Larry Alldredge hails from Indiana where he was the first in eight generations not to become a farmer. He caught the theater bug as a kindergartner where he was cast as one of the Little Red Hen’s chicks. The 5-year-old Larry would have preferred instead to produce his own version of “The Wizard of Oz.” He taught Computer Science at Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology. He enjoyed working at Community Theatre of Terre Haute, Indiana as an actor and designer.

After arriving in San Diego in 1988, he worked at Telesoft, designing and consulting on software engineering systems, primarily for the defense industry. He met his future wife, Dawn Moore, when she interviewed him for a job at QUALCOMM. He got the job and later the wife, when they were married on a glacier in Alaska.

Alldredge made the natural career progression in 2008 to become managing director of San Diego Repertory Theatre. (See story on the 40th Season, B4)

What brought you to La Jolla?
When I first arrived in San Diego for a job interview in 1988, my prospective boss drove me around. I distinctly remember him driving me down Coast Boulevard past La Jolla Cove. Coming up the sidewalk next to the Cove were some Buddhist monks chanting. I thought, “This must be one of the most interesting places in the world.” Ten years later, when Dawn and I were looking for a place to live, we lucked upon a condo right there on Coast Boulevard next to The Cove. It seemed we were destined to live there.

What might you add, subtract or improve in the area?
I don’t think I would change a thing. The area changes at a fascinating pace on its own. I enjoy watching these changes unfold. I like the ambiance of the Village, the great walk along the coast, the wildlife and the people. See 10 Questions, B9

Preserving the Past
Historical Society honors owners of La Jolla’s ‘landmark’ homes

BY PAT SHERMAN

The city gave a shout-out to the people who assume the painstaking, often costly process of restoring and maintaining old homes that add character and a sense of place to La Jolla’s neighborhoods, proclaiming March 14, 2015 “La Jolla Landmarks Day.”

La Jolla Historical Society (LJHS) held an event to honor owners of these historically designated homes March 14 at its Eads Avenue and Prospect Street campus.

According to society records, there are currently 106 privately owned, historic homes and 28 publicly or corporately owned historic structures in La Jolla, as well as four sites deemed historic for their landscaping or archaeological significance. To have a home listed on the city’s Register of Historic Places, it must fit one or more of a series of criterion, such as its architectural significance or association with a famous person or master architect or builder. Applicants must submit a Historical Resources Research Report to the city and pay a $1,185 fee to have their home be considered.

San Diego City Council President Sherri Lightner, herself a former LJHS board member, addressed those in attendance at the LJHS event.

“The city designation process, I know, is very difficult and can be extremely trying at times,” Lightner said. “I appreciate the efforts that everyone went through to get their homes designated and I hope that you are also engaged with Mills Act benefits.”

The owners of historic homes may apply for a Mills Act Historic Property Contract, which offers a reduction in property taxes to offset the cost of restoring and maintaining a historic property. See Landmark Homes, B6
THE ROMEROS
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La Jolla Historical Society board president Ellen Merewether and board member Nick Agelidis

FROM LANDMARK HOMES, B1

The earliest property to receive a historic designation in La Jolla was the La Jolla Woman’s Club, designed in 1913 by architect Irving Gill and designated in 1973. According to the LJHS, there are currently 39 additional properties in various stages of research for a possible designation.

Welcoming about 75 guests, LJHS Executive Director Heath Fox noted that next year marks the 50th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act, created to preserve historical and archaeological sites in the country. The LJHS is currently celebrating its own 50th anniversary.

“It’s appropriate to recognize that the historic preservation movement in this country is a phenomenon of our era — it has happened in our lifetime,” Fox said, going on to thank the owners of historically designated properties for their stewardship. “Your properties have importance beyond their lot lines and add cultural relevancy and historic context to the built environment of San Diego.”

LJHS board vice-president Seonaid McArthur said that when she and her husband, Barry, purchased their 1928 Thomas Shepherd-designed home, the restoration process was a monumental undertaking.

“The plaster ceiling was caving in, there was one bathroom that worked out of five and the kitchen metal cabinets were covered in grease,” McArthur said. “I’m sure many of you have had similar experiences, but like each of you, slowly the beauty of the house was revealed — the stained glass, leaded windows and intricately carved cherry doors and paneling in the dining room. These features of the house continue to capture our imagination.”

McArthur recalled attending a recent lecture by contemporary artist El Anatsui, whose work is on exhibit through the end of June at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego’s downtown location.

“Something he said resonated with the work of the Historical Society and aesthetics of old homes,” she said. “When the artist was asked why he preferred to work with old materials he said, ‘Old wood reveals the poetry that lives within; new wood encloses a poetry that has yet to be revealed.’

“Each of your homes, each of these landmarks, contributes its poetry to La Jolla,” McArthur said. “We read it as we live in the homes, and as we drive through our neighborhoods.”

Also in attendance were Connie and Lewis Branscomb, widowers who met while vacationing on Easter Island in 2003. Lewis eventually moved from Massachusetts to La Jolla to be with Connie, and each

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Former La Jollan David Goldberg lives in an historic Craftsman home in Point Loma and La Jolla Realtor Linda Marrone, who serves on the city’s Historical Resources Board, lives in an historic English Tudor Revival-style home designed by master architect Edgar Ullrich in 1935.

Historic La Jolla home owners Bob Agdern, architect Reena Racki, LJHS board vice-president Seonaid McArthur and Barbara Agdern celebrate ‘La Jolla Landmarks Day.’ The Agderns live in a 1936 home designed by architect Cliff May (father of the California Ranch House); Racki lives in one of the homes comprising architect Rudolf Schindler’s 1923 redwood and concrete Pueblo Ribera complex in WindanSea, and McArthur lives in a 1928 Thomas Shepherd-designed home.

purchased homes that they later had designated historic. Connie, a former LJHS board president, submitted nomination paperwork for both.

Connie’s house (on Ludington Place) is an adobe structure designed in 1948 by Russell Forester, known more for his later, modernist style. She and her late husband previously lived next door to it. “I knew that anyone else who bought it would tear it down,” Connie said.

Lewis purchased a home on nearby Ludington Lane, designed in 1929 by architect Lillian Rice, which is akin to an English Country home.

“It’s closest to something you might see in one of the National Park Lodges, on a much smaller scale — not elegant, but beautifully made and very comfortable,” Connie said.

Both homes have Mills Act contracts. In order to qualify for the program, there were six things Lewis had to do to bring his home back to its original, 1929 state. This included replacing standard entry windows with colored bottle glass windows. Poking around in the basement one day, Lewis was fortunate enough to discover the originals secreted away there, in tact.

“Now, when the morning sun shines in through those windows, it’s just startling how beautiful it is,” he chimed.

Bill and Dawn Davidson own a historic 1929 Spanish-style cottage that they previously lived in as renters. ‘We fell in love with it years ago,’ Dawn said. ‘I’m a designer and he’s a builder so we totally appreciate the character and the sensitivity that went into its construction. We’re empty nesters now, so when it came up for sale, we had to buy it.’

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