Wisteria Cottage Construction Underway
Historic Perspectives on Bird Rock
Scientists Embrace Mid-Century Modern
Executive Director’s Message

What a great Springtime event season we’ve had this year! The 9th annual La Jolla Concours D’Elegance & Motor Car Classic held in early April and the 15th annual Secret Garden Tour in late May were great successes, and we are extremely thankful to the many committee members and volunteers who so generously contributed their time and talents to these community events. A very special thanks to Mike Dorvillier, Chair of the La Jolla Concours D’Elegance & Motor Car Classic, and to Sue Kalish and Pam Felley, Co-Chairs of the Secret Garden Tour.

This summer we are offering two summer camps for the community’s youth. From July 8-12, our Young Photographers Summer Camp will be presented in collaboration with Outside the Lens, a nonprofit organization specializing in photography and digital media youth programs throughout San Diego county. This summer the focus is on photjournalism with the theme of “street photography”. Our popular Young Architects’ Summer Camp is being expanded to two one-week sessions; one for middle school students July 12-19, and one for high school students July 22-26. Students are introduced to the architectural history of La Jolla, visit the studio of a local architect, and develop architectural drawing, modeling, and computer skills. They visit La Jolla buildings that exemplify the work of extraordinary architects from different eras, and learn on-site recognition of architectural styles. The camp provides students with an introduction to the concepts of historic preservation and to design issues related to the built environment. This is the onlyarchitectural summer course available to youth in San Diego County, a unique program offered, organized, and taught by practicing architects who volunteer their time for this project. We are most grateful to them, and to the Kiwanis Club of La Jolla and our many in-kind donors for their generous support of this program.

The Wisteria Cottage capital construction project is getting started! In this issue, you can read more about the project from Masterplan Committee chair Leslie Davis and architect Ione Steigler, and see the Wisteria Cottage floor plans. While we’re under construction, look forward to the La Jolla Historical Society and Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego joint presentation of Scripps on Prospect: Evolution of Villa and Cottage. This exhibition will explore the histories of Ellen Browning Scripps’ South Moulton Villa to present-day MCASD and Virginia Scripps’ Wisteria Cottage to the current home of the La Jolla Historical Society. The exhibition will be presented at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego in two phases; the first from September 21, 2013-January 5, 2014 in the Axline Court, and the second from February 8-May 10, 2014 in the Jacobs Gallery. Admission will be free for members of the La Jolla Historical Society. A joint members opening is scheduled for Friday, September 20, 2013—look for your invitation in the mail later this summer. And for your future planning, also mark the dates of Saturday, October 19, 2013 for the Ellen Browning Scripps Luncheon at the La Jolla Beach and Tennis Club with Ellen Scripps’ biographer and University of San Diego faculty member Molly McLain. These two dates will mark the inaugural events of our 50th anniversary commemoration of the Society. I sincerely hope you will be able to join us for these celebrations.

Also in this issue, we continue to explore 1950s and 1960s midcentury modernism in La Jolla art, design, and architecture with an article on the scientific community’s connections and involvement. In addition, the varied mix of La Jolla neighborhood’s is considered with an article on Bird Rock.

Finally, I would like to recognize and thank several members of our Board of Directors who have completed their terms of service: Tom Grunow, Connie Branscob, Courtney Coyle, Angeles Leira, Clarke Herring, and Don Yeckel. We are extremely grateful for your dedication and hard work on behalf of the Society.

Heath Fox
Executive Director

New President’s Message

As the La Jolla Historical Society begins its 50th anniversary season we look forward to the long awaited rehabilitation of Wisteria Cottage and grounds. It will be a time when routines are varied, venues changed, our familiar spaces altered - and La Jolla history made. The 50th Anniversary Committee is already planning very special events to celebrate our progress and completion. And the Secret Garden Tour and Concours d’Elegance will continue to engage committees of volunteers and patrons from inside and outside La Jolla.

While we’re closed, I’ll miss Wisteria and working with the other docents, who have done such a great job of presenting our stories to visitors from our community and around the country and the world. (I believe that about a quarter of our guests are from other states and other countries.) It will be a great pleasure to again interpret La Jolla history in state of the art galleries when Wisteria re-opens next year. Meanwhile, it’s good to know that images from our collection will be part of a collaborative exhibit at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego opening this September.

Thanks to the outstanding board members who have just retired for their many and varied services to the Society. We will miss Connie Branscob, Courtney Coyle, Tom Grunow, Clarke Herring, Angeles Leira, and Don Yeckel. It’s good to know that they continue in very active roles during the coming year. Additionally, Pam Felley and Sue Kalish produced, with the help of an outstanding committee of dedicated volunteers, a wonderful Secret Garden Tour, complete with sunshine and the very successful Garden Boutique which welcomed tour participants as well as the community to the last weekend at Wisteria Cottage.

Heath Fox
Executive Director

Wisteria Cottage (closed for restoration) 780 Prospect Street La Jolla, CA 92037

www.lajollahistory.org

Cover image: Look a starfish! Low tide and the tidepools off Bird Rock are enjoyed by two beachgoers in a 1961 Charles Schneider photograph from the La Jolla Historical Society archives.
Biographer to Speak at Ellen Browning Scripps Luncheon

Professor Molly McClain, who is at work on a definitive biography of Ellen Browning Scripps, will lecture on the legendary La Jolla philanthropist and resident Saturday, Oct. 19, at the annual luncheon in her honor at the La Jolla Beach and Tennis Club.

McClain, who holds a Ph.D. in history from Yale University and serves as the director of the University of San Diego’s Interdisciplinary Humanities Program, has spent hundreds of hours researching her subject to uncover many heretofore unknown facts and nuances about Scripps’ life in La Jolla from her retirement here at age 61 in 1896 to her death in 1932. She will share them with her audience prior to the new biography’s publication. The book’s working title is “American Money: The Life and Philanthropy of Ellen Browning Scripps.”

Part of the La Jolla Historical Society’s 50th anniversary celebrations, this year and ongoing into 2014, the October event will start at 10:45 a.m. with a gathering in the Beach and Tennis Club’s Walnut Room overlooking the surf where a reception and silent auction are planned. Lunch at noon will be followed by McClain’s lecture at 1 p.m. Tickets are $55 for LJHS member and $65 for non-members and are available through the Society’s website at lajollahistory.org.

The Ellen Browning Scripps luncheon is held annually commemorating the La Jolla philanthropist’s October birthday in recognition of her many gifts and donations to the community when she resided here in an Irving Gill designed home at the present Prospect Street site of the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego.
As patron of Louis Kahn’s iconic Salk Institute, Jonas Salk helped define Post-War California Modernism. Completed in 1965, the Institute’s bold design not only made a formal statement about the potential for human innovation. It also made this innovation possible by reworking how research spaces had traditionally been organized. But the Salk Institute just tells part of the story of Jonas Salk’s connection with modern San Diego architecture. 1964 saw the completion of another building that would become home to the pioneering researcher, the house at 2444 Ellentown Road in Scripps Estates where he would move in 1969 likely first as a renter and then as an owner when he married the painter Francoise Gilot in 1970.

They lived there together for the rest of Salk’s life.

The house had its beginnings in 1954 when Norman and Joan Holter drew lot 18 in the Scripps Estates lottery. Holter had owned a research company in Montana and in the mid-forties participated in early postwar bomb testing dubbed Operation Crossroads. Eventually, the couple hired local architect Loch Crane to design their house at 2444 Ellentown Road. The architect had studied with Frank Lloyd Wright and served in Japan, his own House Beautiful sold basic house plans for construction and expansion, and the project greatly influenced the planning of the Ellentown Road house, which shares many of its characteristics. After moving into the house, Jonas Salk acquired a set of his own House Beautiful plans.

It is tempting to imagine the Salk Institute and the House Beautiful house as diametrically opposed. However, the function and use of both buildings are comparable. The House for 75 Women embraced the progressive open plan, which could expand and contract based on family size and utility. The Salk Institute strived for similar flexibility with its labs, which were designed as open spaces that could expand and contract based on the needs of individual researchers (since all utilities were housed in interstitial spaces above the labs, adjustments could be made without infringing on research space). The two buildings also sought to resolve the tension between the sometimes conflicting needs of individual and community. Jonas Salk made frequent use of the open-plan living spaces of the Ellentown House (and of another similarly organized open-plan houses he had rented earlier in La Jolla), inviting the gamut of Salk researchers and visitors into the house for collegial entertaining, which provided continuity for discussion and collaboration begun at the Institute. However, Jonas Salk also cherished private, usually elevated, spaces for retreat, which according to son Peter Salk became a leitmotif of every one of his own residences. In the mid-seventies, Gilot convinced her husband to build an upstairs extension at the Ellentown house for 75 Women to house this very purpose, commissioning drawings from Crane (the House Beautiful plans included “family workshop” for messy projects that could be totally shut off from the rest of the house as well as a designated proto-man cave. Kahn’s plans for Salk made similar concessions with its private offices and inner-courtyard towers of studies, which were meant to house individual work and contemplation. According to Salk researcher and historian Suzanne Bourgeois, of all the original Institute researchers only Salk made frequent use of the isolated tower offices while his colleagues preferred the more sociable offices in the main buildings).

Finally, we can observe in both the Salk Institute and the Ellentown house a symbiosis between architecture and nature, which is a major component of modernist architecture, particularly California modernism. Although House Beautiful made architectural plans for the House for 75 Women available to a national market, with its emphasis on indoor-outdoor features it is hard to imagine the architecture functioning the same way in colder climates. Similarly, with its grand embrace of the coast and coastal light, the Salk Institute is as much about landscape as it is about architecture. In Jonas Salk’s places of work and home, social life takes place at the threshold of the outdoors.

Grezemkovsky works in External Relations at Salk Institute. She has a Ph.D. in Architectural History from the University of California, Berkeley.
In 1964 and ’65 a group of Texans started to buy up shorefront property, in the heart of La Jolla very quietly. No one ever suspected what was being planned. ..This was the first high-rise in La Jolla, and the whole town was up in arms. The Texans prevailed. ..This is just a piece of La Jolla history.”

Thus did photographer Charles Schneider summarize the building of 939 Coast Blvd. – by far the most controversial building ever to soar into the La Jolla skyline to the tune of 18 stories, virtual fist cuffing on the streets and a conundrum of political snafus as Texans and La Jollans fought to the draw like the gunfighters of “High Noon.”

While this La Jolla movie didn’t have Gary Cooper, it did have Charles Schneider who worked through 939’s construction phase in the ’60s photographing the steps along the way as the building shot up, getting bigger and bigger and higher and higher on the skyline with the controversial brouhaha leading finally to the California Coastal Commission’s 30-ft. height limitations.

Today, it’s nearly 50 years later. 939 has reached middle age. While time has mellowed the opposition to its presence on the skyline, it remains a grand halloo in the annals of local history, an episode worth revisiting for some retrospective analysis – perhaps, even in a spirit of good humor. Nobody laughed when 939 went up, but the whole hoopla surrounding the construction and opening back then now appears almost facetious: Texas investors lunching on the rooftop, an automobile being craned to the top for publicity and enough parties and promotional campaigns to “sell” the building that would convince Howard Hughes to buy an Edsel. (Did people really do this?) Even Schneider viewed his role in photographing the proceedings with a bit of tongue-in-cheek. After taking hundreds of pictures he recalled: “I was brought into this by Orville Huntley, a very good organizer. He was the advance man on this project. He came into my studio one day and said he wanted some aerials and ground shots of this location. Paid me a handsome retainer.”

939 Coast – initially called the Huntley Building when first built – happened during a great growth decade in La Jolla, a period of change from a small village to a cosmopolitan setting of new people and new buildings. UCSD campus and Salk Institute both arrived. The new Ards Road exit from the 5 was completed making access to the community more amenable. Large buildings began to sprout (some only as proposals) all over the place, including the Seville at the top of Girard Avenue which, although also tall and massive, didn’t incur the wrath of 939 Coast since it was set back and failed to interfere with as many views.

The opposition to 939 ranged from residents to civic officials. Even Herbert Hoover, a regular visitor to La Jolla, opposed the building and made a point of saying so in print. Benjamin Briten, San Diego’s eminent architecture critic, observed: “To own a window on the La Jolla view, people have decked houses ingeniously on the hills. As demand increased, cubistical man-made hills began to rear up as though Gulliver had decided to build among the Mildendoans. As this is written in 1965, townspeople are engaged in a valiant effort to assure that ‘high rise’ buildings are highly satisfying in appearance – if they need to appear at all.” He noted, generally, that high rise buildings “tend to look like frenzied wallpaper pasted on the sky.” In his usual sardonic wit, he also urged La Jolla to “do away with those Early Bronze Age high-rise structures – the utility poles.”

939 opened with considerable fanfare. Huntley launched the building with an ambitious advertising campaign as a place to “Live elegantly. . .where your front yard is America’s Riviera, La Jolla.” Apartments were priced between $33 and $95 thousand and had an additional monthly maintenance fee. They had marble baths, air-conditioning and sound-proofing. Amenities also included a limousine service to La Jolla, a heated pool and a Finnish sauna.

Schneider’s collection of 939 photographs – part of a larger group of negatives donated to the La Jolla Historical Society’s archival collection – record many of the parties and social events surrounding 939’s opening. The building and its high rise controversies also were well-chronicled by the national press and, locally, San Diego Magazine. Harold Keen, popular observer of the San Diego scene, wrote in a 1965 issue of the latter, “La Jolla may never be the same again, emotionally as well as physically. ..” After 939’s completion numerous other high rises were proposed in La Jolla, most of which were defeated by community hue-and-cry, including another Huntley project proposed in the mid-’60s that would have put seven 18-story buildings atop Mt. Soledad at a cost of $60 million. Obviously, the second time the Texas project bit the dust.
A Treasure in the Alley. . . er, Lane
by Carol Olten

One of La Jolla’s oldest houses resides in Drury Lane amidst a cacophony of commercial buildings and traffic. It was built in 1894 and, despite its age, continues to be practically used for residential and office purposes.

Located at 7849/7851 Drury Lane, the building is known by its historic name, Villa Waldo, and is one of the very few surviving examples of Victorian Stick architecture in La Jolla. (The name “villa” is deceptive as the building is a simple and modest two-story structure of wood siding; it was fashionable, however, in the 1890s to sometimes name unpretentious houses “villas” – La Jolla also had Brockton Villa and Ellen Browning Scripps’ South Moulton Villa.

Villa Waldo was built by Olivia McGilvery Mudgett, the widow of a Maine sea captain who moved to La Jolla in the 1890s to be near her sister and brother-in-law, Nellie and Anson Mills. Both Olivia, familiarly called “Livy,” and Nellie were active in community social life and both were involved in real estate and renting beach cottages.

Villa Waldo originally was built at 7848 Girard Ave. (facing Girard at the present site of Taba Rugs (formerly QuonMane) when it was a residential street instead of being a commercial thoroughfare). As commerce increased on Girard, it was moved and turned to face the alley.

Livy resided in the house until her death in 1918. During her residence it was a popular gathering place for friends and extended members of the Mills’ family. The La Jolla Historical Society archives includes a photo of the house with a large group assembled in the front for a picture on Christmas Day, 1899. Anson Mills records many gatherings at Villa Waldo in his daily diaries, noting what was served for dinner and how the house was arranged. Legend has it he was most enamoured of “Livy;” his diaries record her passing with great sorrow.

Today, Villa Waldo is lovingly maintained by Joanie Huffman, the property manager for long-time owner Stephen Enoch. The upstairs – a warren of small, but airy and well-lighted, rooms with oddly slanted ceilings because of the high-pitched roofline – is operated as residential rental space while the downstairs is rented as offices with Geppetto’s toy store as one of the leasors.

The building is a challenge to maintain, “but we really try to take care of it,” says Huffman, along with a landmark Torrey Pine that’s part of the property. For the last 10 years Villa Waldo has stood out on Drury Lane for its originally bright, but now fading, yellow and green color scheme. Expect a new color system soon.

Carol Olten is the Society’s Historian

Editor’s Note: Keepsakes is a regular newsletter feature highlighting a selection of La Jolla’s most treasured homes and buildings. Retired architect Kendall Mower provided sketches

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My Southern-coastal micro-neighborhood of Bird Rock is a delightful pocket of walkable streets, dotted by iconic century old eucalyptus, pines and palms. It’s familiar history is of growth after World War II resulting in the construction of modest jewel box homes on ample lots inhabited by all-american working families. General Dynamics employees, GI’s as well as owners of the shops, restaurants and services that occupied the business district on La Jolla Blvd helped make up the close-knit neighborhood. A slow drive up Colima onto Bellevue or Taft will reveal a few of the remaining modest manicured beauties in original condition.

Although its post-war history defines Bird Rock’s growth spurt, it’s pre-WWII history is alluring. In the early 1900s Bird Rock was the home to many Japanese farmers. A look at the census at the time, is a peak into the population of Bird Rock that tended to the vast strawberry, sea lavender and vegetable fields that dominated south to Pacific Beach. Of course, this chapter ended with their internment after the start of the war.

In 1923 Albert Bennett was a realtor in La Jolla and decided to spend $2,300 to purchase the land on the 5500 block of Bellevue Avenue (then named Hodgeman) - now our home. He built the entire 3,500 square-foot house of salvaged wood – including old bathhouse advertising signage. Labor then was cheap and materials were expensive – the opposite of today. We’ve come to know a few dozen more Bird Rock homes dating back to the 1910s’, 20s’ and 30s’ still in relatively original condition.

On the west side of the 5400 block of Bellevue, lovely pre-war homes of Spanish influence are to be admired for their beauty and restraint. At the corner of Forward and Beaumont, a carriage house and main house, now two addresses, exude the 20s’ Spanish influence. At the corner of Waverly and Midway a remaining beach cottage beams with charm. On each of the Southeast corners of the 5400 and 5500 blocks of Beaumont, almost century old “farm houses” continue to comfort and inspire. On La Jolla Hermosa (previously Electric Avenue) see if you can spot the half dozen sweet originals still standing.

From tales of riding horses for paper delivery and week long hikes to buy a donkey in Mission Valley, to the “gastronomic glory” of the Bird Rock low tides, the early stories along with our remaining built history a picture emerges of our industrious and adventurous seaside roots.
One of the most important considerations of historic buildings is they are not only, by their nature, about the past but also are structures about progression through history and into the future. Time, for people as well as buildings, does not stand still – if it does termites will party!

As the La Jolla Historical Society’s “Timekeeper” newsletter goes to press, its Wisteria Cottage – the Prospect Street landmark about to celebrate its 110th birthday – is starting to undergo the most extensive restoration and rehabilitation since it was first built in 1904. It is designed to carry the building into its next decades of life as an exhibit space for LJHS as well as a venue for third-party events. The project is being undertaken over a year-long time span financed with monies realized through a capital fund-raising campaign that netted $1.9 million.

Major goals of the project are:

• Restoration of the original main entrance of the cottage on the southwest side of the building where a walkway once connected the Eliza Virginia Scripps-owned property with her half-sister Ellen Browning Scripps’ home at the present location of Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego (this also will open up Wisteria again to the outside lawn and fulfill the restoration wishes of SOHO which owns the easement rights).

• Rehabbing interiors to make the cottage compatible with today’s code compliances; this includes installing all new electrical, plumbing, heating and cooling systems as well as ADA-access bathroom facilities.

• Remodelling the basement area under the back room of the cottage (originally created after an Irving Gill design in 1908-09) to include a catering prep area, an ADA-access bathroom and storage.

• Installing an elevator lift from the basement to the first floor.

• Creating three major first floor gallery areas totalling 1,483 sq. ft. for the display of the Society’s continuing program of exhibits.

• Refurbishing the Balmer Annex (added to the property in 1942 to house the Balmer School) to create a state-of-the art meeting room.

• Renewing the cultural landscape and exteriors of both Wisteria Cottage and the Balmer Annex.

When the restoration and rehabilitation concludes and the Society re-opens with a projected new exhibit schedule in May, 2014, Wisteria is “going to look just like it does now but with elements like all the old windows working and the all the interiors modernized for contemporary use,” says Ione Stiegler, architect for the project. In designing the project, Stiegler has observed many varied parts of history and uses that have been experienced on the site through the years.

“When you start pulling Wisteria Cottage apart you realize that it’s really an amalgam of designs from many points in history,” she says. “It started as a simple coastal cottage with almost no stylistic embellishments. Then, Gill came along and began to create more of an architectural statement by adding the cobblestone foundation and walls around the perimeter and the graceful pergola with a welcoming front porch and side loggias with definite references to the Craftsman style of architecture. The building became more tied to the landscape and took on more of a street presence.”

The Balmer period of the 1940s witnessed another amalgam as the porch was enclosed and the cottage and annex took a different design turn for use as a school and, much later, two different book stores beginning in the 1960s.

Heading the Society’s Masterplan Committee for the project, Leslie Davis views the restoration of the historic Prospect Street landmark with the goal of creating “a nice approachable piece of La Jolla history.” It should continue to stand out from its surroundings, she says, “with its unique landscape, trees and the cottage aesthetic – the old La Jolla experience.”

The property, Davis concludes, will ultimately benefit from the work over the next months because “do no harm is a big part of it.”

Olten is the Society’s historian
Historical Perspectives on Not-Built La Jolla
by Sandy Spalding

We all have "what if" moments in our life when we ponder how our lives would have been transformed if something different had happened instead of what occurred. Towns are no different. It's interesting to look at what La Jolla could have been if certain plans had not fallen into the category of "proposed but not built." The 1920s were a pivotal period for growth and development in La Jolla history and produced numerous such proposals.

The La Jolla Journal announced on April 8, 1926 that a group of Los Angeles and San Diego men were going to spend nearly a million dollars on a new club to be built on fourteen acres south of the Scripps pier and north of the new La Jolla Shores development. Plans called for a clubhouse with a harbor dredged and a pier constructed to accommodate yachts. Called the La Jolla Beach and Yacht Club, the group began dredging for the harbor in October. Elaborate brochures showed grand plans for the property and the harbor. The first unit of the plan, a temporary clubhouse, was constructed and opened in 1927. By 1936, plans for the harbor had been abandoned, no further building had taken place, and the whole development was sold to Fredrick William Kellogg who turned it into the La Jolla Beach and Tennis Club.

Another million dollar development surfaced in November of the same year when plans were announced for the nine story, 182 room Hotel La Jolla Del Mar. The prospectus for the project promised a beautiful reinforced concrete structure to be built on the oceanfront near the Casa de Manana. A lounge, dining room for 150 people, and a banquet hall would all be on the first floor while the basement would house two large rooms with lockers and showers for men and women bathers, a barber shop, a beauty parlor, and living quarters for the staff. This project precipitated the first outcry for height restrictions in La Jolla. A compromise was reached that exempted this hotel but limited future structures on the ocean front to six stories.

Another grandiose plan from this era exists only as a drawing which lists Walter Gordon Clark and Benjamin Geer McDougall as architects and engineers. The sketch shows a humongous La Jolla Hotel with an eleven story center tower and matching stepping down wings on either side. Projecting from the front is a loggia with umbrella tables on top surrounded by walkways on several levels and a fountain in front.

The La Jolla del Costa Hotel proposed in 1929 was to be located "in the center of a seven and one third acre tract overlooking La Jolla and the Pacific Ocean and about three-quarters of a mile north of the business center of the town." The Mediterranean style building was to be three and four stories tall with lobby, formal and informal lounges, ball room, main dining room, children's dining room, and exclusive shops. The grounds were to include bungalows, an 18 hole putting course, two tennis courts, a garage to hold 100 cars, and a riding stable.

On a different note was the 1928 design done by preeminent architect Frank Lloyd Wright for the Rosenwald Foundation, established by Julius Rosenwald, one of the founding partners of the Sears Roebuck Company. Dedicated to improving the lives of black Americans, the group hired Wright to design a school for the black children of La Jolla. A notation on the drawing reads "N.B. (Not built, not Colonial.)"

The 1920s do not have a monopoly in the "proposed but not built" category. The 1960s were a similar period of growth and had their own failed proposals which will be looked at in a future issue.

Sandy Spalding is a long-time volunteer who does special research projects at the Society.

What’s In A Name?

In the original La Jolla Park Subdivision, Herschel Avenue was named Lincoln after America's 16th president, Abraham Lincoln. As part of La Jolla's sweeping change of street names in 1900, it was renamed after Frederick William Herschel, the 18th century German-born scientist who distinguished himself as an astronomer, inventor and composer after establishing a life for himself in Great Britain.

Political issues concerning the Hanoverian Guard in Germany caused Herschel to leave his native country in 1737 at the age of 19. He lived in a variety of English villages working as a composer and organist before settling in Slough, England, where his new interest in astronomy led to the construction of a significant number of lenses and telescopes enabling planetary discoveries.

Herschel became famous for his discovery of the planet Uranus, along with two of its major moons, Titania and Oberon. He also discovered two moons of Saturn and was the first scientist to recognize the existence of infrared radiation in sunlight, the latter occurring by chance in 1800 as he was testing filters to observe sun spots. Not always wedded to science in its pure form, Herschel was sometimes given to speculation. He hypothesized that every planet was inhabited including the sun, calculating that every creature living there would have an exceptionally large head because extreme heat would cause anything human-size to explode.

During his lifetime, Herschel constructed more than 400 telescopes to aid in his astronomical observations, many of which are displayed in museums and observatories bearing his name.

Herschel died in 1822 at age 83 in Slough and is buried at nearby St. Laurence's Church, Upton. The Rue Herschel in the Sixth Arrondissement of Paris is in his commemoration as is our La Jolla village street. The next time you cross Herschel in La Jolla, look up. It’s the street name that belongs in the sky!
Exhibit Reviews Covenants

by Judy Haxo

The Society’s last exhibit, “Home of Your Dreams: 1887 through the 1920s,” depicted many delightful aspects of early La Jolla including its civic organizations, natural beauty, sports opportunities, cultural richness, interesting architecture, and its delightful and salubrious climate. Real estate developers’ brochures touted all this and more. Exclusionary covenants assured potential investors that their property would retain its value.

It is perhaps a measure of how far our social attitudes have evolved in the last century to observe that we are appalled at what was openly advertised as a positive value in the early 20th century regarding who could occupy these La Jolla properties.

A 1917 deed for a house in La Jolla Hills (the area north of Exchange Place) includes: “the said premises shall not be sold, conveyed, demised or leased to any person other than of the white or Caucasian race...” A 1926 real estate brochure assures its investors of “the restriction of ownership or residence to members of the Caucasian race.”

The concept of the “Caucasian” race was developed in the 18th century in Europe to describe primarily light skinned Europeans, as distinguished from the “Mongoloid” and “Negroid” races. Its use in the late 19th century (when Social Darwinism drew adherents) and the first half of the 20th century, particularly after WW I (with the rebirth and expansion of the Ku Klux Klan) approached equation with the Nazi’s “Aryan” race.

Exclusionary covenants like that contained in the 1917 La Jolla lease were widely used in the first half of the 20th century in the United States. In 1926 their legality was upheld by the US Supreme Court in Corrigan v. Buckley. It was not until after World War II in Shelley v. Kraemer (1948) that the US Supreme Court unanimously held that state governments could not legally enforce these restrictions because of the 14th Amendment. However, this decision did not bar private citizens from discriminatory actions. By 1959, California Civil Code made it illegal and punishable by a fine for anyone to discriminate in housing on the basis of “sex, race, color, religion, ancestry or national origin.” Private discrimination in housing became illegal nationally with the adoption of the Civil Rights Act of 1968.

The impact of La Jolla’s exclusionary covenants on its Jewish-American population has been researched and documented, particularly in Mary Ellen Stratthaus’s “Flaw in the Jewel: Housing Discrimination Against Jews in La Jolla, California.” Anti-semitic housing restrictions were one of Roger Revelle’s concerns as he fought to have the new branch of the University of California located in La Jolla. The end of discriminatory practices and the development of the university and research institutions have created a tremendous change. San Diego’s largest Jewish enclave is in La Jolla, according to the United Jewish Federation.

Less attention has been devoted to the covenants’ impact on La Jolla’s Asian, Black and Latino populations. Its early Asian population was mainly of Japanese origin and that population was abruptly removed under the World War II internment policy. To our knowledge, only the Nakamura family returned to La Jolla after the war. Ironically La Jolla’s Black population, which was fairly substantial by the 1940s, seems to have chosen to relocate with the expansion of civil rights (and broadening economic opportunities). The little we know about the impact on the Latino population reflects a mixed effect.

Today the exclusionary covenants are relics in old deeds. The restrictions to La Jolla’s housing are high property values rather than ethnographic constructs.

Haxo, a former teacher, has served the Society in many capacities. She presently heads the oral history program.
As we head toward our 50th anniversary and with the renovation of Wisteria Cottage making it unavailable for exhibits, we are fortunate to have the chance to work with our neighbors, the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, on a new exhibit called *Scripps on Prospect: Evolution of Villa and Cottage*. Opening September 21st in the MCASD’s Axline Court this new exhibit will display vintage photographs, artifacts and architectural drawings that will trace the history of Wisteria Cottage and Ellen Browning Scripps’ South Moulton Villa as they evolved from their residential beginnings to play vital roles in the social and cultural fabric of La Jolla.

As the home of Ellen Scripps, South Moulton Villa was naturally at the center of much of the cultural life in La Jolla. After Miss Scripps’ passed away in 1932 the residence kept its connection to art and culture when it became the informal home for displays by La Jolla artists. As the years passed the connection to art was formalized and over time it grew to be an internationally renowned museum dedicated to Contemporary art in all its forms. Through the exhibit we will also have the chance to see original plans from the architect Irving Gill, who rebuilt the Villa in 1915, as well as the work of architects Robert Mosher and Robert Venturi who were instrumental in reinventing the museum to match the needs and vision of the times.

Gill also had a hand in remodelling and expanding the more humble Wisteria Cottage in 1909; over the years small changes make it seem as though, beyond the addition of the Balmer Annex in the 1940’s, not much has changed physically. But while the changes may have been small, the true evolution of the Cottage has been the changing role it has played in the lives of many La Jollans. When I first came to work at the Society I quickly learned how many people in La Jolla feel personally connected to the Cottage either through the Balmer School or through its many years as John Cole’s Book Shop. Visitors to our exhibits and members of the Society are inspired by the building to tell stories of life as a student at Louise Balmer’s school while others talk about either working at the Coles’ Book Shop or spending hours hunting for the perfect book for either a day at the beach or a night in front of the fireplace. So for each building although they diverge in how they came to be what they are: one an example of adapting the physical space to serve a larger purpose (hint, South Moulton Villa) and the other a site of changing purpose (Wisteria Cottage). Both now stand as examples of historic preservation and both remain important players in the cultural and social life of La Jolla.

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Volunteer Focus

Lois Hindell and Andrea Brannan have all the attributes organizations such as the La Jolla Historical Society look for in volunteers: A passion for learning and sharing history and a love of people. In addition both are natural organizers and have energy to spare.

This mother and daughter team are a whirlwind of ideas and possess the ability to get things done. For the 2012 Ellen Browning Scripps luncheon they scoured antique shops and eBay to find a collection of unique teapots they turned into table centerpieces. When the docent-led walking tours needed a boost, they stepped in to make sure the tours remained a popular weekend activity for visitors and scores of La Jollans.

Originally from Seattle, they have lived in San Diego for years. In the 1990’s Lois worked with the Gaslamp Quarter Association. Andrea who graduated from Mission Bay High School, got her first job at the Pannikin. They came to the Society in response to an ad looking for docents and, although working as realtors for Pacific Sotheby’s International Realty on Ivanhoe keeps them busy, decided volunteering might be fun.

When talking to Andrea and Lois, their creativity and love of putting ideas and people together in new and exciting combinations quickly comes through, “We would love to have the Society put together a salon that would allow people to share ideas about art, science and life,” Lois says. Andrea connects the idea to La Jolla’s past by adding, “in the way Anna Held did when she owned the Green Dragon.” As the conversation spins around how that might work, the talk turns to interactive exhibits, music, art programs and many other ideas that can make the La Jolla Historical Society a larger part of life in the community.

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Lois Hindell (left) and daughter Andrea Brannan
Despite this and despite that, there remains a lot to love about La Jolla, says architect Laura DuCharme Conboy, who started her own firm here in 1992 and continues to be one of the award-winning practitioners in residential architecture. DuCharme appreciates La Jolla for small wonders such as having “lanes,” instead of “alleys;” the “accidental” buildings along Girard Avenue such as the original I Magnin store (“far better than anything that could have been designed with a set community plan”) and the sharpness of the white and blue colors at Mary Star of the Sea Church and Stella Maris Academy.

“As I drive through town, these are just a few of the things I always love to look at,” says DuCharme. “And, although there are people here who design projects to maximize investments, there are also a lot of people who appreciate the integrity of the historic housing stock and want to keep the charm.”

Working out of an office in the Crosby Center on Herschel Avenue, DuCharme keeps a busy schedule going with residential remodels. She recently completed a major project in La Jolla Shores combining elements of contemporary architecture with the style of a Japanese farm house featured in San Diego Home/Garden magazine. In the process of completion are remodels on Muirlands Vista Way and Virginia Way.

“I think we have passed the point of people needing very large houses and that much space to live in,” she says: Today’s interests are more in opening up existing spaces, bigger kitchens and taller ceilings.

DuCharme, her husband, Garth, and two children live in a 1940s home in Ludington Heights. She takes a special interest in spreading the word about architecture and design to young people and, for the second year, is chairing the Young Architects Summer Camp being presented by the La Jolla Historical Society in July. She also heads BEEP (Built Environment Education Program) San Diego.
Mid-Century Duplex (754-758 Bonair St.) This property is set for demolition as part of a backflip situation to change from a duplex to single family residences to be built on the site near the bike path off Nautilus Street. Three three-story homes are planned on the 9,225 sq. ft. lot. They will range in size from 1,929 sq. ft. to 2,185 sq. ft. with Dan Linn as the designing architect.

Mid-Century Case Study House No. 1 (2329 Rue de Anne) Designed and built in 1961 as a case study house as part of a triad on the slopes of Mt. Soledad, this unique residence is on the way to becoming a historic landmark. The LA Conservancy moved to place it on the National Register of Historic Place. The designation recently was endorsed by the City of San Diego Historic Resources Board.

Mid-Century Case Study House No. 2 (2542 Rue de Anne) Architect Ed Killingsworth designed a triad of case study houses to nestle on the slopes of Mt. Soledad in 1961. This home, over 50 years old, was nominated along with 2329 for the National Register of Historic Places by the LA Conservancy. The owners, however, chose not to endorse the nomination. “Case studies” were a project sponsored by California Arts and Architecture magazine to experiment with new designs and materials for residential living in post World War II.

Spanish Eclectic (311 Dunemere Dr.) Owner Mitt Romney is demolishing this Barber Tract residence to construct a new 11,062 sq. ft., two-story house (above basement) adjacent to the beach. The project also will include an attached garage, hardscape and retaining walls. The existing pool, spa and sea wall that presently are part of the property are scheduled to remain.

Organic Contemporary Landmark (9805 Blackgold Rd.) A signature home in the Black Horse Farms area designed by maverick experimental architect Kendrick Kellogg, this residence has gained noteworthy attention through the years for its curvilinear mushroom-like forms that dominate the façade. The City of San Diego Historic Resources Board, however, recently turned down a bid for historic designation on the basis of structural changes that have taken place on the building. Kellogg originally designed the residence in collaboration with artist James Hubbell.

La Jolla Historical Society’s Walking Tour of Historic La Jolla

During the 90-minute 1.5-mile tour, guests begin their tour at the La Jolla Historical Society’s 1909 Cottage (7846 Eads Ave) and then proceed to 15 additional stops in La Jolla’s historic downtown village with a knowledgeable volunteer.

- Second and fourth Saturdays of every month at 10:00 am
- $10 for adults / children 12 and under free (if accompanied by adult)
- Advanced reservation required; call reservation line at 858-480-6424
- Private tours available upon request

NOTE: This is a brisk walk with some hills

Landmark Tree (7800 block Ivanhoe Ave.) One of many eucalyptus planted along the streets of La Jolla by founding fathers in the late 19th century, was cut down and removed from the front of a building being remodeled – another in a line of eucalyptus taken out because they are said to be safety hazards. Shortly after La Jolla was founded in 1887, pioneers planted nearly 2,000 trees along La Jolla’s streets and avenues as a beautification effort, many growing to overhang thoroughfares much like the oak alleys in the American South. Only a handful remain.

Landmark Tree
Third graders at La Jolla Elementary School hosted LJHS historian Carol Olten this spring for the annual “Readers Are Leaders” program. Olten shared information with the students on La Jolla history and read several children’s stories to the class. “Readers Are Leaders” started as a national program 16 years ago to educate young students about the importance of reading in their lives. Members of the La Jolla community from various professional disciplines participate in the local program under the supervision of elementary school principal Donna S. Tripi.

Panel Discussion

Progressive attitudes of La Jolla community planning in the 1980s were revisited in a recent panel discussion hosted this spring by the La Jolla Historical Society. Participants examined the work of two organizations, in particular – BLOB (Ban Large Office Buildings) and the PDO (Planned District Ordinance) – in regard to their efforts in community planning. Composing the panel were many individuals who contributed to the 1980s efforts: Angeles Leira, Robert Collins, Orrin Gabsch, Ione Stiegler, Mark Fehlman and James Alcorn.

Secret Garden Tour Blooms Again

More than a thousand persons enjoyed this spring’s 15th annual Secret Garden Tour making the annual event one of the most successful in its history. This year’s tour featuring a range of historic and contemporary gardens throughout La Jolla was augmented by a Garden Boutique on the lawn of Wisteria Cottage where visitors enjoyed a variety of vendors selling furniture and objects related to garden design. Susan Vandendriesse, one of the founders of the original SGT, chaired the boutique while Pam Filley and Sue Kalish served as chairs of the tour, benefitting the La Jolla Historical Society.

Readers Are Leaders

Rosamond Larmour Loomis (2.14.1911-3.3.2013)

Life handed Rosamond some hard challenges, but with wit and hard work she soldiered through the depression and World War II to acquire a Bachelor’s degree from Hollins College, a Masters degree in English Literature from Radcliffe College and years of teaching and administrative experience in public and private schools. In 1953 she became the Head Mistress of The Bishop’s School, then a school of 140 girls. Under Miss Larmour’s leadership dorm rooms were humanized, young teachers were recruited, more day students were sought, alumnae were organized and parents were welcomed. Enrollment grew to 302. In 1962 a divided Board of Trustees abruptly asked for her resignation. The community of La Jolla was shaken. Reuben H. Fleet offered Rosamond and her assistant Mary Moran funds to resume their graduate studies. Rosamond enrolled in a course at UC Berkeley. She was visited there by Richard Loomis, a retired trustee, who sought to understand what had happened to end her tenure. A short time later at age 52 she launched a new phase of life as Mrs. Richard Loomis. Although she never lost her love for her native Virginia, she was a devoted La Jollan for 60 years. Her greatest joy was sharing life with her former students, friends and family.

Concours d’Elegance

A Magnificent Success

Thousands of spectators, collectors and restorers of vintage vehicles enjoyed a beautiful day at Scripps Park for the ninth annual La Jolla Concours d’Elegance this spring. Concours chairman Michael Dorvillier heralded this year’s event as “the biggest and best ever.” “We had incredible feedback from around the country,” said Dorvillier, chairing the event for the second year in a row. “It was best in terms of the caliber of cars we had as well as for the participation of the three top museums in the country,” he said.

More than 150 automobiles competed for awards. A 1937 Bugatti Type 57 Cabriolet took the pre-World War II best in show prize. The post-war best in show prize went to a 1954 Mercedes Benz 300SL Gullwing. Presented by the La Jolla Historical Society, the Concours annually acknowledges the preservation of classic automobiles and the art of their restorations. Next year’s event will celebrate European race history with Bentleys and Ferraris as the two car marks.

Best in Show Post-War 1954 Mercedes Benz 300 SL Gullwing | Russell & Elena Hook
Best in Show Pre-War 1937 Bugatti Type 57 Cabriolet | Paul Emple

View from the stage. Thousands of car lovers enjoyed the Concours d’Elegance at Scripps Park.
This is the third year that the La Jolla Historical Society and Outside the Lens have partnered to offer a young photographer’s summer camp. Outside the Lens is a San Diego County non-profit dedicated to helping young people gain self-knowledge by interacting with their communities through photography and digital media.

This summer’s La Jolla program for incoming 6th through 8th grade students will run from Monday, July 8 through Friday July 12. It will focus on “Street Photography” exploring the techniques used by renowned photographers to capture life in the public arena. Students can register for either half-day sessions (9:30-12:00) or full day sessions (9:30-3:00) Afternoon sessions will explore more advanced photographic techniques.

To register and to see other programs offered by OTL visit their website at https://outsidethelens.org/register/summer2013/

The young architects’ summer camp is being offered for the second year. The program is designed and taught by award-winning local architects headed by Laura DuCharme-Conboy. Students learn to think in three dimensions through drawing, constructing measuring and touring. They are taught Sketch-up, a CAD (Computer Aided Design) program on rented computers. Visits to local houses designed by extraordinary architects of different eras demonstrate the richness of La Jolla’s architectural heritage. Each week-long program culminates in the student designing his or her own structure on a specified site. Instructors donating their time and expertise include Laura DuCharme Conboy, Pauly De Bartolo, Trip Bennett and Jeffrey Shorn. Lunch will be provided.

Funding has been provided by the Kiwanis Club of La Jolla. Additional support is being given by National Charity League, Wahoo’s Fish Tacos, The Cottage, & Amici’s

Session 1 for students entering grades 6 through 8 will run from July 15-19, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm.
Session 2 for students entering grades 9 through 12 will run from July 22-26, 9:00 am to 3:00 pm.

To register visit the La Jolla Historical Society’s website at http://lajollahistory.org/education/young-architects-summer-camp/
Or call: 858-459-5335

A photo in last issue’s newsletter mis-identified Lynn Fayman and Russell Forester. In the picture Fayman is on the left and Forester, the right.
Give the Gift of History!

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The La Jolla Historical Society accepts advertisements in its newsletter. Quarterly circulation of Timekeeper is over 1,200 with an estimated 2,000 pass-along. All proceeds for advertisements enable the Society to expand and enhance the educational and historical content of Timekeeper.

**Special Magazine Partnership for Society Members**

For every two-year ($28) subscription to San Diego Home/Garden Lifestyles magazine purchased by members of the La Jolla Historical Society, $10 goes to the Society!

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(858) 459-5335
After graduating from the School of Architecture at Columbia University, Thomas Shepherd (1897-1979) enjoyed a 50-year career designing buildings in La Jolla, Rancho Santa Fe, Orange County, Coronado and Mt. Helix. Shepherd arrived in California in the 1920s and worked briefly in Pasadena and Santa Barbara for noted architect, George Washington Smith. He arrived in La Jolla in 1926 and a few years later, designed the Spanish-style arcade building at 1117 Wall Street where he maintained his offices. A brief partnership with architect Herbert Mann, who is also considered a master, ended in 1932.

Shepherd preferred to customize his homes to meet his client's needs and his designs are in no particular architectural style. However, his travels to Europe and particularly the Mediterranean region clearly had an influence on him as his designs have a classic timeless quality about them. During his prolific career, Shepherd designed over two hundred residences, most of them in La Jolla.

Currently, La Jolla has fourteen single-family Shepherd designed residences listed as designated historic sites. In addition to his homes, Shepherd also designed a number of buildings. He designed additions to some of our community's most noteworthy structures as well, including: the La Valencia (HRB site #204), Darlington House (HRB site #327), The Little Hotel by the Sea (HRB site #181) and the Marine Room/Beach & Tennis Club. The Parker Office Building (HRB site #230) located at 7917 Girard Avenue (an annex to the Athenaeum) is designed in the Zigzag Moderne style is a sample of Shepherd's architectural range.

Recently, I listed a condominium at 230 Prospect, which is also a Shepherd designed building. Over the years I have sold several of Tom Shepherd's homes in La Jolla and I noticed that the same linen closet design I have seen in his homes is also in the condominium units at 230 Prospect. The linen closet is designed with a pull out wooden board, similar to a cutting board that is used for folding linens - a clever idea.

According to the Directory of San Diego Architects 1868-1939, it is said that Thomas Shepherd's designs gave La Jolla a certain "look" second only to the beauty of it's beaches. I heartily concur!

**230 Prospect Street #11, was remodeled in 2011 and features 2 BR/1 BA. The 19 unit building features a roof top area with panoramic views of the ocean and La Jolla and is offered at: $625,000.**
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