

West Adams Matters

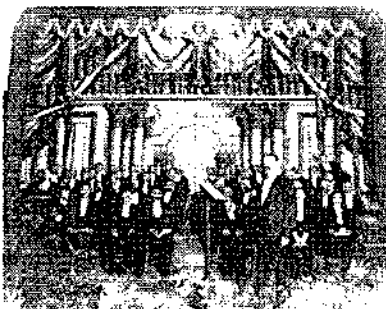
A Century of Music in West Adams

by Leslie Evans and Laura Meyers

Many of the grand houses of old West Adams were often the scene of musical evenings in the days before World War I, before Adams Boulevard was supplanted by Beverly Hills as the city's most exclusive neighborhood.

That tradition has largely faded away, except for occasional concerts at the Doheny mansion, former home of oil millionaire Edward Doheny, on the Mount Saint Mary's college campus, and the "Chamber Music at the Clark" series held at the Clark Library, built by mining heir William Andrews Clark.

Lately, we have re-created some of the old ambiance. Visitors partook of a genial day of chamber music in a setting out of that past on June 3rd, at WAHA's *Treasures Tour: Chamber Music in Architecture*. And then, on July 4th, we will again enjoy the jazzy song stylings of the trio Voice Over at our annual summertime picnic on the lawns of the Stearns-Dockweiler mansion in University Park. And, the Clark hosts a Summer Chamber Music series this July.



The Ellis Club in 1897

In its early days as a city, Los Angeles (and its West Adams residents, who counted among the leaders in business, political and social circles) laid the groundwork for its becoming the international cultural mecca it is today.

During this era, socially-prominent women throughout California and markedly in Los Angeles were establishing a network of women's clubs and music clubs devoted to not just good works but also as an effort toward creating a music center on the coast which would command the attention of the musical world. The women's club movement's driving forces were the West Adams residents of the 1890s, with the Friday Morning Club organizing

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WAHA's Star Spangled 4th of July

Tuesday, July 4, 1 - 4 p.m., 27 St. James Park

Bring the kids – your own or someone else's – and wear your summer whites or patriotic attire at WAHA's annual 4th of July picnic, on Tuesday, July 4, from 1 to 4 p.m. at the historic Stearns-Dockweiler Residence, a Victorian-era Colonial Revival erected in 1900. Owners Jim and Janice Robinson are hosting WAHA's annual event celebrating America's birthday at their lovely property in St. James Park, in the heart of the University Park HPOZ just north of Adams Boulevard. Live music from the pop/jazz trio Voice Over and lots of fun is on the schedule. As always, Wa-hot dogs will be for sale, cold drinks are on the house, and the potluck theme is summertime picnic – please bring salads, main dishes, desserts, or fruits (enough for at least 10 people, please! And, let's avoid food that will melt on a summer day) to share.



On the Move: Arapahoe Mansions Take to the Road

by Michele McDonough

The Pico Union Housing Corporation's "Casa Alice" project will begin when two houses — one a 1904 Craftsman/Tudor Revival by Frederick L. Roehrig and a 1908 Colonial Revival/Foursquare attributed to the firm of Hunt & Eager — are moved from their original location on Arapahoe Street at Olympic to Alvarado Street between 11th and 12th Streets.

The moving date for the first house is tentatively set for June 15.

The houses will be fully restored but will have full basements with a connecting tunnel and deck. When completed there will be a construction shop in the basement of the Roehrig house. This house will be used for a construction trades training program for area residents. It will be affiliated with LAUSD's "We Build" program which arranges for union apprenticeship. Tutoring, GED as needed, are part of the program. When the students complete their apprenticeship, other programs will provide work boots, hard hats and tools.

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House Moves

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This program will also feature a historic preservation/reconstruction component. Students will learn how to minimize damage to historic structures while upgrading systems (we hope.) The shop will provide training and some businesses. Fabrication of moldings, repair of stained glass, casting of hardware or cement stone and stucco decorations are being considered.

The other building will house offices and other training programs for area residents, ESL, first time home buyer, and credit management are some of the classes/programs to be offered. Parking will be in the rear with access from the alley. The houses will join the two Los Angeles Cultural-Historic Monuments at 12th and Alvarado.

The foursquare style home at 981 Arapahoe was built for the family of Harris Newmark. Harris Newmark was a prominent pioneer Angeleno, who arrived in Los Angeles in 1853 and went on to become one of its most important citizens, both in terms of business and social influence. He was a merchant and partner with his brother, Joseph, in various enterprises. He had six children survive to adulthood, including Estelle, who married Leon Loeb, and their sons founded the famed Loeb & Loeb law firm.

Harris Newmark became involved in local politics and associated with many of the early pioneers in the area. In the last years of his life, Newmark wrote a memoir, *Sixty Years in Southern California*, first published in 1916. Newmark was most instrumental in forming the Jewish community in early Los Angeles, including charities such as the Hebrew Benevolent Society, the Jewish Orphans Home and the first synagogue, Congregation B'nai Brith. The latter continues to this day as Wilshire Boulevard Temple.

According to house historian Tim Gregory ("The Building Biographer"), Newmark "had the house built for his son Marco R. Newmark. Harris Newmark also built 977 Arapahoe, in which Marco lived for many years. Evidently, 981 was built as income property or perhaps as a residence for other members of the Newmark family. Harris Newmark never lived in either house, residing at 837 South Westlake for many years."

The adjacent Tudor mansion, which is also being moved to Alvarado, was built for Jesse and Esther Jevne. Jevne ran the wholesale and retail grocery company founded by his father. Jevne's was located on Broadway in Downtown Los Angeles and was later described as a precursor to such fancy grocers as Jurgenson's. He was also listed as the "backer of some thirty different concerns."

The houses are currently located northwest corner of Arapahoe Street and Olympic Boulevard, at 981 and 987 S. Arapahoe Street. They will be relocated to 1115 and 1129 S. Alvarado Street. For the move itself, they will be lifted up and transported onto Olympic Boulevard and then will travel east to Alvarado. They will turn south on Alvarado and continue to the site. The new site is located on the west side of Alvarado between Pico Boulevard and 12th Street. ●

President's Message

by Jefferson Davis

"The Sketches of Frank Gehry" is a wonderful documentary by Sydney Pollack, which skillfully portrays one of our greatest living architects. While celebrated today, I wonder if his architecture will one day be considered an eyesore and be endangered by a wrecking ball. While watching the film, I could not keep my mind from wandering back to our own journeys in West Adams, and to the West Adams architects who shaped our neighborhoods. I thought about their creative processes that went into the designs of West Adams' most memorable structures.

What would it have been like to have John Austin (the architect of Los Angeles City Hall) personally go in and out of your home on daily basis, picking out the woods, the windows, and tiles?

Can you imagine hiring Paul Williams while he worked simultaneously on a house for Frank Sinatra (the notorious pushbutton house), or Lon Chaney, Sr., or Lucille Ball, or Tyrone Power (two houses), or Barbara Stanwyck? What would it have been like to meet with the Greene Brothers asking them to design a smaller scale of the famous Gamble House? Or to hire Frank Tyler, or the Althouse Brothers, or Lloyd Wright, or the countless others?

Who were these men and where did their brilliance come from? (Sadly, few women had the opportunity to pursue architecture as a profession.) What were their obstacles, personal and professional, to creating their respective signature architectural styles that still endures today. With clients as diverse as a the man who brought the railway to Los Angeles, to the creator of on-screen musicals, I think there is a story to tell here that is rich with history, insight, and entertainment. Today, as architects are treated as pop celebrities, West Adams has the highest concentration of "stars" in the entire state of California.

As the West Adams Heritage Association continues our work in promoting our historical and architectural treasures, I believe we are missing a significant opportunity if we don't create a book or a film or whatever to document their work. I welcome your ideas as we formulate our plan for future projects.

Jefferson Davis can be reached via e-mail, jeffdavis@yahoo.com

Gramercy Housing Group Celebrates 10 Years of Service

The two-story brick building on the northeast corner of Washington and Fourth Avenue was erected in 1923 by druggist Herbert Kalliwoda. Over the years, his Majestic Pharmacy Building at 1824 South Fourth Avenue would have numerous changes of ownership, and by the early 1990s the place was, put politely, "a mess." The City had evaluated the building, by now boarded up, as uninhabitable, while the County valued the property for "land only." It seemed destined for a bulldozer.

In 1992, Gramercy Housing Group saw a different possibility: affordable housing for young women who are single parents. The non-profit service organization gutted the building down to the studs, and then reconstructed it as a mixed use project with 16 apartment units plus a community room, a child care center and retail space. Today, Gramercy Housing Group provides a comprehensive program of moderately-priced housing and social services for young low-income single-parent families to help them transition from near homelessness to a new life of independence.

This month, Gramercy Housing Group celebrates its 10th anniversary in operation, and it is throwing a party.

On Thursday, June 22, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Gramercy Housing is inviting West Adams neighbors to a ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating not only ten years of service but also a Grand Re-Opening showcasing the organization's newly expanded childcare center, which will be open to community families as well as the children who live at Gramercy Housing Group. Local officials including representatives from CD10 are expected to participate in the day's activities.

WAHA is also doing its share to help the organization. We will be working with Gramercy Housing to find historic photographs which will be blown up to billboard size, and then placed on display in the large storefront windows facing Washington Boulevard and Fourth Avenue.

If anyone has a great photo showing West Adams' historic past - ideally one that also depicts mothers and children - please consider sharing it for this project. Contact Jefferson Davis for more information, by e-mailing him at jeffdavis@yahoo.com. ●

IS THIS YOUR LAST NEWSLETTER?

WAHA sent out dues renewal notices in March for the membership year 2006-2007 (the membership year runs April to April). If you haven't paid your dues for the coming year yet, this will be your last newsletter. However, if you joined late in 2005, WAHA extends your membership through the following year. If you are not sure of your status -- but want to guarantee that your newsletter keeps coming -- please contact Candy Wynne, candywynne@yahoo.com or 323-735-3749. ●

Around the House

Resources — Farmers Markets

You can indeed purchase farm-fresh produce in and near West Adams. Here is a list of local/nearby Farmers Markets:

Wednesday

West Adams, Adams and Vermont: St. Agnes Church, West Adams Boulevard at Vermont Avenue. 2 to 6 p.m. 323-777-1755.

Thursday

La Cienega: La Cienega Plaza, 1801 S. La Cienega Blvd., 3 to 7:30 p.m. during daylight savings. 562-495-1764.

Friday

Wilshire Center: Mariposa Avenue and Wilshire Boulevard, 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. 818-591-8161.

Saturday

Downtown Arts District/Little Tokyo: Weller Court, 2nd and San Pedro streets, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. 323-660-8660.

Leimert Park: Degnan Boulevard and 43rd Street. 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. 323-463-3171.

Sunday

Larchmont Village: Larchmont Boulevard, between 1st Street and Beverly Boulevard, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. 818-591-8161.



My World — Life in an Urban Village

by Adam Janeiro

I am annoyed by door flyers. Can't we pass a city resolution to ban them?! I understand that advertising is expensive and that the ol' USPS doesn't give many breaks, but I am being flyer-ed to death. Pizza delivery, month-to-month auto insurance, gardening services, home remodeling, you name it — I get it, slipped beneath my wiper blade, my welcome mat, rubber banded to my door handle, or just left to lie in the walk.

Funny how the flyer "handers-outers" never come back by to pick up the discards, those blown by the wind, soaked by the rain, tossed in the gutter.

I want redemption values attached to flyers, just like used-up drink bottles. I wouldn't mind at all if a guy came by on Saturday mornings pushing a cart full of crumpled pizza chain door knockers, hittin' me up for my rug cleaning notices. "Hey man, I'm on the way to the recycling center, you got any of those green slips I can take off you — you know the ones that say 'Alfombras'?" ●

Janeiro writes about life in the urban village we call "West Adams" in his own blogspot, on his website, www.recenteringelpueblo.com

Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner, Saturday Brunch

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the 29th street cafe

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Call for Bortfeld Award Nominees

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

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.

Normally, the candidate would NOT currently be a WAHA Board member.

The award has been presented in the past to Kathleen Salisbury, Harry Anderson, David Raposa, Harold Greenberg, Lindsay Wiggins, Jodi Seigner, Jon Rake, Lana Soroko, Norma Latimer, John Kurtz, Audrey Arlington, Jim Meister, Joe Ryan, Laura Meyers, Linda Scribner, Corinne Pleger, and Peggy King.

As you can see by this listing, all former Honorees have had leadership roles in WAHA and have undertaken a diverse range of activities in the organization and in the community at large.

Nominations should be submitted in writing to WAHA President Jefferson Davis, either via e-mail (jeffdavis@yahoo.com) or letter sent to WAHA's office, 2263 S. Harvard Blvd., Historic West Adams, Los Angeles, CA 90018. Please briefly written describe activities your candidate has undertaken for West Adams Heritage Association and in the West Adams community, and explain why you believe he or she should be chosen for the Bortfeld Award. The winner will be selected by WAHA's current President, Membership Chair Candy Wynne, and last year's winner, Peggy King.

Deadline for submission is FRIDAY, JUNE 23. ●



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Stepping Out

Doheny Mansion Tour

Saturday, June 17, and
Saturday, July 15

9:00, 9:45, 10:30, and 11:15 a.m.

The home of oil baron Edward L. and Carrie Estelle Doheny for almost 60 years, the Gothic Renaissance-style Victorian mansion was designed by architects Theodore Augustus Elsen and Sumner P. Hunt in 1898. This well-maintained home boasts a marble-pillared great hall, the Pompeian Room with imported Siena marble and a Tiffany iridescent glass dome, furniture copied by permission of the Italian government from Pompeian furniture in a Rome museum, and much of the original furnishings in its other opulent rooms. Visitors will step back in time as they learn the history of this fascinating family, and the lifestyle of rich and famous Angelenos 100 years ago.

Docent-led groups limited to 20 people will visit the first floor of the Mansion and outside surroundings. The cost of the tour is \$25 per person and reservations are a must. No children under 12, please.

To book a tour, please call 213-477-2962. <http://www.msmc.la.edu/pages/473.asp>. Proceeds will benefit the preservation of this historic residence. ●



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Butterflies at Natural History Museum

Pavilion of Wings

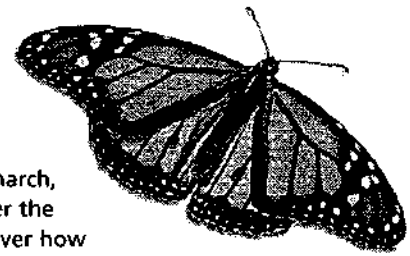
Continuing through September 4

Back for its eighth summer, Robinsons-May Pavilion of Wings opened on Sunday, April 16 and runs through Labor Day.

Enter a world of free flying butterflies and stroll through a beautifully landscaped temporary exhibit housed at the Museum's South Lawn. See a giant swallowtail, monarch, American painted Lady or even a California dogface - California's state butterfly. Over the summer, thirty different butterfly and moth species will call the pavilion home. Discover how butterflies interact with the plants and gain a new understanding of various environmental issues.

Special ticketed admission applies: \$3 for adults, \$2 for seniors and students and \$1 for children ages 5 to 12. Tickets are sold in half-hour time slots through-out the day. Museum members receive free admission and the first available tickets.

For more information about these and other Museum programs, visit www.nhm.org or call 213- 763-DINO ●



Open Saturday at Peace Awareness

Labyrinth & Gardens with Afternoon Tea

Saturday, June 17, and Saturday, July 22,
Noon to 4 p.m.

Guasti Villa, 3500 West Adams Blvd.

Bring friends and family to enjoy the gardens and walk the labyrinth. Open Saturday is especially designed for people who want to visit the historic Guasti Villa, walk the labyrinth, and enjoy an afternoon in the gardens. No appointment necessary. Afternoon Tea will be served from 2 to 4 p.m. Fresh-made tea sandwiches and cakes and organic Urth Caffé teas. Cost for Afternoon Tea: \$10.00 (advance reservations and payment required) No charge for visiting the gardens: (but, donations are welcomed.) To make a reservation and pay in advance for the afternoon tea, please contact Zoe at 323-737-4055 ext 127 or e-mail registrar@peacelabyrinth.org. ●



The Henry J. Bruman

Summer Chamber Music Festival at the Clark Library

Although the Clark Library at 2520 Cimarron is closed to scholars for research while its physical plant is being upgraded, the historic building is still open this summer for other events, including a musical series.

The tentative schedule is:

- July 17 - A quartet of L.A. Philharmonic musicians: Tamara Chernyak and Stacy Wetzel, violins; Minor L. Wetzel, viola; Barry Gold, cello
- July 20 - Armadillo String Quartet
- July 24 - Mládi
- July 27 - I Palpiti Soloists presented by Young Artists International
- July 31 - Calder Quartet
- August 3 - La Camerata

The Clark's Chamber Music series are very popular and almost always sell out, so most tickets are awarded on a lottery basis. Call 310-206-8552 or e-mail c1718cs@humnet.ucla.edu for more information and to be added to the subscription list. ●

Cocktail Soiree at the Oviatt Penthouse

June 10, 5 to 8 p.m.

617 E. Olive Street (Downtown)

The Art Deco Society invites "decophiles" to a fabulous and rare opportunity to enjoy cocktails and hors 'd'oeuvres at the Oviatt Penthouse in Downtown Los Angeles. You know the place — it's one of the most exclusive addresses in the historic downtown core — the building with the Lalique Crystal doors. The Art Deco Society of Los Angeles again invites you to spend a wonderful, sophisticated evening enjoying this jewel of a penthouse, with its world-famous collection of Lalique crystal appointments.

Enjoy an evening that features everything a glamorous soul could wish for — a premium martini bar, delicious hors 'd'oeuvres, a positively stellar silent auction, plus a self-guided tour of these exquisitely appointed and restored rooms.

This event is always a sell-out, but there are a few tickets left. Cost: \$90. Reservations (space available) can be made via Paypal online at <http://adsla.org/oviatt.html> or with a credit card by telephone at 310-659-3326. Questions? E-mail ArtDecoLa@sbcglobal.net. Information at www.adsla.org. ●

A Century of Music

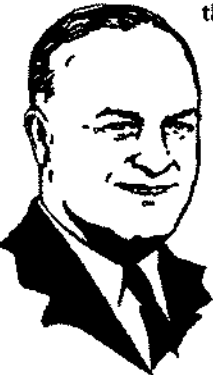
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in 1891 and the Ebell Club in 1894. Soon, too, the Harmonia Club was also established as a culture club dedicated to music education and to presenting musical performances.

West Adams denizen Caroline Severance not only founded the Friday Morning Club, she also helped lay the groundwork for the Los Angeles Philharmonic before her death in 1914, and the orchestra was formally founded in 1919 by another West Adams personality, William Andrews Clark.

But the story of music in Los Angeles starts nearly three decades earlier. In 1887, Adolph Willhartz organized a Philharmonic Society, soon followed by an orchestra conducted by A. J. Stamm. Harley Hamilton, who founded the first symphony association, Bernhardt Bierlich, who played cello, violin and viola, and flutist William Mead all played in that first concert. They were members of a musicale group which met frequently at the West Adams home of Judge Robert Maclay Widney and his wife, Helen. Helen Widney was an advocate of the arts, and also helped to organize a Women's Orchestra, conducted by Hamilton. Hamilton also conducted the Los Angeles Symphony for 16 years, followed by Viennese musician Adolf Tandler.

Music was given its greatest impetus by William Andrews Clark, who as patron provided funding for the Los Angeles Symphony and, later, the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra. Clark himself also participated in a classical chamber music quintet, which included Bernhardt Bierlich and, after his death, son Julius Bierlich, a violinist who served as the concertmeister for both the Symphony and the Philharmonic Orchestra, and built his own home in West Adams.



Through the half century that the Bierlich family owned their West Adams home, they were periodically joined in residence by jazz symphony composer Ferde Grofe, famed for his big band orchestrations and the nephew of Julius. In 1909 Grofe was hired by the Los Angeles Symphony as a violist, a position he maintained for 10 years. While with the Symphony, Grofe continued to compose his own works and formed his own jazz ensemble. In 1923, playing in local clubs around Los Angeles, he met the famed jazz conductor Paul Whiteman, who hired him as pianist and arranger for his orchestra. Together they were catapulted to fame with Grofe's arrangement for George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*.

Another early West Adams musician was chorale leader Joseph Dupuy, who erected a South Seas-inspired home in West Adams. Dupuy secured the first subscription for Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra in 1897 and was the principal force behind the reorganization of Ellis Club men's choir in 1900. In 1905, Dupuy also founded the Orpheus Club, a men's glee club. A decade later, Dupuy was vice president of the National Federation of Music Clubs and in 1915 he helped organize its ninth annual convention and festival in Los Angeles -- the largest musical event in America at the time.



Ferde Grofe (above); the Paul Whiteman Orchestra in 1928

West Adams' musical history doesn't end with the pre-WWI era. From the 1930s until the present day, many singers, instrumentalists, composers, band members, and other musicians lived and worked in the West Adams area.

One of the most famous West Adams residents was Oscar-winning actress Hattie McDaniel, who owned two homes in the area. McDaniel worked as a singer with Professor George Morrison's Orchestra in 1915, touring the country. She became the first African American to sing on network radio in the United States. She is probably most often associated with the supporting role of Mammy in the classic 1939 film *Gone with the Wind*, a role for which in 1940 she became the first African American to win an Oscar.

But music played in many other West Adams homes. Jazz trombonist, composer and arranger Melba Liston was a pioneer female instrumentalist and played with Gerald Wilson, Count Basie and other great bands. She lived in Jefferson Park.

The Mills Brothers quartet imitated musical instruments and was among the first black singing groups to cross racial lines, performing for royalty and broadcasting its own radio show. The legendary ensemble, famous for harmonizing such tunes as *Glow Worm*, lived in several Jefferson Park and West Adams homes.

Ethel Waters was one of the most popular African-American singers and actresses of the 1920s. She moved to New York in 1919 after touring in vaudeville shows as a singer and a dancer. She made her recording debut in 1921 with *The New York Glide* and *At the New Jump Steady Ball*. Waters soon recorded the Blues numbers *Down Home Blues* and *Oh Daddy*. But by the mid-1920s Waters had become more of a pop singer. She performed in a number of musical revues throughout the rest of the decade and appeared in a couple of films, including *Check and Double Check* with Amos 'n' Andy and Duke Ellington. By the end of the 1930s she was a big star on Broadway. Eventually she moved to the West Coast and settled in West Adams Heights.

Trailblazing actor-singer Herb Jeffries is one of the last original singing cowboys from the early days of Hollywood Westerns. A longtime Jefferson Park resident now retired to Idyllwild, he is best remembered for his role as the "Bronze Buckaroo" -- the whip-wielding, pistol-flashing, break-into-melody hero of four all-black musical Westerns from the late

Art Baker, Cady, Specialties Hawaiian, Drummed, Coached, Sax? - Scott

1930s. But his thick resume dates back to the early 1930s, when Jeffries sang first with Erskine Tate and then with Earl "Fatha" Hines. His rich baritone enhanced the legendary Duke Ellington Orchestra beginning around 1940.

Jazz woodwind virtuoso on five instruments (alto-saxophone, clarinet, bass clarinet, flute and oboe), Eric Dolphy was one of the greatest avant-garde/experimental Jazz musicians who ever lived. He was raised in a modest working-class West Adams home by his Panamanian immigrant parents. Dolphy made many recordings as a leader, and is on John Coltrane and Charles Mingus recordings too.

Texas-bred blues guitarist Johnny Guitar Watson lived in the Adams-Normandie neighborhood for 30 years beginning in the late 1950s. He built a vaunted reputation as one of the hottest blues axemen on the West Coast during the 1950s. But that wasn't paying the bills by the 1970s. So he totally changed his image to that of a funkster, enjoying more popularity than ever before for his down-and-dirty R&B smashes *A Real Mother for Ya* and *Superman Lover*.



Ethel Waters

Musician Johnny Otis lived in the West Adams area during the 1970s. He began his musical career in 1939 as a drummer with Count Otis Matthews West Oakland House Rockers. In 1943, at the recommendation of Nat "King" Cole and Jimmy Witherspoon, he moved to Los Angeles to join Harlan Leonard's Kansas City Rockets at the Club Alabam. By 1945 Otis was leading his own band, and had his first big hit that year with *Harlem Nocturne*. In 1950 he had ten songs on the *Billboard* Magazine Top 10 Rhythm & Blues records list. With this success, he went on the road with his California Rhythm & Blues Caravan, and became the hottest musical attraction in black America. Otis soon also began a radio career and became one of the most popular disc jockeys in Southern California. His early radio broadcast success led to a weekly variety show on television.

Never formally trained in music, Pearl Bailey, who lived for a time in West Adams Heights, credited her love of music to growing up in a "Holy Roller" evangelical church where her father was the minister. In her early career in amateur shows and nightclubs she developed her throaty style, embellished with asides and ad libs. Bailey sang with bands, and later on stage and in films. The all-black version of *Hello, Dolly!* is one of her best-known roles. Bailey was a frequent guest on television variety shows and had her own show on ABC in 1970-71.

Lou Rawls' voice is as instantly recognizable as any in music. From his early days in gospel to his collaborations with Sam Cooke, from the Dick Clark Show in 1959 to the opening for The Beatles in 1962 at Crosley Field in Cincinnati, from his monologues in the 1970s that presaged rap music to becoming a "crossover" artist before the term was invented, there has been one constant in Rawls' career — a voice that one critic has called "sweet as sugar, soft as velvet, strong as steel, smooth as butter." He also lived in West Adams Heights.

Pianist, composer, voice coach to the stars -- Phil Moore, Sr. was an influential artist in the local African American community. Moore's roots were in Los Angeles and Country Club Park. He was married to Jeni LeGon, Bill "Bojangles" Robinson's dance partner and film actress, dancer and choreographer. Moore was a voice coach to Lena Horne, Nancy Wilson, Marla Gibbs, Dorothy Dandridge, Diane Reeves and many other famed vocalists and film and stage performers.

One of West Adams' newest landmarks, RPM International on Washington Boulevard, was constructed by singer Ray Charles and his long-time manager Joe Adams. The first album recorded here was Charles' *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 produced at the two-story stucco facility. Willie Nelson, B.B. King, Gladys Knight, Johnny Cash, and Quincy Jones are among a host of artists who have used the studio. Just before his death in May 2004, the Grammy-winning singer recorded his *Duets* album here featuring Norah Jones, Willie Nelson and Elton John.



Like Ray Charles, most of these musical pioneers of the West Adams community have passed from our midst, but we can remember and celebrate their musical traditions every time we hear the strains of music in West Adams. ●

Editor's note: If you know of additional West Adams musicians and/or musical history, please contact Laura Meyers at lauramink@aol.com. WAHA is doing further research on this subject.

Community Matters

Voices of Ballona Creek: Oral History from L.A. Backyards

Did you know that there is a natural underground stream known as El Rio del Jardin de las Flores in Los Angeles that surfaces briefly on its journey from the Hollywood Hills to Ballona Creek? For two weeks, from June 8 to 17, Angelenos will gather at Memorial Branch Library at 4625 W. Olympic Blvd. to listen and share in oral histories from a diverse group of people, including residents, naturalists and artists, who will give accounts of living on the banks of the far-reaching El Rio del Jardin de las Flores brook and Ballona Creek.

Voices of Ballona Creek: Stories of the Region's Inhabitants involves the diverse narratives of people who have a connection to the Los Angeles watersheds, El Rio del Jardin de las Flores and Ballona Creek, and the stories of the rich cultural and environmental landscape between these two waterways.

The primary goal of this community storytelling is to give Angelenos a genuine experience of oral history via interviews in order to appreciate the process of historiography. Participants include longtime resident Sandy Boeck; award-winning radio dramatist/educator Tony Palermo; film producer Jan Wieringa; river historian Jessica Hall, award-winning author Lisa Teasley, Ballona Creek Renaissance president Jim Lamm, and others.



Thursday, June 8, 3:30 p.m.

Historical and Natural Life of the Community by Marina Tidwell and Sandy Boeck.

Marina Tidwell will present *Beach Birding: A Power Point Presentation*. Shelter, rest, feeding grounds, wilderness. . . These aren't words you normally associate with a largely urbanized area such as Los Angeles, but for hundreds of species of birds this area is essential habitat. Preying upon snails, crabs, worms and fish, each bird species has a different strategy for stalking and eating food. Sandpipers plunge their beaks into the sand, pelicans make arcing aerial dives, while terns hover over the surf on quivering wings, gulls raid, and oystercatchers glean among the rocks. Discover the many fascinating and beautiful birds of Los Angeles' shores—and their prey—with Tidwell, author and photographer of *Beyond the Beach Blanket, A Field Guide to Southern California Coastal Wildlife*.

Co-presenter Sandy Boeck is a longtime resident of the unique Brookside community. Boeck has been involved as the secretary of the Brookside Homeowners Association for twenty years. She is a trustee and board member of the Windsor Square-Hancock Park Historical Society, Hope-Net Liaison Partner through Coldwell Banker, former secretary of the Wilshire Homeowners Alliance, and a WAHA member. She was named Woman of the Year in 1999 by the *Larchmont Chronicle*.

Saturday, June 10, 10 a.m.

Ballona Creek and Brookside: The Watershed and Its People

Join Jessica Hall, Ballona Creek Watershed Coordinator of the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission, to learn about Los Angeles' hidden creeks and rivers of our communities. Hall has been mapping these creeks, researching their history, and seeking to restore them for the past five years. At the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission, she works with community groups, environmentalists, agencies and others to promote projects and education activities that will improve the health of the Ballona watershed, which includes the Mid-City and Country Club Park neighborhoods. In addition to a historical overview of LA's creeks, she will talk about current efforts by different organizations to restore the waters of Los Angeles, and describe the Ballona Creek Watershed Management Plan.

Saturday, June 10, 11 a.m.

Getting Started with Oral History: An Introductory Workshop with Lisa Teasley

Join Lisa Teasley, award-winning author, for a workshop on the basics of oral history. This workshop will explore such topics as effective interview techniques. The format will be interactive and will include hands-on exercises, as well as discussions about oral history methodology. This event is co-sponsored by Poets & Writers.

Wednesday, June 14, 3:30 p.m.

The Art of Ballona Creek

Christophe Cassidy created *The Veteran Fishermen of Ballona*, a series of paintings inspired by the concrete landscape/seascape of Ballona Creek. The creek runs through Los Angeles, under the 405 and 90 freeways and pours out into the Pacific at the mouth of Marina del Rey harbor. The place has a semi-industrial, semi-wild feel to it; a vast variety of animals and birds inhabit its concrete route. It can also be a solitary space where many people find refuge from urban life. These paintings are a tribute to this poetic concrete wilderness. Cassidy is a successful painter and a muralist who lives and works in Los Angeles.

Jan Wieringa produced the ACE award-winning *The Man Who Broke 1,000 Chains*, starring Val Kilmer; *Long Gone*, starring William Peterson; and large format (IMAX) *Texas: The Big Picture*, which is currently in release. She also produced the iconic post-9/11 spots *I Am An American*. Wieringa recently produced the National Endowment for the Arts documentary *Why Shakespeare?* directed by Larry Bridges and featuring Tom Hanks, William Shatner, Martin Sheen, and Christina Applegate.

Thursday, June 15, 3:30 p.m.

New Beginnings Along Ballona Creek with Jim Lamm, President of Ballona Creek Renaissance

Learn about the efforts of Ballona Creek Renaissance, a Culver City-based non-profit organization, to work with many others toward renewing Ballona Creek and its watershed through art, education, native plantings, and multi-faceted

(continued on page 12)



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Community Matters

Voices of Ballona Creek

continued from page 11

improvements. BCR President Jim Lamm looks forward to sharing interesting information, illustrations, and ideas.

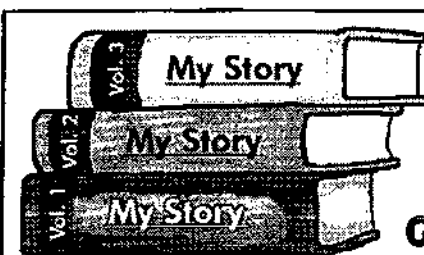
Saturday, June 17, 11 a.m.
Oral History and Radio

To celebrate the culmination of the *Voices of Ballona Creek* there will be a special community-wide storytelling event with Tony Palermo. Palermo is an award-winning radio dramatist/director, composer, engineer, sound effects artist and educator who lives in the community. He operates Encyclo-Media, a multiple (but not multi)-media production company. Since 1996, Palermo has been writing, directing and scoring radio plays for public radio, The Museum of Television and Radio, the United Nations, on stage, and in recordings. He's done everything from super-heroes to soap operas, detective shows, westerns, horror stories, historical dramas, and science fiction. Recently he won the Audio Publishers' Audie award for best Radio Drama — for the "Sherlock Holmes Theater" on Blackstone Audio.

All events are free. For more information, call 323-938-2732.

Friends of the Memorial Library, Inc., founded in 1973, is an auxiliary of concerned citizens dedicated to enhancing the services provided by the Los Angeles Public Library; who care about libraries and who are interested in promoting the welfare and growth of the library.

Voices of Ballona Creek: Stories of the Region's Inhabitants was made possible, in part, by a grant from the California Council for the Humanities as part of the Council's statewide California Stories initiative. For more information on the Council and the California Stories initiative, visit www.californiastories.org. ●



Got Books?

Friends of the Washington Irving Library request that you send your used books their way. Please contact Toni Floyd (tbrxfloyd@comcast.net) for more information.

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

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Community Unity Day

Saturday, June 10, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Benny H. Potter/West Adams Avenues
Memorial Park

The entire community is invited to the 7th annual Community Unity Day, a health fair and festival, on Saturday, June 10. Presented by Home Assembly Church, and co-sponsored by a number of organizations, including Broadway Federal Savings, Farmers Insurance, United Neighborhoods Neighborhood Council, and the City of Los Angeles, Community Unity Day offers a variety of health testing opportunities PLUS a day of music and fun for kids. The Kid Zone will feature rock climbing, an Orbitron, and a 3-in-one jumper.

Among the performers are the Kinnara Taiko Drummers, the Nigerian Talking Drums group, and a number of gospel choirs. Both free food and food sold by vendors will be available. ●



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



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WAHA's Annual 2006 "No Excuses" Calendar

Important future dates - Please cut this out and save!

July:

Tuesday, July 4 — WAHA's Annual 4th of July Picnic

September:

Saturday, September 30 — Angelus Rosedale Cemetery Tour

October:

Sunday, October 29 — Frightful Halloween Festival

December:

Saturday and Sunday, Dec 2 and 3 — Holiday Tour

Sunday, December 10 — WAHA Holiday Party

NOTICE:

WAHA's Annual Paint Contest Deferred

Each year WAHA acknowledges all the hard work West Adams residents put in to beautify our community. But we are changing some aspects of our annual Exterior Paint Contest, and will defer the awards for a little while. So please, grab your paint brush and continue to work on your house this summer! And look for details about the NEW Paint Awards in an issue of the WAHA Matters newsletter later this year. ●

Calendar ✓

WAHA June Calendar

Community Unity Day, Saturday, June 10: A health fair and music festival at Benny H. Potter/West Adams Avenues Park (see story, page 13)

Mills Act Workshop, Saturday, June 24, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.: United Neighborhoods Neighborhood Council is presenting a workshop on the Mills Act historical properties contracts. Location: Washington Boulevard Stop-In, at 10th Avenue and Washington. The workshop will provide information and hands-on instructions for filling out the applications, which are due by July 14, 2006. Contact info@unnc.org, or visit www.unnc.org, for more information and to sign up (seats are limited - be first to reserve).

WAHA's Annual 4th of July Picnic, Tuesday, July 4: Do plan to celebrate America's birthday with your friends and neighbors in West Adams! (see story, right)

WAHA's Star Spangled 4th of July

Tuesday, July 4, 1 - 4 p.m.
27 St. James Park



Bring the kids, and wear your summer whites or patriotic attire, to WAHA's annual 4th of July picnic, on Tuesday, July 4, from 1 to 4 p.m. at the historic Stearns-Dockweiler Residence. Owners Jim and Janice Robinson are hosting WAHA's annual event celebrating America's birthday at their lovely property in St. James Park, just north of Adams Boulevard. Live music from the pop/jazz trio Voice Over and lots of fun is on the schedule. As always, Wa-hot dogs will be for sale, cold drinks are on the house, and the POTLUCK THEME IS SUMMERTIME PICNIC -- please bring salads, main dishes, desserts, or fruits to share.

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. Lett 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 2006. All rights for graphic and written material appearing in the newsletter are reserved. Contact Director of Publications for permission



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