

West Adams Matters

Art in Historic Places: West Adams' Creative Canvas

Saturday, June 5 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

WAHA presents its annual June Historic Homes and Architecture Tour with a new twist: Art!

Historic West Adams and nearby environs are becoming a new hotbed for fine art. Along with a few galleries and artist-run spaces, a growing number of emerging and established artists now live and/or work in the community.

So this year with a nod to that creativity, WAHA presents art in architecture! When visitors tour this year's collection of West Adams' most interesting historic places, they will also see exhibits of works by some of West Adams most talented artists.

WAHA's Art in Historic Places: West Adams' Creative Canvas tour will open the doors of architecturally diverse historic homes and buildings throughout the West Adams District. Visitors will explore a selection of Victorian, Craftsman, Spanish and other 1920s Period Revival homes along with an Alpine-influenced Arts and Crafts mansion on Adams

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WAHA Elections and Potluck Gathering

Saturday, April 17 • 1 p.m.

4325 Victoria Park Drive (Victoria Park)

The annual Board of Directors election for West Adams Heritage Association will be held at Terry Speth's beautiful Craftsman home in Victoria Park. Meet the candidates and nosh on potluck offerings -- Please bring a springtime dish to share.

Starting this year, WAHA has an 18-member board, and to achieve that number there are eight positions open for this election. We have received some candidates' statements (you'll read them on page 2), but it is not too late to add yourself to the roster. All Board candidates will be asked to present themselves at the election meeting on April 17 in a very short (one- to two-minute) speech. At that time candidates may ask to be added to the ballot on a write-in basis.

Book It: A Society Columnist's Heritage plus Cagney & Lacey Producer's Memoir in Historic Lafayette Square Villa

Saturday, May 15

4 p.m. (Reception) 5 p.m. (Author Talk and Book Signing)

At the former home of Princess Conchita Pignatelli, 1757 Buckingham Rd.

WAHA invites you to meet TV producer Barney Rosenzweig and tour a literary legend's former home at one of our periodic "Books in Historic Places" events next month. Rosenzweig will talk about growing up in Boyle Heights, his lifetime in television, and his memoir, *Cagney & Lacey...and Me: An Inside Hollywood Story, Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Blonde*.

This author talk and book signing will be held at a home associated with another Hollywood literary figure, society columnist Princess Conchita Pignatelli, whose father was the namesake for Sepulveda Boulevard. (The book will be available for purchase and signing at this event.)

In a media landscape today filled with strong female voices, it is worthwhile remembering there was a time not too long ago when most women journalists were relegated to newspapers' "Society" pages and a TV program about two women detectives was considered "groundbreaking."

But as television producer Rosenzweig recalls in *Cagney & Lacey...and Me*, in the mid-1970s,

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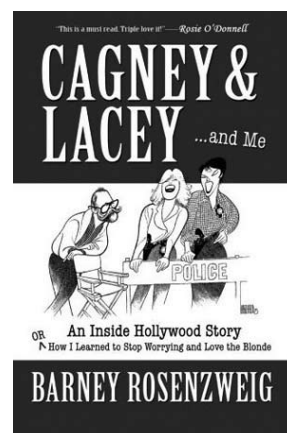


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Correction:

In the March issue of *WAHA Matters*, we published a story on Certified Farmers Markets. One of the markets we mentioned (FAME) is not a Certified Farmers Market, although it does sell fresh produce.

WAHA Board of Directors Candidates' Statements

Election/Potluck on Saturday, April 17, 1 p.m., 4325 Victoria Park Drive (Victoria Park)

WAHA has eight open positions on its Board of Directors. Here, meet three candidates who have submitted statements:

Suzanne Henderson

As a founding member of WAHA, I have volunteered in many capacities over the last 27 years. My house has been on numerous tours. I have been a docent and a house captain. I've cooked, planned parties, painted out graffiti, spoken at city council, served on the CRA PAC, and written the Resources column for the newsletter. I was awarded the 2005 Bob Bortfeld award for Historic Preservation. I have welcomed new members and buried old members, but the one thing I have never done is serve on the Board. The time has come. For all its lofty preservation accomplishments, WAHA was originally founded as a community support group. One of the first names we talked about was "Historic Adams Homeowners Association." I think it is time to put the HAHA back in WAHA.

Cheryl Francis Harrington

I am running for the WAHA board because I have an affinity for old houses and share a vision of a neighborhood that has unique and eclectic shops like those that exist in Culver City, Larchmont Boulevard, West Hollywood, or, dare I say it, Montana Avenue in Santa Monica. It's easy to sit back and complain about what is wrong with "this neighborhood." You say, "Yeah ...I love my house, I got it for a good price but, but, but..." BUT: What If ...you, me, we, us, came together and got involved in creating that neighborhood that we desire? I know you don't have time, I don't have time either -- who has time? But if you, we, I don't get involved, take the time, we run risk of opening doors to things that may not be the direction we want our neighborhood to go. Involvement can be simple: I moved in the neighborhood nine years ago and soon spent an hour on a Sunday knocking on doors encouraging the neighbors sign the papers to request for the free trees. Now Lowe's is coming, and we have a Farmers Market. What else can we do to have our vision materialized? I hope my service on the WAHA Board can help us create this together.

Candy Wynne

I have been a legal professional since 1982, working in several firms in the downtown Los Angeles area. I have lived in West Adams since 1985, when my late husband and I were searching for a friendly neighborhood where we could raise our three children. We were fortunate enough to find a beautiful 1908 Craftsman on 23rd Street in the heart of West Adams. The neighborhood offered me the opportunity to live in a vibrant community within the city I love and I found that my neighbors became some of my dearest friends. Six years ago, when I was searching for a way to give back to the community that had given so much to me, I was approached to join the Board and fill a vacancy. That appointment has allowed me to work with dedicated community members to expand WAHA's borders, protect endangered homes and areas, and assist in helping our community grow stronger. I have served for the past five years as the chair of the membership committee. I would like to return to the board and plan to serve in an at-large capacity, helping out where I am needed. ●

President's Message by Jim Robinson

WAHA's annual elections are fast approaching, so it wasn't a huge surprise when the following e-mail hit my inbox recently: "I was interested in the duties of board members."

An easy question, I thought, but not an easy answer. And the more I thought about it, the more I thought I should share my answer with the rest of WAHA's members.

The quick response is the logistical one: WAHA's board meets over dinner on the fourth Thursday of every month, except November when we may change the date to avoid Thanksgiving, and December when we have no meeting. Attending those meetings is the minimum expected of board members, although our bylaws do not require it.

Over the years, our meetings have rotated among board members' homes or been held in various restaurants and meeting rooms. Our bylaws allow up to 25 board members, but the board may choose a lower number. It's currently set at 15, but the board voted last year to raise it to 18 for the new term. Our maximum budget to feed 15 people is \$135 per meeting.

At the first board meeting following the annual election, board members choose a president, secretary, treasurer, one or more vice presidents, and whatever other officers the board may decide. The board may also choose to designate committees, which hold their own meetings and report back to the board.

Those are the logistics. Now for the hard part.

WAHA's board does set policy and oversee expenditures, and individual board members do assist with WAHA's tours and functions, but the truth is that most of the work of WAHA takes place away from board meetings. The day-to-day heavy lifting is performed by a small core of dedicated volunteers – non-board members – who organize our tours, prepare our historic nominations and submissions, meet with city planners, speak for WAHA at city committee and council meetings, produce our brochures and newsletters, and manage our web site.

It's hard work, and they do it with very little help. And some of them are getting tired.

Perhaps more worrisome than this unfair concentration of labor is our failure to attract new people willing to learn the ins and outs of historic preservation. It's a lot more than stripping paint and repairing sash cords on wood windows.

In recent months, for example, a handful of WAHA representatives played a leading role in shaping the city's ordinance that protects historic monument. Some of these same volunteers are working to alleviate the effects of city staffing cuts on Historic Preservation Overlay Zones. The time, complexity and negotiating skills involved in these efforts cannot be overestimated.

Does that new board members need a degree in urban planning? No. But it does mean they must be willing to spend the time to learn the basics, so they can help do the job. They also must be willing to join – and later lead – WAHA's committees, projects, events or delegations. They must be self-motivated and dependable, willing to assume responsibility, able to commit the time and certain to follow through.

It helps if board members arrive with useful experience and skills – at organizing, fund-raising, networking, motivating. Writing skills are good, too; our newsletter needs more writers.

In short, our directors must be a working board, not an advisory one. We don't have an executive director or employees, so there's no one for us to advise. We're grateful for the volunteers we get, but in the end, "L'état, c'est nous," to rephrase King Louis.

"I was interested in the duties of board members," my correspondent wrote me, already using the past tense...

Well, there are some of them. I hope he's still interested.

Another Endangered Landmark: The Tate-McCoy Homestead

by Anna Marie Brooks

Unless you have reason to travel to the dead end block of Norton Avenue, just south of Pico Boulevard, you have likely never seen the work, now somewhat altered, of Los Angeles' first female architect, Lillian Pearl Tate McCoy.

The Tate-McCoy Homestead, located at 1463-1469 S. Norton Ave., is a complex of several buildings that together became Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument (HCM) No. 811 on July 8, 2005. Although landmark status theoretically protects the buildings, there's a good chance they are at risk, because the property has recently gone on the real estate market for \$895,000, with no mention of its HCM status. (The real estate agent is Henry Y. Han of New Star Realty, cell phone 213-785-4989, should you wish to complain.)

Dr. Thomas Jefferson McCoy purchased Lot A of the Woolsey tract in 1904 from the Pico Street Villa Land Company. Neighborhood lore asserts that Dr. McCoy planted and maintained a citrus grove and extensive gardens on the property. By

(continued on page 10)



Around the House

Springtime is Here -- It's Time for a Visit to Mordigans *by Gail Peterson*

For those of us who grew up in Los Angeles and think "Beverly Park," pony rides, and a kiddie-sized rollercoaster when we drive by the Beverly Center, the name "Mordigan's" means plants and the best nursery in town.

Mordigan's lay next to that urban pre-cursor of Disney's Orange County pipedream for forty years. But the "Beverly Park" dreamland was really piped in, made real by Mrs. Hayes of Beverly Oil, one of whose pumps stood like a masthead in the middle of the site. At one point the nodding pump was disguised with wooden siding, and was as well camouflaged as a child's ball wrapped with paper.

Mordigan's was started as a Victory Garden in 1937 by George Giebel and Dick Mordigan on an acre or so of property near the Barham off-ramp off the 101 freeway where they raised tomatoes and vegetables to feed our troops in World War II. Near the war's end the men moved their enterprise from the Barham location to Beverly and La Cienega (where the Rexall drug store once stood) where they operated from for a year and a half until moving across the street on a handshake agreement with Mrs. Hayes. During their 40 years there they tried time and again to buy the land where their business stood but the death of Mrs. Hayes and complications of her immense estate made that impossible.

Developers acquired the Beverly Oil property in the late '70s with the plan to put up an enormous shopping center they would call the Beverly Center, and so Giebel and Mordigan decamped once again. This time they moved to 6285 West 3rd St., part of the enormous 256-acre property owned by another oil wealthy family, the Gilmores, who had operated a dairy farm, "Gilmore Island," at 3rd and Fairfax.

In 1995 Giebel and Mordigan parted ways. Mordigan went off to start a business on property just south of the airport where he raised trees for shopping centers and other commercial enterprises and Giebel continued to operate as "Mordigan's" (he thought a German sounding name didn't fit so well in the neighborhood) and after 20 years at 6285 W. 3rd St. experienced a 'déjà vu' when another developer wanted to start a "Grove" for shoppers.

Mordigan's moved to another part of the Gilmore property just down the street at 7933 W. 3rd St. and is now run by third generation owners, Mary Giebel-Bambino, and her brother Mark.

The business has faced many threats. In February 1989, a methane gas explosion blew the roof off the nearby Ross clothing store. That shut down 50 businesses including Mordigan's and the police ordered the proprietors to stay away for three days. When Mary Giebel-Bambino replied they wouldn't have a business to return to if they were kept out that long, they were allowed in for an hour a day to water and care for their plants.

The current threat leaves no place for retreat as the Gilmore company seeks to expand their shopping complex to include the present Mordigan's location. Mary Giebel-Bambino told me that Mr. Gosovitch, the Gilmore son-in-law who ran the family business for years, had a great relationship with Mordigan's Nursery and the Giebel family, but Hank Hilty, a Gilmore grandchild who now runs the business, doesn't share that vision. And so now, "we're waiting for the word," said Giebel-Bambino. "This time, if we have to move, that'll be it."

RESOURCES INFORMATION:

Mordigan's rose bush selection is huge, and the nursery offers the largest selection of pottery to choose from in Los Angeles, along with orange trees, lemon and lime trees, cactus, azaleas, potting soil, hoses, shovels, and even hats to keep the sun out of your face in the garden. 7933 West Third Street (one block west of Fairfax), Los Angeles, 323-655-6027

OTHER SO CAL NURSERIES RECOMMENDED BY WAHA MEMBERS:

SPEHLING NURSERY An eleven acre garden center located in Calabasas -- Sperling specializes in the hard-to-find and unique, offering thousands of beautiful plants and flowers from around the world in a beautiful setting in the oak-tree studded foothills. 24460 Calabasas Road, Calabasas, 818-591-9111. <http://www.sperlingnursery.com/>

BURKARD NURSERIES Tomatos, delphiniums, roses, exotic bulbs are among the specimens found every day at this North Pasadena nursery, established in 1937. 690 North Orange Grove Blvd., Pasadena (corner of Lincoln and North Orange Grove), 626-796-4355. <http://www.burkards.com/>

BELLEFONTAINE NURSERY Pasadena still holds one pre-War Nikkei nursery, Bellefontaine Nursery, established by Kuniyoshi Uchida just prior to WWII's evacuation of Japanese Americans. You can often find unusual specimens here. 838 S Fair Oaks Ave., Pasadena, 626-796-0747. ●



The 5th Ever Los Angeles Old Time Social

Friday, May 15, 8 p.m.

The Velaslavasay Panorama, 1122 West 24th St. (University Park)

If you are fond of all things antique, you may enjoy an evening of old time music at one of West Adams' local venues. The Velaslavasay Panorama is hosting the 5th Ever Los Angeles Old Time Social, a concert evening featuring musicians Frank Fairfield, Joe Wack and Triple Chicken Foot.

Frank Fairfield is a young chronicler of American music. Switching from song to song between banjo, guitar and his grandfather's fiddle, Fairfield channels the stories told by figures long since passed. Traveling by bicycle with his instruments tied to his back, he can often be found busking on street corners and farmer's markets throughout the greater Los Angeles area, and at times even playing his rare 78 rpm records on an acoustic gramophone for passersby.



Joe Wack was first enthralled by old time music as an art student in West Virginia University in the early '70's. From that time he has maintained the dual vocations of musician and artist. As a banjo player, he was an original founder of the still-active WV stringband Stewed Mulligan. Since moving to the L.A. area in 1993, he has worked in animation as a character designer in the TV series *The Simpsons*, all the while playing fiddle, guitar, and banjo. Wack will be joined by his frequent musical companions Steve Lewis and Laura Osborn. Lewis started playing old-time banjo the same year he began his teaching career, and since then has been a regular performer at dances and festivals throughout southern California. For ten years he has hosted the monthly old-time jam at Encino, and he produces the 4th Saturday Contradance in Brentwood. Osborn has been a lifelong musician, performing and teaching flute in the Los Angeles area for almost twenty years. She plays old-time music on guitar, banjo, and banjo-uke.

Triple Chicken Foot is a Los Angeles based Old Time band. Having played together for more than five years, The Foot has honed their skills and focused on playing Old Time music rooted in tradition. Spending time with veteran players around Los Angeles and the country, they have soaked up knowledge and technique handed down through the years. The Foot finds their voice through their repertoire of tunes and songs, be it gospel songs, archaic banjo tunes, or crooked fiddle tunes. They have also recently finished recording their second full length CD titled Tar River.

Tickets are \$15. To purchase, visit <http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/106070>. For more information about the Velaslavasay Panorama, visit www.panoramaonview.org. ●

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Preservation Matters

Take Action: Tell Congress to Restore Preservation Funding

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is asking all of us to help lobby Congress to restore funding for historic preservation:

Background Information

In early February, President Obama released his FY 2011 budget request that would eliminate funding for Save America's Treasures and Preserve America, and cut funding for National Heritage Areas by 50%. These critical historic preservation programs matter now more than ever – not only because they protect our national heritage, but because they serve as economic development engines and job creators in the thousands of communities they serve. For example, Save America's Treasures alone has been responsible for more than 16,000 jobs since it was created just ten years ago.

Established by Executive Order in 1998, Save America's Treasures is a public-private partnership that includes the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the National Park Service, the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, and the federal cultural agencies. Since its creation, Save America's Treasures has designated over 1,100 projects, created an estimated 16,000 jobs, and awarded about \$300 million in public and private grants to preservation efforts across the country. The projects range from such iconic objects as the Star-Spangled Banner to historically and architecturally significant structures like the Acoma Pueblo and the Conservatory of Flowers. The proposed FY 2011 budget eliminates funding for Save America's Treasures. However, just last year, Save America's Treasures was permanently authorized at \$50 million annually in the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009. In FY 2010, the program was funded at \$25 million.

Moreover, Save America's Treasures projects generate heritage tourism in the regions where they are located. According to a recent study, 118 million leisure travelers participate in cultural and heritage activities, contributing \$192 billion annually to the U.S. economy. On average, heritage travelers travel more often, spend more per trip (\$994 vs. \$611), and spend more on cultural and heritage activities than other activities. The elimination of Save America's Treasures would result in a 30% cut to the Historic Preservation Fund, which is funded through outer continental shelf oil leases, not taxpayer dollars. Since its inception, the Historic Preservation Fund has typically only received one-third to one-half of its annual authorization of \$150 million.

Preserve America was launched in 2003 as a White House initiative to promote and support community preservation efforts. There are several components of the Preserve America initiative:

- Preserve America Presidential Awards are given annually to organizations, businesses, and government entities for accomplishments in historic preservation. To date, 20 awards have been given to a variety of recipients ranging from Downtown St. Louis to the Lower East Side Tenement Museum.
- Preserve America Communities are designated for their commitment to protect, promote, and celebrate historic assets through education and heritage tourism. A total of 814 communities have been designated in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and two U.S. territories. Preserve America Stewards are honored for volunteer efforts at historic resources around the country. As the newest element of the Preserve America initiative, already 21 stewards have been designated. The Preserve

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America History Teacher of the Year Award is presented in partnership with the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History to recognize outstanding achievement in history education.

• Preserve America Grants have been awarded to over 250 projects throughout the country since 2006. These grants range from \$20,000 to \$250,000, and are designed to complement the Save America's Treasures grant program. To date, more than \$20 million has been awarded to projects in five funding categories – interpretation and education; promotion; planning; research and documentation; and training. More than \$20 million has been awarded to over 250 Preserve America grant projects throughout the country since 2006. And, there is a great need for the Preserve America Grant Program – over 600 project proposals requesting over \$30 million have been received by the National Park Service.

Preserve America Grants directly contribute to heritage tourism – one of America's largest employers. According to the Travel Industry Association, travel-related jobs generated \$157 billion in payroll in 2002, creating 7.2 million in direct travel-generated jobs and 17 million in indirect travel-generated jobs.

National Heritage Areas are designated by Congress as places where natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally-important landscape. Inaugurated in 1984 with the designation of the Illinois and Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor, the National Heritage Areas movement now encompasses 49 areas, ranging from factory towns and city neighborhoods to farmland and battlefields.

Though still relatively new, the National Heritage Area approach has already created thousands of new conservation, preservation, and historian jobs in communities across the country. Each year, more and more regions seek recognition under the program – a testament to the need of such a program. Each National Heritage Area is authorized to receive up to \$1 million annually. For the past four years, the program has received annual appropriations between \$15 million and \$17 million. The National Park Service provides technical, planning, and limited financial assistance to National Heritage Areas.

What You Can Do

Contact your Senators and Representatives and ask them to support restoration of funding to Save America's Treasures and other preservation programs.

Contact at least five of your friends and colleagues asking them to send a message as well.

Share this information on Facebook, Twitter, and other social networks using this link: <http://bit.ly/savepresfunding>.

For more information, visit www.preservationnation.org. ●

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Cagney & Lacey...And Me *continued from page 1*

when the feminist movement was in full gear, he read Molly Haskell's *From Reverence to Rape: The Treatment of Women in the Movies*. "In that work," he writes, "which remains a fascinating textbook on Hollywood's on-screen view of women from its earliest days, Ms. Haskell made a statement that haunted me: never in the history of motion pictures or television had Hollywood made a film where two women related to each other as did Paul Newman and Robert Redford. In other words, there had never been a buddy movie featuring women. Why not make one?"

Rosenzweig's light bulb moment eventually morphed into the popular TV series about two female New York City police detectives, *Cagney & Lacey*, which aired on CBS from 1982 to 1988. The show starred Sharon Gless as Christine Cagney, a single, career-minded woman, and Tyne Daly as Mary Beth Lacey, a married working mother. The series received 14 Emmys over the course of its run, and changed the course of women characters on television.

A generation earlier, Princess Conchita Sepulveda Chapman Pignatelli made headlines – literally – as the leading society columnist for William Randolph Hearst's *Los Angeles Examiner* newspaper. The famed princess was a contemporary of and friendly competitor to gossip columnists Louella Parsons and Hedda Hopper. As a reporter for nearly three decades, from the early 1930s until the *Examiner* closed its own doors and merged with the *Herald-Express* in 1962, Princess Pignatelli profiled the royal families of Europe, General MacArthur's return to the U.S. and Hollywood stars such as Sophia Loren. During much of this period, the Princess held home court at a 1926 Spanish Revival villa in Lafayette Square.

Princess Conchita Sepulveda Chapman Pignatelli was the daughter of Ygnacio Sepulveda and Herlinda de la Guerra, both members of prominent Spanish families in Southern California. Conchita was born in 1888 and educated in México City, where her father worked for the Wells Fargo Company and also attended to the interests of William Randolph Hearst. Ygnacio Sepulveda was born in Los Angeles in 1842, the son of Jose and Francisca (Avila) Sepulveda, both descended from old families of Spain and California. He studied law, and in 1869 Ignacio Sepulveda became the first Superior Court judge in Los Angeles. In 1883 he moved to Mexico, returning to Los Angeles 30 years later. On coming to Los Angeles, his daughter Conchita was considered one of the belles about town. She married businessman Charles Chapman, who hailed from Rutland, Vermont; two children were born of that union. After Chapman's death, Conchita married Valerio Pignatelli, a Papal Prince and newspaper correspondent, and became titled. They had one child together but that marriage was not long-lived.

Alone with three children to raise, Princess Pignatelli turned to family patron Hearst for help. He hired her to write for the society section, and the job fit her well. She later recalled, "The newspaper years in a way were the best. Newspaper life was never a chore."



Princess Pignatelli (top right) with Louella Parsons, Hedda Hopper and Sophia Loren

In 1939, Hearst wrote to one of his European correspondents, William Hillman, asking Hillman to investigate the princess's absent husband. The letter read in part: "...Princess Conchita Pignatelli is married to a person named Prince Valerio Pignatelli, of Rome. He is now in Spain, in the hospital... He has written a letter to the Princess asking her to consider a divorce. They have been separated for ten years. The separation was quite simple. He took everything that she had and then abandoned her and the child. The Princess would like to find out what is affecting Pignatelli's attitude. He was always been averse to a divorce, hoping apparently that the Princess would die and leave him some money. He certainly has never sent the child anything...I have decided to find out whether he has anything to provide alimony with - any money, any estates...I would also like to find out if he is in love with any one else..."

The princess was active in Los Angeles civic affairs throughout her life and was a patron of the El Pueblo de Los Angeles State Historical Monument Commission. She was named a Times Woman of the Year in 1962. Princess Pignatelli died of a heart attack in 1972.

Barney Rosenzweig is one of television's best-known producers (along with *Cagney & Lacey*, he helmed *John Steinbeck's East of Eden*, *The Trials of Rosie O'Neill* and *Christy*). He has three daughters, including Allyn Rosenzweig Mango. Allyn and her husband, David Mango, are newer West Adams residents and they have just restored the Princess Pignatelli house.

Our hosts have invited us to tour the house during the reception before the author talk and book signing. The event is free (we do ask you to RSVP to WAHAholiday@aol.com so we can provide enough food and beverage) but the books are not, and will be for sale. ●



Volunteers Needed

The Historic Preservation Committee needs your help.

This May's General Membership meeting on May 23 will be in the groove for National Historic Preservation Month. The traditional mimosa brunch gig is down at Vintage Hollywood in the Washington Square Shopping Center at 10th Avenue. Preservation BEAT, a cool celebration of history and land use set in a Googie coffee house, will jam with music and readings.

WANTED:

Poets, Actors, Musicians, Troubadours, Dancers, Story Tellers, Mimes, Jugglers, Magicians, Docents, Food Preparers, Food Handlers, Set-ups, Clean-ups, and all BEATS.

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Preservation Matters

Tate-McCoy Homestead *continued from page 3*

1908 the first of the residential structures stood on the property. It is a one-story home with a recessed entry and paired Prairie windows, and is connected via a pergola to the main residence, a Prairie-influenced Mediterranean Revival villa erected in 1915. Both of these homes are attributed to Lillian Pearl Tate McCoy.

Dr. McCoy and Miss Tate married in 1911, when Lillian was already well-established in her career (and soon after Dr. McCoy was widowed). She designed most of the homes on her block of Norton Avenue where she and Dr. McCoy made their home. In her husband's 1921 biography in John Steven McGroarty's *From the Mountains to the Sea* it is stated that Mrs. McCoy was the first woman architect in Los Angeles. McGroarty goes on to state, "She practiced [architecture] for ten years and planned between six and seven hundred houses, and built nearly all the homes in her neighborhood on Norton Street, including the attractive McCoy place...She opened her own studio in the O. T. Johnson Building, then in the center of the city." *The Architect and Engineer of California* also noted that she completed commissions in other Los Angeles neighborhoods and in Walton, California.

In a January 6, 1906, article in the magazine *Los Angeles Graphic*, writer Catherine Robertson Hamlin interviewed Lillian Tate. At that time Tate was the only woman architect in Los Angeles. Hamlin writes, "...[Tate] devotes her time to designing houses and to overseeing the construction of those for which she is responsible."

Lillian Pearl Tate came to architecture naturally as her father William F. Tate was a Los Angeles contractor. Tate said that, "ever since my babyhood I have played around the shop and thought of how I should make my houses when I grew up."

When Hamlin inquired if the men architects were nice to her, Lillian replied, "...at first they were not very friendly but they found that I was determined to stick to my business and intended to mind my work so they have quite thawed out."

Lillian continued her thoughts about her male architect counterparts:

Why should men be displeased that women have determined to become architects and builders? If anyone should know what is needed in the home, surely those who spend all their time there are the ones who should be fitted to judge of its requirements. Not one man in fifty thinks that a closet or two less is sufficient cause to keep a house from selling. But it is—at least when a woman has anything to say in the matter...What a woman regards as paramount, they [men] look upon with a certain contempt for which they cannot be blamed; trivial details are tiresome to those who are not condemned to live in the houses that they build."

The writer of the *Graphic* article seemed unable to resist asking Tate what she found most difficult about the work of a woman architect. Tate said that she had initially found it trying to climb over unfinished houses but had solved the challenge by wearing short strong skirts and by viewing the climbing as part of her everyday routine.

At the time of the writing of the *Graphic* article Lillian Pearl Tate was planning to attend the architectural program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and to return to Los Angeles to take the state's certificate exam for architects. Reminded by interviewer Hamlin that she was already an architect, Tate replied, "Yes, practically and to all purposes, but I am not allowed to write 'architect' after my name, only 'draftsman.' Still I am busy enough to keep an assistant and I employ a young woman who will follow me to the Eastern school and will probably go into business with me."

For his part, Dr. McCoy was both a prominent physician and also a real estate investor. He financed the construction of and owned many homes in Historic West Adams. Dr. McCoy was an early member of the Jonathan Club and the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce. In *From the Mountain to the Sea* McGroarty writes of him, "Dr. McCoy was a nature and home lover. He adorned his attractive residence by the planting of trees and many flowering plants and cared more for his home than for club life."

Thomas Jefferson McCoy was born April 2, 1857 on a farm in Warren County, southwestern Ohio. He was educated in the Cincinnati area, then graduated Miami College in Ohio and attended the Miami Medical College in Cincinnati. He graduated from the Kentucky School of Medicine in Louisville in 1880 and three years later married Millie L. Tucker.

Dr. and the first Mrs. McCoy arrived in Los Angeles from Cincinnati in May of 1887. They lived at Fourth and Broadway. Dr. McCoy served as a general practitioner for his first five years in Los Angeles. He then formed a partnership with Dr. Albert C. Rogers and they became the first medical specialists in the city of Los Angeles. Their practice was limited to the eye, ear, nose and throat. In 1910 McCoy's brother Dr. George McCoy joined the practice, which then became known as Drs. Rogers and McCoy Brothers. Dr. T.J. McCoy brought leading edge cataract surgical techniques to Los Angeles, and became Professor and Chair of Ophthalmology at the College of Physicians and Surgeons at Los Angeles. He was also in charge of Ophthalmology at the County Hospital. ●



Lillian Pearl Tate McCoy at her drafting table

Stepping Out

Last Remaining Seats

Mark your calendar for the Conservancy's annual series of classic films in historic theatres. The 2010 Last Remaining Seats series runs May 26 - June 30 and will showcase the historic movie palaces of downtown Los Angeles' Broadway Historic Theatre District. To celebrate the sixties, the organization is screening *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* (1967, opening night), *The Graduate* (1967), and *American Graffiti* (1973), the coming-of-age classic with the tagline "Where were you in '62?" Prepared to be wowed by the Los Angeles Theatre, Orpheum Theatre and Million Dollar Theatre.

Tickets are \$16 for Conservancy members (\$20 for the general public). General public sales began April 14. Stay tuned for details on this year's lineup of live entertainment. Visit www.laconservancy.org for more information. ●

Doheny Mansion Brunch

Saturday, June 13, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.



The Doheny Mansion at Mount St. Mary's College, former estate of early-1900s oil baron Edward L. Doheny, hosts a \$60 per person fundraising champagne brunch to raise funds towards its preservation efforts.

The college's nationally-recognized archivist, Victoria McCargar, will speak.

Home to the Doheny family for nearly 60 years, the mansion was designed by Theodore Augustus Eisen and Sumner P. Hunt in 1898. Doheny and his wife, Carrie Estelle Doheny,

frequently remodeled the mansion.

Last summer, the College began the first extensive restoration of the home in 70 years, and visitors will be able to see this work up close.

The first phase of exterior renovations, which have been completed, included reinforcement of the roof of the Gothic Renaissance-style Victorian mansion. The home's central architectural element is a cupola-capped turret rising from the ground floor to the left of the property's exotic, red-marble grand entry. The turret had begun to lean into the building, so contractors added steel supports to reinforce existing framing in order to prevent further damage.

Other completed restoration includes exterior stucco work, painting the home's facade, and waterproofing and preserving the roof in addition to repairing damaged copper finials. The stained glass and dome in the famous Pompeian Room were cleaned and repaired.

Reservations for this brunch event are requested by June 1 to Karen Butler, 213-477-2761.

To learn more about the Dohenys, read the book *The Doheny Mansion: A Biography of a Home*, by mansion Curator MaryAnn Bonino. All proceeds from book sales go toward mansion conservation. The book is available for purchase through www.dacamera.org. ●



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Jefferson Park Spanish Revival Duplex (*Adam Janeiro, Buyer's agent*)

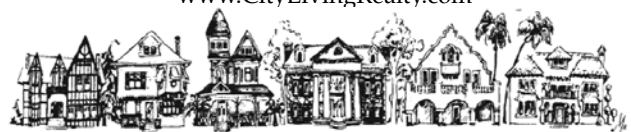
Jefferson Park Craftsman/Transitional Bungalow (*Adam Janeiro, Buyer's agent*) Welcome, Kristen St. John!

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Art in Historic Places *continued from page 1*

Boulevard, a 1923 French Norman Revival apartment building, and the Union Theater, a WWI era movie theater that is now home to the Velaslavasay Panorama, a showcase and forum for painting-in-the-round.

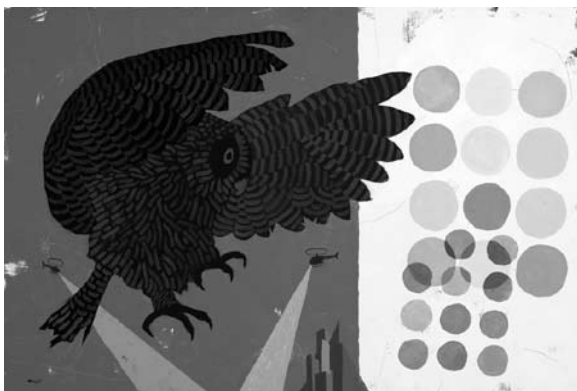
The art on tour will be equally eclectic, pairing historical architecture with bold, cutting edge works and more traditional contemporary art alike. Today's West Adams artists are landscapists and portrait painters, sculptors and ceramicists, collagists and photographers, who work in a variety of mediums, from clay to canvas, and in diverse styles. Expect to see artists' works that are whimsical, narrative, abstract, figurative, conceptual, time-honored or even historical in theme.

Participating artists include Marina Moevs, Tom Lazarus, Max Miceli, Georgia Toliver (Tolanna), Rob Remer, Sue Ann Jewers, Taidgh O'Neill, Steven Irvin, Shelly Adler, Art Curtis, and Jenny Hager, among others. In some cases, the artists' own historic homes and work studios are to be open for the tour, while other artists' works will be exhibited in period homes and other settings.

Each artist has a unique creative vision. For example, Tolanna is a photographer and sculptor who specializes in figurative work.

"As with photography, I want to capture moments in time, but in a more durable form that can to be viewed from multiple angles," she says. Rob Remer's minimal atmospheric landscapes paintings are evocative rather than representational, suggesting moody skies and horizons without reference point. At first glance they seem serene, but Marina Moevs's metaphysical landscape paintings reveal nature as a force capable of overwhelming human structures. In her recent work, artist Jenny Hager's forms are influenced by the gestural forms of such Abstract Expressionists as Willem de Kooning and Mark Rothko, but in her canvases the elements are part of an episode, implying movement in constructed abstract landscapes.

Two-parts pop to one-part folk, Max Miceli's graphic, stylized aesthetic landscapes and portraits force viewers to examine the relationships between man and beast, industry and nature, and abstraction and realism. Painter and ceramicist Tom Lazarus's unusual pottery has led to him being referred to as a "present day George Ohr." He refers to his painted portraits as "Renaissance Folk Art" that has been influenced by Titian, Tintoretto and Veronese. Shelley Adler paints genre



Two by Max Miceli: Sofa Bird (top) and Night Hunting (above); Rob Remer, I Dreamt We Were (below)



Jenny Hager, Space Age Nautilus (2009)





Taidgh O'Neill, Mobility of Resources (2009)

paintings of the 20th /21st century, derived from small black and white snapshots dating from the 1930s, '40s and '50s.

Artist Sara Velas' Velaslavasay Panorama at the Union Theater will offer tour visitors another unique artistic experience. Drawing on the illustrious history of the great panorama paintings of the 18th and 19th centuries, the Velaslavasay Panorama is an exhibition hall, theatre and garden dedicated to the production and presentation of unusual visual experiences. The panorama is an art form that encircles the spectator

with an illusion of continuous space, often in a painted 360-degree format. Patented by Englishman Robert Barker in 1787, this spectacular visual entertainment flourished throughout the 19th century.

June 5 tour visitors will be able to see a sneak peek of a new upcoming panorama project that will be performed on the stage, called "The Grand Moving Mirror of California." It is a 270-foot long painting on a scroll, accompanied by a narrator reading from an original 1853 script detailing the journey from the Eastern US around Cape Horn and up to California during the Gold Rush. In addition, guest artists Ulrike Mohr and Susanne Weck's "Lost Panorama" exhibition will be on display in the venue's Ancillary Salon.



Georgia Toliver (Tolanna) at work

Art in Historic Places: West Adams' Creative Canvas is a self-guided drive-yourself (or bike-yourself) tour, with a brochure and map that will guide visitors to these historic venues, toured in any order and at your own pace.

Tickets are \$25 in advance (deadline for this Early Bird price is May 31) and \$30 at the door. To purchase advance tickets, please make out a check to "WAHA" and mail it to 2209 Virginia Rd., Los Angeles CA 90016. Prepaid tickets will be held at will call. The last day-of-tour tickets will be sold at 1 p.m., and most tour properties will close promptly at 4 p.m. (Visitors tour at their leisure, and are encouraged to set aside several hours to enjoy the Art in Historic Places Tour.)



Two by Marina Moevs: The Field Fire (left) and Oceans III (above)

As always, we do need volunteers to check in our visitors, talk to them about the architecture and art in the tour sites, and help in myriad ways. Please contact tours@westadamsheritage.org if you can help.

If you are an artist who would like to be considered for participation, please contact Laura Meyers at news@westadamsheritage.org. We do have most of the historic venues lined up, but there may be room for additional artists to join the "show."

More details about the tour, including check-in location and online ticket sales information, will be posted in late April at www.WestAdamsHeritage.org. ●

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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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Los Angeles California 90018
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WAHA....Creating Our Future by Preserving Our Past

Calendar ✓

Upcoming Events

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

APRIL

Saturday, April 17:

WAHA Board Elections, 1 p.m. (see page 1)

MAY

Saturday, May 15:

Book It: Author/Producer Barney Rosenzweig signs Cagney & Lacey...and Me, 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. (see page 1)

Sunday, May 23:

WAHA Celebrates Historic Preservation Month at our Beat Coffeehouse

JUNE

Saturday, June 5:

Art in Historic Places -- WAHA's Annual Spring Historic Homes and Architecture Tour (see page 1)



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