities to learn, discuss, and interact with preservation minded attendees from all over the state. The official Conference hotel, the Argonaut, is a very clever adaptive use of a cannery on Fisherman's Wharf. Adaptive reuse of historic properties is a key preservation issue, for example, with the pending decision by LAUSD to demolish or adaptively reuse the Ambassador Hotel. The Argonaut Hotel offered a very lively setting and colorful adaptive reuse. As we head into a new WAHA Board year, we need to recommit our resources to identification, designation, and protection of our historic resources in West Adams and elsewhere, networking and building solidarity. The new National Register District in University Park, the newest West Adams Terrace HPOZ, and the Casa de Rosas designation are all good news. Goodbye to the Film Exchange Building formerly at Washington and Vermont, and other losses too numerous to mention here. Please rededicate yourselves to preserving community and celebrate Preservation Month. ●

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Please make check payable to WAHA.

Return to: WAHA
2263 S. Harvard Blvd
Historic West Adams
Los Angeles, CA 90018

____ Please DO NOT include my name, address, e-mail, or telephone in the WAHA membership directory.

MEMBER DISCOUNTS

The following companies and organizations offer discounts to WAHA members. Remember to show your WAHA membership card when you make your purchase.

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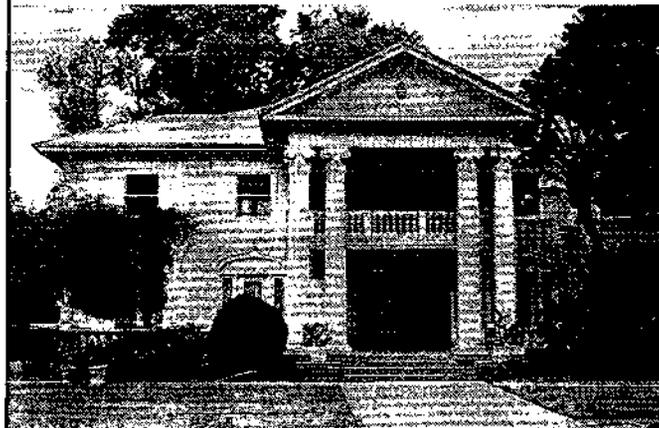
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If you frequent a local business — retail store, restaurant, service provider, etc. — ask them if they would like to offer a discount to WAHA members. Explain that they would benefit from the increased exposure to many local consumers, and would be listed monthly in the WAHA newsletter. Or, call me at 323-733-6869 and I would be happy to contact them.
— Steve Wallis



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Open Your Doors To The World! Homestay situations wanted for international students from Asia, Europe, and South America. They pay \$750 per month for a furnished bedroom and house privileges, light breakfast, and supper. Most would like to have opportunities to speak English with their host(s). If you have extra rooms in your house and would be interested in boarding one or more of these students, please contact Peter Lownds at 213/386-1634 plownds@ucla.edu.

Help Brenna Bronson's School - Please consider helping WAHA kids' schools (at no cost to yourself!) by buying "scrip" gift cards and registering your grocery cards. To help Pacifica Community Charter School (which serves a number of West Adams folks as students and faculty), please call me with your Ralph's, Von's, or Albertson's club card number and a percent will go to Pacifica every time you swipe. How painless! Also I can deliver prepaid gift cards ("scrip") for Home Depot, Smart + Final and Whole Foods (and many other big stores) and a percent goes to the school. To help other WAHA schools check with other parents about whether their kids' schools are selling scrip for fund raising. – contact Darby Bayliss and Eric Bronson 323-737-1163, darberic@earthlink.net

Roommate Wanted? Vintage Stove for Sale? Garden Plants in Search of New Home? Place your classified ad here to reach preservation-minded readers. Contact wahaclassifieds@yahoo.com NO LATER THAN the first of the prior month.



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Calendar ✓

MAY

Saturday, May 22 - Celebrate Preservation with WAHA at the landmark Miller-Herriott residence, 1163 West 27th Street, the home of Clayton DeLeon, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Continental breakfast at 11 a.m., program at noon. (See story page 1)

Saturday, May 22 & Sunday, May 23 - Step Out to San Luis Obispo (see story page 6)

JUNE

Saturday, June 5 - Exploring the Heights: Historic Homes & Architecture Tour in Arlington Heights, Angelus Vista and West End Heights, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. (see story page 1)

Saturday, June 12 - WAHA's Annual Garden Meeting at the Carl Bean House, AKA the Wells-Halliday Mansion, City Historic-Cultural Monument No. 458, 2146 W. Adams Blvd. It's time for the Garden and Paint Contest, plus learn about plans to install gardens at both this property and nearby 24th Street School.



*Painting of the Miller-Harriot residence
by: Jennifer Morey Cunningham*

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 2004. All rights for graphic and written material appearing in the newsletter are reserved. Contact Director of Publications for permission.



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