

West Adams Matters

The Unsinkable Christy Johnson McAvoy WAHA's 2015 Martin Eli Weil Preservation Award Honoree

by Jean Frost

WAHA is delighted to award the 2015 Martin Eli Weil Award for lifetime achievement in historic preservation to Christy Johnson McAvoy, Founding Principal of Historic Resources Group, who has been at the forefront of historic preservation since the late 1970s. The award commemorates Martin Eli Weil, WAHA member, preservation architect and its first recipient. It is traditionally awarded at WAHA's annual preservation brunch (scheduled this year on **Sunday, June 21**, at the **USC One Archives library, 909 West Adams Blvd.**)

In order to argue to save a historic resource, one first must identify it. Christy McAvoy played no small role in the identification of historic resources in West Adams.

In the early years of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) in West Adams, surveys provided guideposts for the Redevelopment Agency to guide developers towards sensitivity to historic resources. McAvoy (with Leslie Heumann) was on the cutting edge of historic resources surveys when, in 1985, the Hoover Redevelopment Project embarked on its area-wide survey. McAvoy has surveyed historic resources while being unflappable in the face of

(continued on page 6)



Christy Johnson McAvoy

WAHA's Annual Patriotic Picnic

Saturday, July 4th

11:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

1821 S. Victoria Avenue (Lafayette Square)



Please don your patriotic best (red, white, and/or blue), and join WAHA at our annual All-American 4th of July party and picnic. Our host is WAHA Board member Jean Cade.

Never been to a WAHA 4th of July? Here's what you need to know: Food. Fun. Music, activities for the kids and good cheer for the whole family. This year, it is also a pool party (with lifeguard), so you are welcome to bring/wear swimming attire.

As always, Wa-hot dogs (and hamburgers) will be on the grill, cold drinks are on the house, and the Potluck Picnic IS ON YOU — please bring salads, main dishes, desserts, or fruits to share (each adult should try to bring enough for 10 people, and let's avoid food that will melt on a summer day! If you prefer a different meat, please bring it already cooked.)

We hope to see you on July 4th! ●

Annual Preservation Brunch:

Celebrate WAHA's Preservation Successes at the Landmark ONE Institute

Sunday, June 21, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.; Program at 12 Noon

909 West Adams Blvd. (University Park)

Every year WAHA celebrates its successes in historic preservation advocacy with an annual brunch. This year's achievements include the legal victory in the Roger Williams Baptist Church/Bishop Mansion case, which will lead to proper environmental review for any project at its Adams Boulevard location and, we sincerely hope, other projects in Historic West Adams. We also celebrate the success of the June 6 tour of West Adams Heights, "The Heights of Elegance," which raised much needed funds for WAHA's continued preservation efforts (see story, page 10).

So please raise a glass of champagne mimosas and nibble on bagels with WAHA at the annual Preservation Brunch. Architect Barry Milofsky, a member of the city's Cultural Heritage Commission, is the featured speaker, and WAHA will present the Martin Eli Weil Award to Christy Johnson McAvoy.

(continued on page 7)



The ONE Archives, the largest archive of LGBTQ materials in the world, is located in an award-winning Modernist former residence built as a fraternity in 1965-1966.

Table of Contents

STEPPING OUT:

Live & Dine in L.A.....4
 Weird West Adams Tour.....5

WAHA MATTERS:

Heights of Elegance Tour: A Great Success!..... 10

COMMUNITY MATTERS:

Murphy Oil CEB and Other Land Use Dates & Deadlines . . 12

WAHA BOARD MEMBERS 14

WAHA PATRONS 14

WAHA CLASSIFIEDS 15

WAHA CALENDAR..... 16

Living History Tour Plans Are Underway — Helping Hands Needed for September 26 Event!

WAHA's annual Living History Tour takes place every autumn at the Angelus Rosedale Cemetery. Amid the elaborate headstones and monuments, costumed actors bring to life — and tell the stories of — a half dozen fascinating residents from Los Angeles' earlier times. Visitors also learn the history of this cemetery, and the role it has played in the lives of generations of Angelenos.

This year's tour is slated for **Saturday, September 26**, and we invite your participation now to help organize the event. The tour is one of our organization's signature events, and has become known as a compelling way to tell the diverse story of Los Angeles' history, from the 1850s to the present day. WAHA's Living History Tour Committee members research and write the scripts, cast the actors (well, twist their arms!), costume them, create graveside vignettes, and, of course, also organize the tour itself, with all the myriad accompanying tasks.

There will be a few random meetings scheduled in July, with a more regular schedule of meetings in August and September.

This year marks 25 years of presenting the Living History Tour, so we'd like it to be the best tour ever — with your help.

To join in this rewarding effort, please contact Laura Meyers at lauramink@aol.com, or write tours@westadamsheritage.org. ●

Bob Bortfeld Award Nominations Sought

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

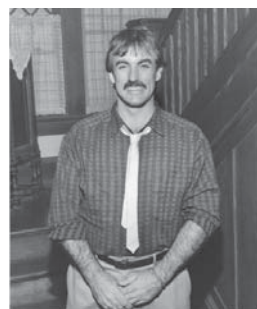
When Bortfeld purchased his home 34 years ago in a long-ignored neighborhood, he had a vision for this community. Bortfeld felt that with strong community activism and a shared love for old houses, West Adams could be one of L.A.'s best neighborhoods. WAHA established the Bortfeld Award to honor his vision and inspiration after he passed away in the late 1980s.

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

Typically, the candidate is not currently a WAHA Board member.

The award has been presented over time to 26 West Adams leaders: Kathleen Salisbury, Harry Anderson, David Raposa, Harold Greenberg, Lindsay Wiggins, Jodi Seigner, Jon Rake, Lana Soroko, Norma Reynolds, John Kurtz, Audrey Arlington, Jim Meister, Joe Ryan, Laura Meyers, Linda Scribner, Corinne Pleger, Peggy King, Leslie Evans and Jennifer Charnofsky, Suzanne Henderson, Ed Trosper, Pat Karasick, Mitzi Mogul, Rory Cunningham, John Arnold, and Jean Cade. As you can see, all former Honorees have had leadership roles in WAHA and West Adams, and have undertaken a diverse range of activities in the organization and in the community at large.

Nominations should be submitted in writing via e-mail to president@westadamsheritage.org (preferred) or letter sent to WAHA's office, 2263 S. Harvard Blvd., Historic West Adams, Los Angeles, CA 90018. Please briefly describe the activities your candidate has undertaken for West Adams Heritage Association and in the West Adams community, and explain why you believe he or she should be chosen for the Bortfeld Award. **Deadline for submission is MONDAY, JUNE 22.** ●



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President's Message by Lore Hilburg

The WAHA board in its infinite wisdom has seen fit to pass the crown? (no)...scepter? (no)...gavel? (no)... baton (YES!) to yours truly for one year. After settling down from the Shock and Awe of this decision, I've been forced to think through and decide what the most important goals should be for the new fiscal year. The first on this list is to make sure I do not screw up all the accomplishments achieved through the work of John Patterson and the Board Committees to get WAHA solvent, relevant and fun. This means that I need to let all the hard working committee members and chairs continue doing what they do best.

We need to reach out to all the block clubs and neighborhood councils within the WAHA network. For those WAHA members who are in a block club or sitting on a neighborhood council, please contact me so we know who you are and how best to make your members aware of what WAHA is and what we do.

Another goal I'd like to pursue is to continue to educate all residents of West Adams about the importance of historic preservation. Sadly, many of us have seen regrettable modifications and in some cases, the destruction of architecturally significant features because of a lack of knowledge and understanding of their value to the property owner and the community at large. I think we have a duty in WAHA to continue to educate our members and non-members as to the immense value and beauty of historic preservation and share the many resources we have to maintain our heritage here in West Adams.

Finally, I want continue to make West Adams one of the healthiest and most sustainable places in the city to live. I have three objectives to making this a reality. First, we need to support the efforts to reduce oil drilling and extraction in West Adams. Second, we need to continue to support our existing Farmer's Markets and help them to grow in size and expand in number. Last, we need to educate every member and non-member on the value of replacing non-native landscaping with native plants that reduce runoff, attract beneficial insects and birds, and replenish the soil.

I was President once before about eight years ago. I didn't know as much then and everyone, including myself, considered me just a Caretaker until someone better came along. This time I hope to do more. I need your help if we are to achieve progress toward any of these goals. I encourage everyone to get involved with us in any way you can.

Lore Hilburg may be reached by e-mail at president@westadamsheritage.org

In Memoriam: Donn Sherrin Gorsline (1926-2015)

by Darrin Joy and Laura Meyers

USC professor emeritus, longtime West Adams resident and WAHA member Donn Sherrin Gorsline, 88, died at his University Park home on May 27.

A renowned and beloved marine geologist who mentored more than 100 graduate students, Donn Gorsline inspired the earth sciences community for more than half a century.

The emeritus professor of earth sciences at USC Dornsife, the department of letters, arts & sciences, also inspired us, West Adams' preservation team, with his passionate stewardship of the Italianate Victorian home located near USC that his family has owned since 1934.

Just a few years ago, Gorsline worked with Laura Meyers, with additional help from Jim Childs and Mitzi March Mogul, to prepare a landmark nomination for this house, erected c. 1875-1878 and now one of the oldest still-standing buildings in the West Adams District. It was designated as a Historic Cultural Monument, now known as the "Brown-Gorsline Residence." Soon afterward, Gorsline joined WAHA and he opened his home to us, first for our 2012 tour in University Park, "Pathways to Yesteryear," and then in 2013 for WAHA's Annual Preservation Brunch.

Most importantly, "Gorse," as he was known to generations of students, was a kind man, a man who loved to invite friends over to share a bottle of wine (fetched from his extensive cellar) — a man who will be remembered for his always-generous spirit.

Considered by many as the leading marine geologist of the latter half of the 20th century, Gorsline studied the offshore coast of Southern California, exploring information harbored in sediments of the Pacific Ocean and the Gulf of California. His research on the sea floor unearthed evidence of climate change and examined the effects and frequency of seismic activity and flooding on sediment deposits. His work was described as pioneering and foundational in the field.

"He was a true giant in post-Sputnik USC science," said William Berelson, chair and professor of earth sciences and environmental studies. "With his arms across his chest but a twinkle in his eye ... he touched so many with his kindness and earnest love of geology."

Native Son

Born in Los Angeles, Gorsline was the elder son of Rhea and Seymour Gorsline and grew up just north of the University Park Campus. His father was an editor at the *Los Angeles Times*, and his mother was a well-known interior decorator.

He graduated from Susan M. Dorsey High School in 1944 and enlisted in the U.S. Naval Reserve. He was called to active

(continued on page 8)



Stepping Out

To Live and Dine in L.A.

Saturday, June 13 to Friday, November 13
 Central Library, 630 West 5th Street (Downtown)

"To Live and Dine in L.A." showcases the vast menu collection of the Los Angeles Public Library and celebrates the rich, as-of-yet-untold, history of restaurants and food in the City of Angels. Beginning Saturday, June 13, the project will include a major exhibition at Central Library and the publication of the first book to explore the colorful history of restaurants and menus in Los Angeles (Angel City Press), written and edited by USC Annenberg Professor Josh Kun.

"To Live and Dine in L.A." tackles the timely and critically important topic of food justice, showing us how vintage menus can serve as documents that go beyond the table, acting instead as guides to the politics, economics, and sociology of eating. The project is the second in a series of collaborations between the Library Foundation and the Los Angeles Public Library to explore the Library's extensive collections. The first was 2013's "Songs in the Key of L.A.," which showcased the Library's sheet music collection.

The "To Live and Dine in L.A." book and exhibition will feature rare first edition menus from the Library's collection, in addition to menu templates and menu printing materials donated to the Library by Lord Printing Company, a business that designed, printed, and delivered menus daily to landmark Los Angeles restaurants — including Bob's Big Boy, The Brown Derby, and Perino's — for most of the last century. The exhibition will also include photos from the Library's collection; artist installations by Karla Diaz, Haruko Tanaka, and Fallen Fruit; and short films featuring local chefs Micah Wexler, Cynthia Hawkins, and restaurateur Bricia Lopez.

The Foundation and Library will further celebrate the changing historical role of food in L.A. with over 50 food and menu-related programs coming to life in branches of the Los Angeles Public Library. From story times to cooking demonstrations, nutrition workshops to conversations about history, these programs will span the six regions of the Library's 73 locations starting in June, helping to raise awareness of food access and food insecurity in contemporary Los Angeles.

Please visit lfla.org/live-and-dine for more information about the "To Live and Dine in L.A." project. To explore the menu collection and other special collections, visit www.lapl.org/collections-resources/visual-collections. ●



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IN ESCROW: 1815 Virginia Road in La Fayette Sq. — Offered at \$1,329,000

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JUST SOLD: 1938 Buckingham Road in Wellington Square — Offered at \$849,000

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Stepping Out

"Weird West Adams" Crime Bus Tour

Saturday, June 27 12 Noon — 4 p.m.

Check-in 11:30 a.m. at Benny H. Potter West Adams Avenues Memorial Park, 2413 2nd Avenue

On this unexpected and sometimes wacky guided bus tour through the West Adams District, passengers will marvel at the Crazy Kafitz family's litany of murder-suicides, attempted husband slayings, Byzantine estate battles and mad bombings; visit the shortest street in Los Angeles; discover which fabulous mansion was once transformed into a functioning whiskey factory using every room in the house; and stroll through Angelus Rosedale Cemetery, site of notable burials and odd graveside crimes. Learn about such former West Adams denizens as the most famous dwarf in Hollywood, mass suicide ringleader Reverend Jim Jones, wacky millionaires who couldn't control their automobiles, human mole bank robbers, comically inept fumigators, kids trapped in tar pits, and the death scenes of Motown soul sensation Marvin Gaye and 1920s star Angels baseball catcher Gus Sandberg. Passengers on this funny and informative tour will forever see the West Adams District in a new light.

Esotouric bus adventures was co-founded in 2007 by history mavens and staunch preservationists Kim Cooper and Richard Schave. Esotouric now offers more than a dozen provocative tours into the secret heart of Los Angeles and the incredible personalities that made the city great, from the mad scientists of Pasadena Confidential to literary lions like Raymond Chandler and Charles Bukowski. Packed with original research, startling connections, snappy asides, vintage slideshows, and visits to off-the-beaten-track landmarks, each Esotouric bus adventure celebrates the true culture of a city too often dismissed as superficial and soulless.

Cost for Weird West Adams tour: \$58. Reservations and advance payment is required. Visit www.esotouric.com/westadams for more information. ●

Lonely Girl: The Secret Life of Dorothy Dandridge

Play Continues Through July 31

Vintage Hollywood, 4000 West Washington Blvd.

Dorothy Dandridge's life story is the stuff of Hollywood's dreams — and nightmares. The play *Lonely Girl* recounts Dandridge's rags-to-riches-to-rags story, from humble beginnings in Cleveland to her rise to fame as the first African American actress to receive a Best Actress Oscar nomination (for her role in *Carmen Jones*), to her downward spiral into alcoholism and financial troubles.

This one-woman show stars Wanda Ray Willis and is directed by Leroy Richardson. Orchestra by John Stephens, Blue Visions.

For more information, call 323-216-7528 or visit vintagehollywoodprivateklub.com.vintagehollywoodprivateklub.com. ●



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Sunkist Park, Culver City — 1950s, 3 bed, 2 bath — Adam Janeiro, buyers agent

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SOLD

Trophy Arts & Crafts in Wellington Square — City landmark, Mills Act — David Raposa and Ed Moore, seller's agents

Sugar Hill Transitional — 5 bed, 4 bath. Adam Janeiro, seller's and buyer's agent

Chas. Victor Hall Tract Transitional — Jane Harrington, buyer's agent Congratulations, Ben Creighton!

Equestrian property, Burbank — Jane Harrington, buyer's agent

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Preservation Matters

Preservation Award Recipient Christy McAvoy

continued from page 1

earthquakes and politics. A major contribution to preserving West Adams occurred after the 1994 earthquake, when Historic Resources Group fanned out over our city to identify and tag affected historic resources before any bulldozer appeared to demolish them. She is a historic consultant to Mt. St. Mary's University and USC. For over a decade, she served as Adjunct Professor in the USC School of Architecture, in addition to helping found its program in historic preservation.

Throughout her career, McAvoy has been highly involved in national, state and local historic preservation organizations. She served on the Board of Advisors of the National Trust for Historic Preservation and on the Board of the National Center for Preservation Training and Technology. She is a past president of both the Los Angeles Conservancy and the California Preservation Foundation and a co-founder of Hollywood Heritage.

McAvoy was instrumental in defining the role of the preservation consultant. "Thirty years ago, a preservation consultant was a far less established partner in the planning process. Often an architect would double as the consultant and many people, such as architect Martin Eli Weil, were experts in this field. But over time, due to the demonstrated need of preservation as a planning tool, the category of preservation professional and preservation planner has emerged as cities strive to enhance their planning tools. Neighborhood preservation groups, in concert with state and national preservation organizations, play a key role in providing preservation education to enhance decision making. Established advocacy organizations have been effective partners with preservation professionals over the years. Building on the foundation of established groups, such as WAHA, Hollywood Heritage and the Conservancy, helps preservation professionals to function effectively," McAvoy recalled.

McAvoy has a plethora of recent projects including SurveyLA, a multi-year historic resource survey and educational effort of the City of Los Angeles Planning Department; the Annenberg Community Beach House at 415 PCH; the Downtown Women's Center; Hollywood studios; the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts ("The Wallis"); the Forum; CBS Columbia Square; Los Angeles Union Station Master Plan; University of Southern California; and Scripps College.



Christy Johnson McAvoy has received numerous awards for her historic preservation efforts.

I first encountered McAvoy at a Cultural Heritage Commission (CHC) hearing in the early 1980s. She commanded the room and the commissioners, staff and the general public all appeared to really listen attentively when McAvoy spoke. I wondered: who is this person to who could hold so many people in rapt attention as they addressed this very prestigious body. The CHC is a City of Los Angeles keystone to protecting LA's historic resources. Not only does the CHC consider and approve or disapprove historic cultural heritage monuments (which are then forwarded to City Council for final action) but also acts upon the creation and surveying of HPOZs.

McAvoy has received many, many awards: Her work has received recognition from the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the American Institute of Architects, the California Preservation Foundation, the Cultural Heritage Commission of the City of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Conservancy, the Los Angeles City Historical Society, the Governor of California, the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, and the Hollywood Arts Council.

McAvoy holds a Bachelor of Arts in American Social and Cultural History from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and a Master of Arts in Humanities/Architectural History from California State University, Dominguez Hills.

At last year's Preservation Award (to Mitzi March Mogul), McAvoy was the featured speaker. In her remarks she noted that: "CEQA has been an important part of planning infrastructure. The City now has the Mills Act as a preservation incentive that affords tax breaks for historic properties. Survey LA has been established with funding from the Getty and the City to provide the first citywide historic survey. It is important that groups such as WAHA take part in reviewing the SurveyLA findings to see that historic assets are fully recognized. The future of sound planning and livable cities are directly affected by preservation advocacy."

McAvoy's daughter, Carly Caryn, aptly describes her mother, in her 2011 article on the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation's (GVSHP) 13th Annual House Tour Benefit: "People in the preservation community admired my mother tremendously. She was extremely beloved and a singular wealth of knowledge on topic of historic preservation. Everyone wanted her involvement and advice. She was leagues ahead of her time, crafting her own niche and starting up her own consulting business, in a relatively unpopular field by Los Angeles standards. She was, and remains to this day, a human encyclopedia of architectural information, with a mind-boggling personal library and memorabilia archive to boot, that is virtually impossible to rival."

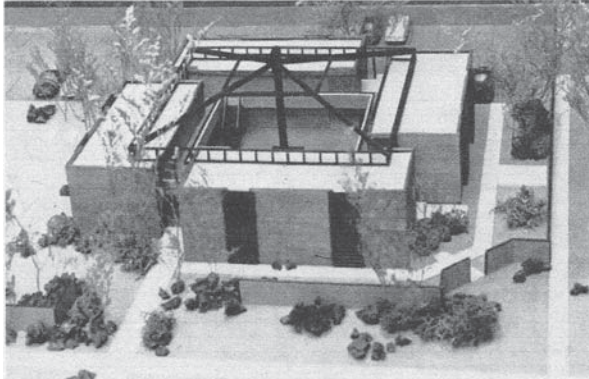
WAHA celebrates the 2015 Martin Eli Weil Award and its recipient, Christy Johnson McAvoy. ●

Preservation Brunch

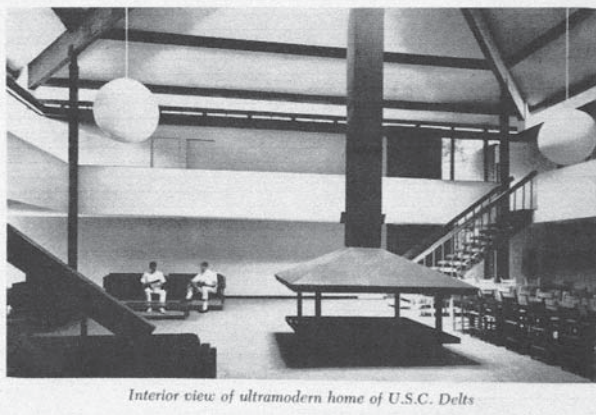
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It is Father's Day, and feel free to celebrate his heritage as well: Bring your Dad.

WAHA gives the Martin Eli Weil Preservation Award each Spring at the Preservation Brunch to recognize individuals' lifetime achievement in historic preservation. The Award is named for Martin Eli Weil, its first recipient in 2006, and WAHA continues to honor him each year as a worthy recipient is selected. Martin Weil was a leading preservation architect and a founding member and a former president of the Los Angeles Conservancy. He was one of the leaders in the effort to preserve the Los Angeles Central Library downtown. Since 1985 and until his death in 2009, he lived in one of the only Greene & Greene-designed Craftsman homes in South Los Angeles, and the only one still standing in the City of L.A.



Architect's model of Delta Pi's Shelter



Interior view of ultramodern home of U.S.C. Delts

fraternity (Delta Pi) designed by Eugene E. Hougham, USC '54, of the firm of Ternstrom & Skinner, and erected 1965-1966. The building, with images from the era pictured above, was chosen by the Southern California Chapter of the American Institute of

We also have a custom at the Preservation Brunch of introducing a guest speaker with wide knowledge of preservation planning. We are pleased that this year the award-winning architect Barry Milofsky of M2A Architects will join us for a brief presentation. You may have met Milofsky at WAHA's 2012 Preservation Brunch, held at the Glen Lukens Hoiuse designed by architect Raphael Soriano. Milofsky was the architect who helped guide owner Michael Chapman's restoration of that HCM, which was indeed a phoenix rising from the ashes. That project won multiple preservation awards, including one from the Los Angeles Conservancy.

Milofsky has 42 years of experience in the management and design of large-scale urban projects, including historic preservation, housing, transportation, and urban design. He was on the peer review panel which helped formulate the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance addressing design and construction issues converting historic commercial structures into lofts.

A sampling of his other projects include the adaptive reuse of the Tokyo Lofts, a 220,000-square-foot manufacturing facility converted into 161 units of live/work housing; and the addition, restoration and seismic upgrade of the John C. Fremont Library.

Milofsky is currently a member of the City of Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commission. He joins Alma Carlisle and Helen Madrid Worthen as Commissioners and former Commissioners who have been our honored guests and speakers at the Annual Preservation Brunch.

This year's Preservation Brunch will be at the ONE Archives at the USC Libraries, located at the northwest corner of Scarff Street and Adams.

The ONE Archives is the largest repository of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer materials in the world. Founded in 1952, the ONE Archives currently houses over two million archival items, including periodicals, books, film, video and audio recordings, photographs, artworks and personal papers of activists, artists and ordinary citizens.

The ONE Archives collections are housed in a modernist former

fraternity (Delta Pi) designed by Eugene E. Hougham, USC '54, of the firm of Ternstrom & Skinner, and erected 1965-1966. The building, with images from the era pictured above, was chosen by the Southern California Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1968 as one of the thirty best buildings erected in Southern California in that recent three-year period.

After four-plus decades housing the Delta Pi fraternity, the building was rehabbed in an adaptive reuse project to house these important archives.

WAHA thanks the ONE Archives for graciously opening its doors to the West Adams community to join us in celebration of historic preservation, and to honor this year's recipient of the Martin Weil Preservation Award. ●

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Community Matters

In Memoriam: Donn Gorsline

continued from page 3

duty that year, attended several programs for officer training, and then transferred to general duty until released to the U.S. Naval Reserve (inactive) in 1946.

Gorsline then enrolled at UCLA for undergraduate studies in mechanical engineering, then attended the Montana School of Mines to complete his B.S. in petroleum engineering in 1950. He enrolled at USC for graduate studies in the geology department in August that same year.

When the Korean War erupted, Gorsline applied for direct commission as an ensign with the U.S. Naval Reserve and was called to active duty in March 1951. He was assigned to USS Skagit AKA/LKA 105 and USS Sedgwick County (LST-1123), where he spent the majority of his service in the waters of Japan, Korea and Hong Kong. He was released from active duty in November 1952 following a promotion to lieutenant junior grade.



Gorsline teaching in 1965

Legacy of Marine Geology Science

Gorsline returned to his graduate studies at USC after the war, completing his M.S. in geology in 1954 and his Ph.D. in 1958 under renowned marine geologist Kenneth "KO" Emery. Gorsline joined the faculty of the Oceanographic Institute at Florida State University in 1957 but returned to USC as an associate professor in geological sciences in 1962, taking the place of his former graduate school mentor, who had retired from USC. He taught at USC from 1962 until 1998.

Entering as a Hancock Fellow, Gorsline was promoted to professor in 1967 and was named the Wilford & Daris Zinsmeyer Professor of Marine Sciences in 1986. He would later retire from the faculty of USC as Zinsmeyer Professor Emeritus.

Before his retirement, Gorsline extended his legacy of marine geology science through his mentorship of 126 master's degree and Ph.D. students. He also helped faculty and students at universities in the Mexican cities of La Paz and Ensenada establish their own programs in marine geology. He was highly regarded and well-liked by his students and colleagues, who noted in particular his amenable style of leadership.

"The most important aspect of all the accomplishments and awards is how they were achieved — always with equal doses of integrity, humility, compassion and style," said Jon Schwalbach, who earned both a master's degree, in 1982, and Ph.D., in 1992, under Gorsline.

During his tenure at USC, Gorsline was deeply active in the Society for Sedimentary Geology (SEPM), the largest organization of its kind. In the 1970s, he served as SEPM's president and editor of its flagship publication, the *Journal of Sedimentary*



Gorsline in 1986

Petrology. In 1983, SEPM bestowed on Gorsline the Shepard Medal in Marine Geology, one of the highest international honors in marine geology. He received the Pacific Section of SEPM's A. Eugene Fritsche Lifetime Achievement award in 2012.

Gorsline's career as a researcher and instructor was punctuated with other honors and accomplishments. In 1993, he received the A. Raubenheimer Award for Excellence in Research from USC — an award honoring faculty for excellence in teaching, research and service to the university. In 1998, he served as chair of the earth sciences section of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and later was named an AAAS Life Fellow. In 2001, he received a Distinguished Emeritus Award from USC.

He also served as a member or chair on committees and panels for numerous organizations including the National Science Foundation; the U.S. Department of Energy; the Geological Society of America, where he was a senior fellow; the U.S.

Office of Naval Research; the Deep Sea Drilling Project; and the International Geoscience Program.

The Brown-Gorsline House

Although its original setting in an orange grove has long been changed, a visitor to the Brown-Gorsline House, located at 2626 Portland Ave., may well step back in time and imagine the days when an individual, newly arrived by horse-drawn carriage (or, soon, by train) to Southern California, would marvel at the fields of citrus orchards, vineyards, and golden mustard, the air filled with the intoxicating scent of roses, orange blossoms and jasmine vines. The visitor may have thought Los Angeles was a true Garden of Eden, and that Thomas Bruen Brown and Eleanor Patton Brown's simple home represented a small slice of that paradise. Inside this genteel residence there remains the true feel of the mid-to-late 19th century in Los Angeles, echoing to a past that has mostly disappeared,



especially in this highly-urbanized neighborhood that has both benefitted and been pressured by its adjacency to the University of Southern California.

In 1875, newly arrived from Washington DC, where he had just earned his law degree, Thomas Bruen Brown purchased 11.7 acres just west of T.C. and Caroline Severance (located roughly from today's Adams Boulevard to 28th Street, Severance Street to Hoover). By 1876 Brown had planted his acres in oranges, and according to the Los Angeles County Assessor, he had already built a fine Italianate style home.

Two of his children later recounted a slightly different, perhaps more romantic version of this home's birth: purportedly Brown built the house when he became betrothed to Eleanor "Nellie" Thornton Patton. (Nellie was the daughter of Susan Glassell Patton — and later the aunt of the famous general, George S. Patton, Jr. Susan Patton, widow of Confederate Col. George S. Patton I, had moved to Los Angeles at the end of the Civil War to join her brother, Andrew Glassell, and other relatives, including her father. They were soon joined by another brother, William Glassell, a former Confederate Naval officer. Eleanor Patton and T.B. Brown were married in June, 1879. Not long afterward Nellie's sister Anne married Hancock Banning.)

By 1880, Brown had planted grevillias, with their impressive feathery foliage and orange plumes rising to a height of 50 feet, along his driveway (these grevillias were said to be the first planted for border purposes in Los Angeles.) Centered in the grove and at the end of the driveway was this Victorian Italianate residence. Surrounding the home itself were roses and other flowers, vines and "creepers," according to a news report of the era.

In the late 1880s, Brown caught the Land Boom fever, and moved to subdivide his property. He filed a map for the Belgravia Tract, cut Portland Street where his driveway had been through to 28th, built sidewalks and curbs, and although he did not succeed in selling any lots until 1892, by then he had also moved this house to its current position. His enthusiasm for the future of his tract was not realized in his lifetime: Thomas Bruen Brown's heart failed and he died in his sleep in February, 1893. It was not until a year later that the Los Angeles City Council voted to bring the sewer system to University Park.

Gorsline grew up in the Victorian house from the time he was about seven years old. He inherited it when Seymour Gorsline passed away in 1995 (Rhea Gorsline had passed away in 1950, and Seymour had remarried, and turned the house into a rental property, but Donn Gorsline had lived in one unit from about 1962.)

In the mid-2000s, Donn Gorsline determined to restore the house to its original single-family use, and to repair/restore its character-defining architectural features. For the front porch area, he removed the column supports that had been on the house from the 1930s at least, and replaced these with squared columns that replicate the original columns still extant on the rear porch and visible in the breezeway. He painted the exterior in the colors of eucalyptus trees: gray green siding, darker gray green skirting, off white trim and buff window trim, and with teak color highlights. He also thoroughly restored the interior, which has soaring, 14-foot-high ceilings.

Gorsline recalled a few years ago, "My brother, the late Anthony Lee Gorsline, was also fond of the house but his interests had shifted to Oregon a couple of decades earlier. He was the major encourager pushing me to apply for historic recognition for the house. He passed away in 2009. My brother provided the driving force to push me to initiate the [Historic Cultural Monument] application process. Dr. Jessica Dutton and her mother, the late Dr. Rosanne Dutton, also urged and encouraged me to prepare the application."

In 2012, the Brown-Gorsline House was designated Los Angeles Historic Cultural Monument No. 1021.

Remembering Donn Gorsline

USC's Department of Earth Sciences will hold a celebration of Gorsline's life and work in the Fall.

Gorsline's ashes will be scattered at sea as part of a private gathering of friends this summer.

Adapted from an obituary prepared by Darrin Joy for the University of Southern California. Jessica Dutton, postdoctoral scholar with the USC Wrigley Institute and a Gorsline family friend, contributed to this article and provided several of the photographs.



Gorsline at WAHA's Preservation Brunch at his home



Gorsline and Jessica Dutton

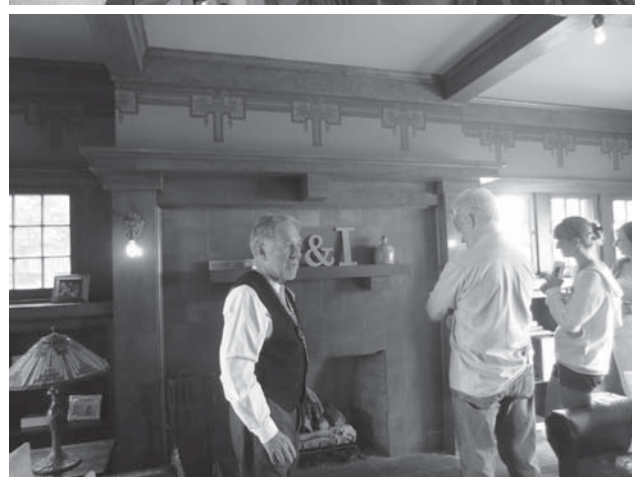
WAHA Matters

The Heights of Elegance Tour Was A Great Success!

It was a beautiful June day in West Adams Heights, and a beautiful day for West Adams Heritage, when well over 600 people toured four historic residences plus the Greater Page Temple Church of God in Christ (originally the West Adams Heights Methodist Episcopal Church, designed by architect John C. Austin) on Saturday, June 6, raising more than \$14,000 for historic preservation.

Highlights included a visit to the Rindge Mansion by Rindge family members who had never seen their ancestral home.

WAHA's Preservation Committee wants to thank everyone — from the participating property owners to the nearly 90 volunteers to the hundreds and hundreds of tour visitors — for their support of historic preservation efforts in West Adams. ●



Rindge family members see their ancestors' home for the first time. Barbara Rindge Stewart (right) and Ted Norman Williamson (left), with owner Harold Greenberg (center)



Ellen Farwell (left) and Alice Garcia (right) are among WAHA's most loyal volunteers.

Visitors line up to see the Rindge Mansion (top); Steven Peckman in the Rindge kitchen; Addison Wright talks to tour visitors at the Rindge; Don Weggeman docented at the Charles I.D. Moore Residence (bottom)



Jeffrey G. Weiss and David Bailey posed before the tour in front of their mansion, the Wesley W. Beckett Residence; on tour day, visitors gather in front of the house.



Thank You to Our Volunteers

Organizing Committee: Laura Meyers, Mitzi March Mogul, Flo Selfman, Roland Souza


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WAHA Preservation Committee: Jean Frost, Chair; Jim Childs, Rory Cunningham, Laura Meyers, Mitzi March Mogul, David Raposa, and Roland Souza

Homeowners: Harold Greenberg, Robin & Ian Sinnott, Jeffrey G. Weiss and David Bailey, Carrie Yutzy & Ned Wilson, with a special thanks to Pastor Greg Bundy and Virginia Ballard, Greater Page Temple Church of God in Christ

Volunteers: Audrey Arlington, Alessia Badagliacca, Regina Berry, Victoria Brown, Jean Cade, SeElcy Caldwell, Kathleen Campbell, Kim Calvert, Jim Childs, Rory Cunningham, Norma Jean Davis, Suzanne Dickson, Eileen Ehmann, Ellen Farwell, Elizabeth Fenner, Jean Frost, Alice Garcia, Lyn Gilson, Andrew Gross, Martha Gruft, Anne Hakes, Dan Hakes, Cheryl Harrington, Jane Harrington, Don Henderson, Suzanne Henderson, Phoebe Heywood, Deirdre Higgins, Adam Janeiro, Pat Karasick, Peggy King, John Kurtz, Laurene Landon, Katie Larkin, Blair Larsen, Raphael Lieberman, Hugh Leeson, Suli Lopez, Jose Jermais Martinez, Julie McGinn, Chris McKinnon, Jane McMahan, Kevin McMahan, Kim Michener, Danny Miller, Inez H. Mogul, Joel Mogul, Gisa Nico, Hunter Ochs, John Patterson, Steve Peckman, Katherine Pellman, Gail Peterson, Lanna Pian, Dave Pleger, Talicia Raggs, Lisa Raymond, Becky Rhodes, Kristina Robbins, David Saffer, David Salazar, Lauren Schlauf, Lisa Schoening, Rebecca Sekulich, Michael Smith, Steve Smith, Lara Soderstrom, Steve Stauzenbach, Greg Stegall, Marius Stelly, Jennifer Still, Carolyn Strauss, BT Timmerman, Maxine Toler, Mark Tomlin, Sally Turner, Jeff Valdez, Steve Wallis, Donna Ann Ward, Merris Weber, Don Weggeman, Lindsay Wiggins, Addison Wright, Judith Wyle, Alice Young-Singleton, and Carmen Zigrang ●



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Mitzi March Mogul thanks volunteers at the reception following the Heights of Elegance tour

Community Matters

Dates and Deadlines for Some Current Land Use Issues

Land use and zoning has a practical impact on historic preservation and quality of life in the neighborhoods that comprise the Historic West Adams District. Here is a short list of current cases with near-future meetings and/or comment deadlines:

Thursday, June 18: Open House and Public Hearing on the **Proposed Crenshaw Boulevard Streetscape Plan**, at the LADWP Community Room, 4030 Crenshaw Boulevard (Leimert Park). The meetings starts at 5 p.m. with an Open House. Planning staff will be available to provide information on the proposed plan and to answer any questions you may have about the plan. Beginning at 6:15 p.m., there will be a Public Hearing which will be conducted by a Hearing Officer who will take public testimony on the proposed plan.

All written correspondence on the Streetscape Plan should be mailed by Friday, June 26, to the following address: Attention: Lakisha Hull, Department of City Planning, 200 North Spring Street, Room 667, Los Angeles, CA 90012, or by e-mail to lakisha.hull@lacity.org. All testimony and written correspondence received on the Streetscape Plan will be considered by the City Planning Commission at a future date.

The Streetscape Plan and supporting documents are available on-line at:

<http://www.latnp.org/crenshawlax-line/crenshaw-blvd-streetscape-plan/> or at www.cityplanning.lacity.org under "What's New."

Tuesday, July 7, 4:30 p.m.: Public hearing at the South Los Angeles Area Planning Commission regarding a **proposed zone change at 1540 S. St. Andrews Place**. The Applicant wants to change one lot (his own) to R-3 to allow the construction of a 16-unit apartment building in the middle of the block, adjacent to the Manhattan Place Historic District and on the same block as several other historical homes. WAHA is opposed; such a change would not only constitute "spot zoning" that only benefits one individual property owner/investor, but also would be a precedent that may allow similar future proposals which would be negative for the character of our historic community.

Please consider attending this hearing (numbers will count) at the South L.A. Constituent Services Center, 8475 S. Vermont (near Manchester). Written correspondence must be sent in no later than Friday, June 26 to the Commission Secretary, James Williams (james.e.williams@lacity.org), referencing Case No. APCS-2014-4010-ZC.

Friday, August 14: Last day to comment about the **proposed installation of a CEB 800 waste gas burner at Freeport McMoran's Murphy drill site** (Adams and Gramercy, stretching down to 27th Street in Jefferson Park.) New information has revealed that the CEB 800 has the capacity to burn almost 1 million cubic feet of gas per day, which is about the amount the combined Murphy and Jefferson-Budlong drill site could produce when the current oil wells are operating at full capacity. A great deal of information about this is posted at www.JeffersonParkUnited.org.

Comments should be sent in no later than August 14 to City Planner Michael Sin (but addressed to Associate Zoning Administrator Charles Rausch), michael.sin@lacity.org, referencing Case Nos. ZA-1959-15227-O-PA5 and related ENV-2014-2482-CE. ●



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— Steve Wallis

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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Calendar ✓

Upcoming Events

JUNE

WAHA's Annual Preservation Brunch at the ONE Archives
Sunday, June 21, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. (see story, page 1)

JULY

WAHA's Patriotic 4th of July!

Saturday, July 4, 11:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.
1821 S. Victoria Ave. (Lafayette Square)

Please don your patriotic best (red, white, and/or blue), and join WAHA at our annual All-American 4th of July party and picnic. Food. Fun. Music, activities for the kids and good cheer for the whole family. As always, Wa-hot dogs (and hamburgers) will be on the grill, cold drinks are on the house, and the Potluck Picnic IS ON YOU — please bring salads, main dishes, desserts, or fruits to share. (see story, page 1)



SEPTEMBER

Annual Living History Tour at Angelus Rosedale Cemetery
Saturday, September 26 (see story, page 2)

WAHA's Preservation Brunch

Sunday, June 21

11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

**The ONE Institute, 909 West Adams Blvd.
(University Park)**

Please join us at the Annual Preservation Brunch and toast WAHA's preservation successes from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. There will be a brief program at Noon where we will hear from preservation architect Barry Milofsky of M2A Architects. WAHA will honor historic consultant Christy Johnson McAvoy with the Martin Eli Weil Award for lifetime achievement in historic preservation. The brunch will be held at the ONE Institute, a mid-century building that houses the world's largest archive of LGBTQ materials. As June 21 is Father's Day, please celebrate Father's Day with WAHA — feel free to bring your Dad and family members to this annual celebration of West Adams' heritage. (See story, page 1) ●

WAHA...Creating Our Future by Preserving Our Past

The WAHA Matters Newsletter is a publication of the West Adams Heritage Association. Members and supporters of WAHA are invited to submit articles to the Newsletter. Letters will be published subject to space constraints and will be cut for length if necessary. Articles will be published subject to acceptance by the editors of the WAHA Board. Advertising is subject to the approval of the publishers. Although the Association appreciates its many fine advertisers, the Association does not accept responsibility for claims made by advertisers. Services and products are not tested and appearance of advertising does not imply, nor does it constitute, endorsement by the West Adams Heritage Association. Copyright 2015. All rights for graphic and written material appearing in the newsletter are reserved. Contact Director of Publications for permission.

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