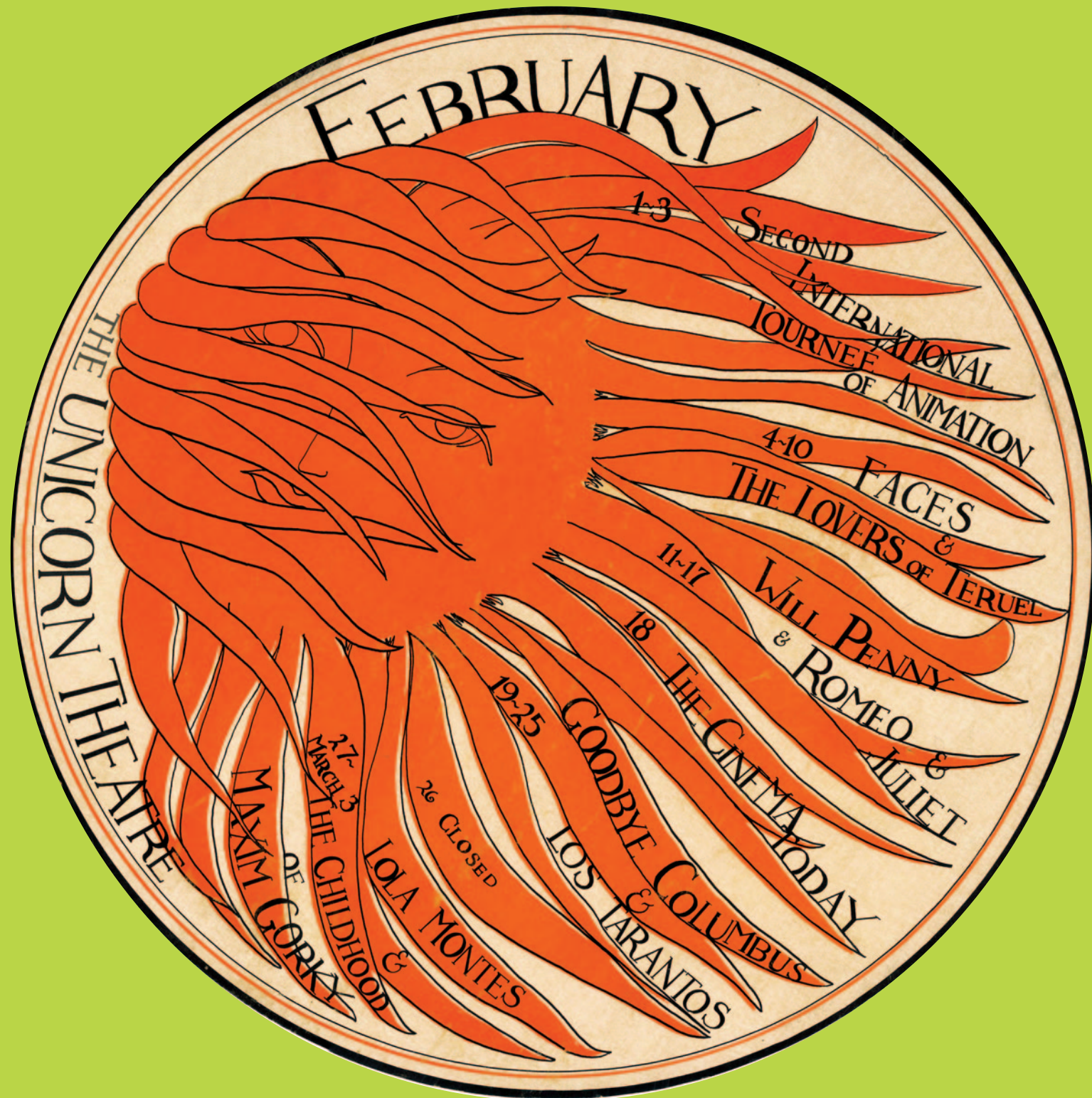


# Timekeeper

WINTER • SPRING 2022

VOLUME 4 NO 1



MISSION

The La Jolla Historical Society inspires and empowers the community to make La Jolla's diverse past a relevant part of contemporary life.

VISION

The La Jolla Historical Society looks toward the future while celebrating the past. We preserve and share La Jolla's distinctive sense of place and encourage quality in the urban built environment. The Society serves as a thriving community resource and gathering place where residents and visitors explore history, art, ideas and culture.

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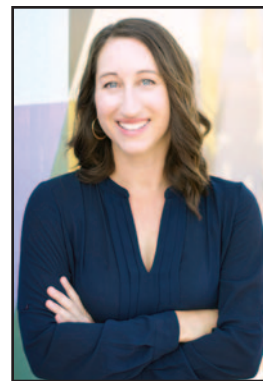
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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



Lauren Lockhart

We think of our LJHS historical collection as a living, breathing entity, that we, as its stewards, are responsible for helping to preserve, nurture and evolve over time. One way we accomplish this is by continually inviting new interpretations of the materials in our archive. Our winter-spring exhibition, *Memory Traces: Artists Transform the Archive*, on view February 5 – May 15, 2022, continues this practice.

Artists featured in *Memory Traces* were asked to delve into the collection for inspiration, and the discoveries they made prompted important new lines of inquiry. In preparation, Curator Elizabeth Rooklidge studied the complex history of archives, and encouraged the artists to reinterpret familiar histories and shed light on those absent from our collection. The result is a diverse exhibition of contemporary art that challenges us to consider how memory is formed, recorded, and transformed over time. We applaud Elizabeth for her thoughtful scholarship and for creating a meaningful

NEW BOARD MEMBER



Stephen Rose

Stephen Rose, joining the Board of Directors, is a former attorney for Paramount Pictures and literary agent in the Entertainment Industry, representing writers and directors for film and television. He has a long-standing commitment to historic preservation and has restored more than 14 historic residences by renowned architects including John Lautner, Paul Revere Williams, Thornton Ladd, John Wolff, William Cody, and E. Stewart Williams. His extensive Board and Committee service includes acting as a Commissioner for the Rancho Mirage Preservation Commission and the Historic Preservation Board of Palm Springs, a Board Member of the Palm Springs Modernism Committee, Co-Founder of the Rancho Mirage Preservation Committee, and Board member of Desert AIDS Project. Stephen currently serves on the LJHS Preservation Committee.

NEW STAFF MEMBER



Ricardo Lopez

First and foremost, I just want to say that I am very excited to be a part of the La Jolla Historical Society. I have been here over a month now and everyone here has been wonderful and welcoming.

My background, in the museum field, consists of having worked in upstate New York for a nonprofit historical landmark known as Great Camp Sagamore as a historical interpreter. The lodge is known for being a "retreat home" for Alfred G. Vanderbilt for half a century. The camp site has 28 historical buildings each with a single use purpose and I provided a 2-hour long tour around the camp, its buildings and the historical people that lived on the site.

I have an undergraduate degree in history. I attended Humboldt State University in Northern California. Before attending college, I had spent all my life in a little town known as Perris, CA.

Being the new Visitors Service Associate allows me to work with the people that come and visit our exhibits. Social Media is also one of my tasks as well as any other projects that need to be done. I've always wanted to give back to a community and I can't think of a better way than by being part of the LJHS. I am well aware of the history, architecture, and the pride the people of La Jolla have for this place, which is why I am happy to be a part of it and help the community.

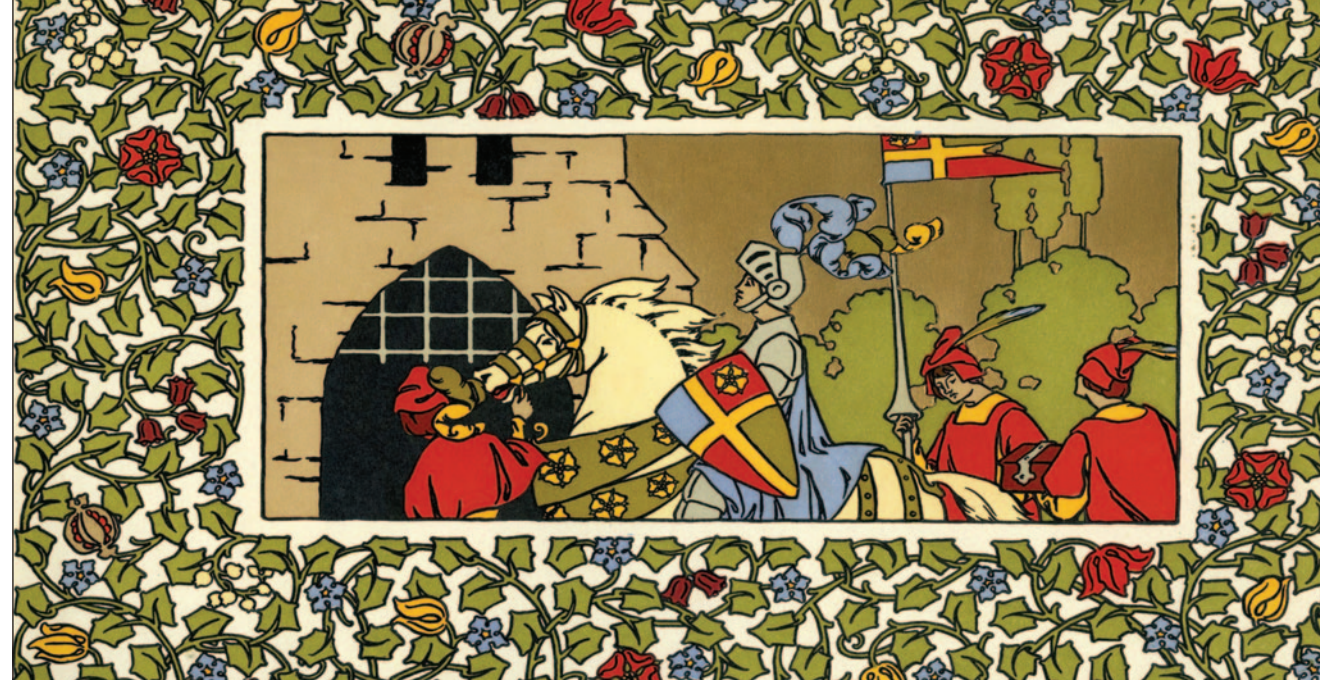
**Cover:** Devotees of the Unicorn Cinema and Mithras Bookstore (1964-1982) often recall the many magical, wonder-filled images created for programs and posters by Sandra Darling, art director and wife of owner Harold Darling. For this 1969 poster advertising the February film schedule, Darling depicts a female face in a whirling orange sun flying in a tangle of rays or hair ready to be caught up, perhaps, in the March wind of the following month. On the tendrils float the titles of the upcoming film offerings including a first-run offering of "Goodbye Columbus" with Ali McGraw docketed with classics such as Max Ophul's "Lola Montes" and a seedy bit of avant French film noir in "The Lovers of Teruel" from 1962. The February poster art is a recent gift to the La Jolla Historical Society from Jim Maffie who, like many others, was among the Unicorn's affectionate devotees.

platform for creative practitioners to engage with our collection. We are extremely grateful for the generosity of the supporters who made this exhibition possible: Bo and Anita Hedfors, Sandy Erickson, the Florence Riford La Jolla Community Fund of the San Diego Foundation, ArtWorks San Diego, and the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture.

In addition to a new exhibition, we have a wide range of exciting activities planned in 2022! Sign up early for our popular Guided Walking Tours of La Jolla and learn more about historic preservation by attending La Jolla Landmarks Week in March. In the spring you can experience unmatched automotive excellence at the *La Jolla Concours d'Elegance* and explore extraordinary private gardens at the Secret Garden Tour on May 14th.

We offer our sincerest gratitude to those who contributed to our Annual Appeal end-of-year giving campaign – your gifts help sustain our work all year! Many thanks also to our Board of Directors, who give generously of their time and expertise, and to the dedicated volunteers who support our exhibition program and special events. And finally, thank you to our Members, we appreciate your engagement and look forward to seeing you at a Society event soon!

Lauren Lockhart  
 Executive Director



LEFT: A medieval-inspired graphic decorated the frontispiece of the Cricket Tea Room's guest book.

BELOW: Guestbook signatures reflect visitors from around the world.

Collection from La Jolla Historical Society



Nanook and Carol (one of us is the editor!)

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Tea rooms became popular and fashionable gathering places at the beginning of the 20th century, especially frequented by women active in the suffragette movement who used them as common meeting areas where they could enjoy light meals and conversation without the worry of needing male escorts. They also appealed to the general public turning their interest to tea and hot chocolate instead of whiskey and ale during the prohibition era. Frequently managed and owned by women who delighted in preparing menus from their own family recipe books such as strawberry shortcake for 40 cents or creamed salmon on toast for 55, tea rooms often were operated as extensions of private homes competing with the grander milieu of palm courts and more dignified atmospheres found in hotel salons and ritzy department stores.

La Jolla had a single memorable tea room from this era. It was known first as the Green Dragon Tea Garden operated by Julia

Heinrich and later as the Cricket Tea Room with Daisy Mitchell as the proprietress. It was located at 1270 Prospect St., site of the present-day Eddy V restaurant. Heinrich, daughter of the German baritone Max Heinrich who had married Green Dragon founder Anna Held, opened the Tea Garden in Wahnfried after her father and mother-in-law had left the house and property in her hands. Sometimes depicted on postcards of the time, it provided a cozy, inviting retreat for all who entered with redwood interiors featuring a variety of Arts and Crafts furnishings ranging from a spinning wheel to Native American carpets. Small wood tables with white cloths and chairs were randomly arranged through the main living area. There are no records as to what was on the menu.

Heinrich, an opera singer by profession, operated the Tea Garden between concert tours in Europe and the United States. After a New York debut at the Metropolitan Opera in 1915 where she sang the soprano role of Guttrune in "Gotterdammerung," her singing career began to take precedence over serving tea and she handed the business over to Miss Mitchell who re-named it the Cricket. Mitchell kept an elaborate pair of guest books of whoever ate her cakes and sandwiches from September of 1915 to the middle of 1918.

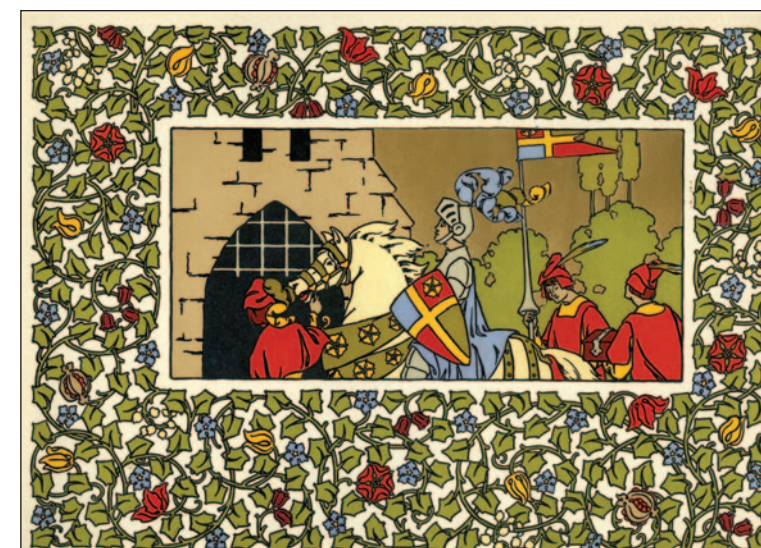
These guest books have been part of the archive of the La Jolla Historical Society since the early days of its organization

when it was a branch of the Library Association. They were a 1944 gift from Hilda Barringer, a well-known La Jolla realtor.

The guest book signatures represent people from all over the world, South Wales to Brazil, Paris and Berlin to Capetown – an indication of La Jolla's universal identity around the globe from the start. The Austrian painter, Wilhelm Kaufmann, signed – and drew a sketch of himself painting at the beach. Interestingly, however, the majority of the signatures are those of women, attesting to the general notion of tea rooms as ladies' sport. The most elaborate of the pair features a medieval-inspired graphic at the beginning which shows knights and horses travelling forward, a la Canterbury Tales. An inscription reads: "Through this wide opening gate, none come too early. . .none return too late."

Let's hope everyone enjoyed their Cricket cakes!

– Carol Olten  
 Editor



Collection from La Jolla Historical Society

# SHIFTING SANDS:

## AN UNTOLD STORY OF WIND 'AN SEA

By John Sheehan, Heather Crane and Carol Olten

EDITOR'S NOTE: Some months ago, John Sheehan, a principal in Studio E architects, began correspondence with me in an effort to flesh out information on Irving Gill's Richmond Court built in the early part of the 20th century on Coast Blvd. and now considered among the many pieces of "lost" Gill architecture. He soon became sidetracked by another mysterious project naming Gill as project architect. It was identified in numerous historic newspaper and magazine articles as La Jolla Strand, a major housing tract planned for the area now known as Wind 'an Sea with amenities to include a hotel, boardwalk, pavilion and other features suggesting a major Southern California seaside resort. The developer was A.B. Curtis who recorded a subdivision map for the project in 1909. Gill was announced as the Strand designer that same year and his signed drawing for Curtis' own house in the tract was published in the San Diego newspapers. Little mention of this exists in present Gill scholarship. The story of The Strand development has remained untold. Sheehan, along with myself and architect Heather Crane, embarked on a mission. What we found and present as joint writers of this article is a lesson in history. It's full of surprises. Don't accept the obvious. Dig deep and stories and characters will almost certainly emerge that no one has ever unmasked. My favorite part of The Strand story was the disclosure of a daredevil flyboy named Paul Koch, the son of a Belgian multi-millionaire, as one of Curtis's main investors. He'd come to San Diego just to build an airplane!

As the inventions of motor cars, flying machines, electricity and motion pictures launched the 20th century into the modern era, Southern California real estate investors and developers began to view beach cities not only as great potentials for lot sales but possibilities for lucrative ventures such as pleasure piers offering entertainment, dining experiences, dance pavilions, bath houses, arcades and the occasional P.T. Barnum-ish side shows such as double-headed monkeys. A grand hotel of some sort, most often designed with fantastical references to history or exotic places, also was offered at the beach city sites in hopes that visitors would stay overnight, wake up the next morning to the healthful attributes of fresh salt air and take themselves off to buy a lot, perpetuating forever their stay in this new-found Elysium. Hence, Venice, became "Venice of the West" with gondolas and gondoliers, Long Beach got "The Pike," and Henry Huntington tried to outdo the entire lot in Redondo Beach with a grand "gingerbread" hotel, bath houses, plunges, a bowling alley and a dance pavilion ballroom that could either seat 4,000 or accommodate as many as 500 couples fox trotting their hearts out.

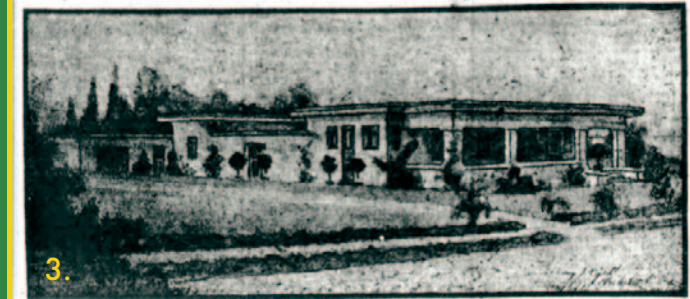
Albert Butler Curtis looked at the area we now identify as Wind 'an Sea as the 20th century dawned and, if there was anything he didn't see, it was surf and the huge crashing waves that would identify it as one of the world's great surfing beaches decades later. Instead, Curtis saw "the Atlantic City of the Pacific Coast" and the real estate development of a lifetime: A pier. A boardwalk with arcades. A dance pavilion. A sizeable hotel with healthful amenities and blasts of fresh air. Rows of neat, upscale patio homes designed for a new style of modern beach living by Irving Gill that would line newly paved streets, all neatly aligned so lot buyers could enjoy ocean views and a healthy life by the seaside were a major part of the plan.

To realize his vision, Curtis enlisted an entourage of investors,

...continued on page 6

### A. B. CURTIS USES PATIO STYLE IN LA JOLLA HOME

Handsome seaside residence in course of construction for A. B. Curtis at La Jolla strand



THE HOTEL AT LA JOLLA STRAND



TYPICAL STRAND HOME UNDER CONSTRUCTION

1. Irving Gill, the Architect originally hired for La Jolla Strand who. . .
2. Would probably object to designing a facsimile of Henry Huntington's pleasure pier and hotel at Redondo Beach
3. Sketched this forward-thinking patio home for the development in 1909
4. May have been involved in designing La Jolla Strand Hotel, later known as Wind 'an Sea
5. Has no reference to this house advertised as part of the development in a building trade magazine



La Jolla Historical Society Collection



# ...BEFORE SURFING

...continued from page 5

promoters, real estate agents, architects, landscape designers, contractors and builders whose names became associated with the project over a period of several years as he proceeded as an overseer in a spirit of old-fashioned boosterism from offices in several different locations in downtown San Diego. Deliberately, Curtis sometimes chose participants in the venture to empower the venture, itself. Besides Irving Gill being announced as the project designer in the metropolitan newspapers of 1909, daredevil flyboy Paul Koch, the son of a Belgian multi-millionaire who had come to San Diego to build a pioneer aircraft, flew into headlines as a major investor.

As the La Jolla Strand project took shape, Curtis – a wheeler dealer in many arenas – had his hands in numerous real estate and development pies in San Diego County as well as capital stock investments with a mining company in Tonopah known as the Nevada Goldfields Development Co. after he, his wife and two children deposited themselves on Jan. 1, 1905, in downtown San Diego's Brewster Hotel. They had journeyed cross country from the East Coast and Curtis was eager to establish himself as one of the movers and shakers in San Diego land development. He joined the San Diego Realty Board and was appointed to the board of directors of the San Diego Advertising and Excursion Bureau, an organization to bring visitors to the city and surrounding areas and encourage them to settle here. In July, 1906, Curtis and four other businessmen filed articles of incorporation for a venture known as the La Jolla Syndicate which announced the purchase of a thousand acre tract in South La Jolla for \$230,000 with plans to divide half the acreage into lots and the balance into marine villa sites with amenities including a pier, a boathouse, a hotel and a pavilion. But almost as soon as the plans were announced the Syndicate dissolved and nothing happened.

Curtis spent the next three years immersed in land ventures in East San Diego, Lemon Grove, Spring Valley Heights and Tijuana valley without notable success (1907 nationally went down as a "bust" year with financial panic and bank closings all over the country). In May, 1909, he turned his sights back to La Jolla. A smaller version of the earlier La Jolla Syndicate proposal was resurrected as La Jolla Strand.

Although The Strand was not as extensive as the original La Jolla Park subdivision of 1887 which scoped the layout of the immediate village and cove areas, it was the second major subdivision proposed for development in La Jolla's history, consisting of more than 400 lots bounded by the beach on the west, extending east across La Jolla Blvd. to Electric Avenue with Bonair and Palomar avenues as the cross streets.

Gill no doubt realized the scope of the project and became an eager participant. He already had completed work for some of San



This pleasure pier at Long Beach, popular during the same early 20th century time frame that La Jolla Strand was proposed for Wind 'an Sea and depicted on a penny postcard, featured pier and beach entertainment including rollercoaster.

Diego's leading families such as the Klaubers and the Marstons as well as Wheeler Bailey in La Jolla and was rapidly emerging as the city's new rock star architect and pioneering modernist. Having also recently designed the Cabrillo Hotel in La Jolla, he would soon embark on the Ellen Browning Scripps commissions such as the La Jolla Woman's Club and Recreation Center that would bring recognition as a leading figure pioneering in the world of modern architecture.

One of Gill's first contributions to La Jolla Strand was a drawing for a startlingly modern home for Curtis, himself, on a prime lot within the project. A November 15, 1909, article in The San Diego Union titled "A.B. Curtis Uses Patio Style in La Jolla Home" offers not only a detailed description of the floor plan but a signed rendering by the architect. The design is striking for its austerity and low-slung horizontality. Gill's trademark arches are notably missing along with his Mission-inspired

**“Although The Strand was not as extensive as the original La Jolla Park subdivision of 1887, which scoped the layout of the immediate village and cove areas, it was the second major subdivision proposed for development in La Jolla's history, consisting of more than 400 lots bounded by the beach on the west, extending east across La Jolla Blvd. to Electric Avenue with Bonair and Palomar avenues as the cross streets.”**

parapets. Instead, the design is puritanically new, modern and evocative of the California patio home Gill extolled several years later in a 1916 Craftsman magazine as “a better, cozier, more convenient or practical scheme for a home. . .with outdoor living rooms.”

Sadly, for reasons unknown the Curtis home was never built. Curiously, however, echoes of Gill's rendering of the patio home appear in the final realization of the La Jolla Strand Hotel, renamed ten years later as the Wind 'an Sea Hotel, an enduring fixture at the site until a disastrous fire of 1943. The hotel had a generous central patio, a long, low ocean-facing veranda and a broad flat roof – all miming the patio home. Was Gill involved in the design of the hotel? At this point we can only speculate. More research also is needed to determine Gill's part in the land planning of the subdivision. Street layouts allowing every potential homeowner to have an ocean view speak to Gill's lifelong mission to create housing of merit and virtue for all social classes. The plot feature allowing the ravine between Del Sur and Del Norte to remain as an oasis of native landscape rather than be graded for lots also bespeaks Gill's concept for architecture to work within the perimeters of California's natural environment. Later development, of course, chose to take advantage of beach-side land values and build the apartments and condominiums that occupy the ravine today.

But even now over a hundred years later, most of the streets shown and plotted in The Strand subdivision map remain after the partnerships involved in its creation fell apart for various reasons. Speculations can be made had Gill continued with the project through build out: Would the pedestrian promenade along what is Neptune Place been graced with pergolas and terraces? Would Gill's proposed design for Curtis' patio home have inspired others to use his talents creating an entire enclave of innovative master works? Or, would Curtis' penchant for fanfare and boosterism to create a West Coast Atlantic City have resulted in simply one splendid mess? Maybe, this, too, led to the architect's disenchantment with the project and moving on to nobler – and more economically profitable – pursuits. Perhaps, too, he remembered the hullabaloo created by the Chicago World's Fair in the 1890s working as a young architect in Louis Sullivan's office to design the fantastical “White City” of 1893. He may have foreseen mere folly in designing more show business architecture.

It would be 14 years and a World War over before the next visionary architect arrived in the same neighborhood with a head full of progressive ideas about seaside living. This was Rudolf Shindler who created the iconic El Pueblo Ribera pushing the ideas of indoor/outdoor living to new extremes using concrete – one of Gill's favorite materials – composed of beach sand from a block away. Interestingly, Shindler and Gill became acquainted in Los Angeles in 1922 after the latter had moved there for work.

Why did Curtis' La Jolla Strand project fail to build out? As usual, time and circumstances added to the demise. At the date of its

Strand developer A. B. Curtis ran this ad in The San Diego Union newspaper in 1912 as part of a last-ditch effort to sell lots at “sacrificed” prices of 50 per cent off or \$175 per.

proposal La Jolla had a population of only about 500 permanent residents living mainly in clusters of small houses built along the cliffs around La Jolla Cove. Although this population increased vastly in seasonal months (seemingly a good market for potential Strand lot buyers), visitors preferred renting beach cottages around the Cove to building their own at a desolate and far afield seaside point lacking commercial services and a post office when automobiles were still a rarity. Curtis repeatedly promised an electric trolley and train stops for the subdivision but they never were fully realized. Fresh water supplies also were problematic, an issue that continued to plague the entire area of La Jolla until 1919 when the City of San Diego finally contracted for water rights and laid pipes to provide adequate amounts of H2O to the inhabitants. Curtis' La Jolla Strand was also an outlying subdivision about a decade before its time. The big push of development to the

...continued on page 23

# MEMORY TRACES: ARTISTS TRANSFORM THE ARCHIVE

By Elizabeth Rooklidge



*Touch Starvation and Golden Hours, 2021*  
Oil and sand on panel

Chantal Wnuk



*Matinee Today, 2021*  
Found banner

Allison Wiese



Elizabeth Rooklidge is an independent curator and writer in San Diego, CA. She works with a wide range of organizations — from artist-run spaces to traditional museums— to develop exhibitions and public programs focused on contemporary art. Elizabeth also founded and serves as Editor for *HereIn Journal*, an online publication for thoughtful exchange around contemporary art in San Diego. She holds a B.A. in Art History from St. Olaf College and an M.A. in Art History from Williams College.

**M**emory Traces: Artists Transform the Archive uses the La Jolla Historical Society's holdings to consider the archive in its traditional function and reimagine it for contemporary times. The exhibition and its accompanying catalogue feature seven San Diego artists working across mediums, whose practices investigate memory, history, and how meaning is created from fragments of the past.

The exhibition draws its title from a 1925 essay by Sigmund Freud, in which he explored the way remembrance functions. Observing memory's natural inconsistency, Freud used the term "memory trace" to signify a note made to serve as a future reminder, an aid to maintaining a clearer picture of the past. An archive has, traditionally, been considered to function similarly; it is a collection of materials, compiled over time, thought to constitute an accurate representation of history. Together, these materials establish a kind of collective memory. And yet, we have increasingly come to understand that the archive is always assembled by individuals, canonized from a particular perspective and set of experiences.

*Memory Traces* operates from an understanding of the archive as unstable, and the impossibility for such records to represent an absolute "truth" about the past. The exhibition proposes that the archive's value may, in fact, lie in its malleability. With projects informed by research in the La Jolla Historical Society's collection, the artists in *Memory Traces* activate the archive with imaginative and diverse interpretations that affirm the importance of keeping memory alive.

At the outset of the exhibition process, the artists were given a prompt: visit the La Jolla Historical Society's archive, dig around, and find something that interests you to use as a point of departure for making new work. The result is a wide range of projects that makes visible erased histories and creates poetic visions of something new. Janelle Iglesias and Robert Andrade dive into post-colonial critique by examining the ideological and sociopolitical implications of a particular natural environment, and what it means to occupy land. Joshua Moreno seeks to fill the archival silence around La Jolla's Queer history, while Chantal Wnuk explores the idea of a personal archive and how it can bear a deeply individual poignancy. Shirin Towfiq pursues a more abstract meditation on how memory travels through time, often in enigmatic form. Crafting humorous homage and melancholy monuments, Allison Wiese and Joe Yorty use historical material to evoke past lives. These projects activate the memory traces already stored in the La Jolla Historical Society's archive to give them new life.

Funding provided by Bo and Anita Hedfors, Sandy Erickson, the Florence Riford La Jolla Community Fund of the San Diego Foundation, ArtWorks San Diego, and the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture.

# The Other Ellen

“ I am La Jolla; still I call my own  
And still they come, though why they do not know,  
From the grey fringes where the desert ends,  
From tropic splendors and from heights of snow  
Far though you roam, and farther yet, maybe,  
From days when all my potent spell was new  
By sunset waters, winds from off the sea,  
I am La Jolla, and I call to you. ”

- "The Lure," by Ellen Morrill Mills



Ellen Morrill Mills was a poet, among other things. She never became a famous poet, but she was a voice, nonetheless, within the group of New Bohemians who appeared at the start of the 20th century and shaped California literature – and the idea of California, itself, – as a land of ocean and arroyos, redwoods and sage-covered hills and drifting fogbanks and golden sunsets with a climate fit for Persephone. Mills loved the La Jolla of the early days of the late 19th and early 20th centuries when, in her words, “private houses had been building, but things were primitive.”

Like the “other” Ellen – Ellen Browning Scripps – Ellen Mills began her life in La Jolla in the 1890s. But Ellen Browning was 60, a gray-haired woman approaching the golden years. Ellen Mills was eight, a dreamy, book-ish child eager for learning. Both Ellens had professions in the writing business – Ellen Browning in her brothers’ newspaper empire and Ellen Mills as a journalist for San Diego and La Jolla newspapers; she also contributed to poetry journals and national magazines.

Both Ellens, too, were Modern women who were educated, supported equal rights causes, remained unmarried and invested great amounts of time and effort in the betterment of their community. When Ellen Mills died in 1940 she was memorialized as “a woman who has grown up with La Jolla,” who “had been connected with every project of civic interest” and “enjoyed a wider acquaintance of La Jolla than any other woman.” And, of course, she had been friends with Ellen Browning before her death in 1932.

Mills’ place in the literary history of California has never been clearly defined, but the important consideration is that, indeed, she had one – a place as a poet with a published body of work, a place as a writer of prose whose way with words evoked both the romance and reality of living in a small coastal town as the larger world spun through World War I and the Great Depression, as horse-drawn carriages replaced automobiles and telephones became the norm in every household. Mills was putting pen and pencil to paper as Helen Hunt Jackson had a bestseller in the California fable of “Ramona,” as Charles Fletcher Lummis recorded the Arroyo Seco culture of Southern California in “The Land of Sunshine” magazine and women writers such as Margaret Collier Graham were touting the glories of the sunshine state in Harpers and The Atlantic Monthly. The same era witnessed the debut of the famous Nellie Bly who turned writing into a series of trans-world adventures and, closer to home at Occidental College, Nora May French made hay with words as well as Jack London before committing suicide at age 26. In an essay on Women Writers of California more than a hundred women of

Ellen, herself, wrote profusely in her later years about the La Jolla she grew up in during that time recalling “right at the front door was the sea, teeming with fish, abalone, mussels for everyone, not to mention toothsome lobsters. . . If anyone had a lot of anything good it was passed around in neighborly fashion.

Mills’ era are recorded as members of the Pacific Coast Press Association, inspired, perhaps, by Carrie Carlton, the first female scribe of California making her journalistic debut in 1858 in the Bay Area’s Sunday Mercury. She was described as “a bright sweet lovable little woman with a cheery style of composition.” Her pen name: Topsy Turvy.

Mills was not one of those. She never used a pseudonym. She had a quiet, kindly manner, collected old china and shells and was a life-long member of the Union Congregational Church. But she didn’t lack spunk. In a poem entitled “The Cure” she suggested anyone experiencing the universe in “a sort of bluish tone” try a trip to Nonsense-land (“the passport to that happy place is just a merry smile”). She wrote a poem on “Shelling Peas” (“how the little green imps hop over the floor, and roll and wink by the big screen door”). Other poems treat roads (those taken in life and not taken), the aftermath of the Great War, romance, landscape, the sea, the song of the wind and so on.

Her poems were published in several 1930-31 editions of American Poetry Magazine, a monthly publication of the American Literary Association, as well as a San Diego verse book called “Troubadour.” A collection of Mills’ poetry also was self-published in a 14-page booklet under the title, “The Little Road.”

A student at Russ High School in San Diego, Mills began her writing career as a La Jolla correspondent for the San Diego Tribune at age 17. She published her first poems in 1921 and a year afterward began to write for the La Jolla Journal, at that time the community’s major weekly. Over the next two decades she rose to positions of editing and co-ownership.

Mills was the only child of Anson and Eleanor (“Nellie”) Mills. She was born in Maine in 1882 and came to San Diego with them to live in 1886. A few years later they moved to La Jolla, becoming one of the legendary pioneer families in the community, living in a small house called Kennebec Lodge they built for themselves at Fay Avenue and Prospect Street. Ellen grew up here, enjoying the freedom of a rural childhood close to the ocean and sagebrush-covered hills. Although bringing along a law degree from Maine, her father chose

Dorothea:  
My "historical" facts may not be correct, but what versifier is ever  
tied down to a categorical or "dog"matic statement?  
--  
This is the tale of one, two, three  
Of the dogs who have deigned to dwell with me:  
--  
Dog number one was a jolly pup,  
Save when the fleas nearly ate him up.  
Full of wiggles and impish tricks;  
Early of wiggles and impish tricks;  
Puzzled on the lawn  
He had not been born.  
To excuse to croon  
To the rising moon.  
Sharp and sweet  
pell-mell down the crowded street:  
the ultimate price of folly-  
truck, not the neighborhood troll.

Left: As an accomplished poet, Ellen often corresponded in verse as in this manually typed letter to a friend concerning pet dogs.

a leisurely life of odd jobs and helping his wife with a cottage rental and real estate business. He also kept daily diaries which became – and remain today – significant records of life in early La Jolla.

Ellen, herself, wrote profusely in her later years about the La Jolla she grew up in during that time recalling “right at the front door was the sea, teeming with fish, abalone, mussels for everyone, not to mention toothsome lobsters. . . If anyone had a lot of anything good it was passed around in neighborly fashion.

*Sea Shells*  
 The shells that pattern the sea shore seem so wonderful to me!  
 Little deserted dwellings of the creatures of the sea  
 This dweller went in his by; Brown was the  
 But he stole the hues of the sunset for the arch of  
 Here was an artist bold; down where the  
 with streakings of gold and crimson he made  
 These fluted and carved the portal tall it  
 Set up to some lesser sea god. With wonders of  
 They wrought these things of the sea depths; age, and  
 They lived, and they built, and perished. What  
 these porcelain and coralline castles  
 The shells that pattern the sea shore  
 Little deserted dwellings of the crea  
 (For Marion)



Any social gathering was perforce a general invitation affair.” She loved seining trips to Long Beach (La Jolla Shores), the grey-green sage brush hills, the darker chaparral and the brilliant patches of wildflowers that embraced the landscape. It was the stuff of poetry, easily seduced into iambic pentameter or other less rhythmic tomes.

In “Lines, With a Rose Sachet,” a poem for the La Jolla Journal, she wrote: “Sunrise and sunset, and the opening flower, Are for our taking, and our joyance, free!” Another poem, “House of Dreams,” describes a fantasy world in which to live where “It always should be afternoon – a golden summer’s day, Just warm and sweet with skies as blue and deep as beauty’s eyes; The trees the tints of autumn, and the flowers the bloom of May.”

Ellen lived most of the 58 years of her life with her parents,

first at Kennebec and then at a house across the street named Idylwild. After her father died in 1933, followed by her mother’s passing in 1937, her home was the small bungalow court at 609 Genter St. where she lived with Simon Bolivar, the ancient Mills family cat. Part of her will requested the cat, along with a pet turtle, be euthanized after her own death for fear neither would not take well to living with an outsider.

Maintaining a happy companionship with her parents and animals, both cats and dogs, Ellen was photographed driving the dusty streets of La Jolla with her father in an open Ford. In an earlier 1890s photo she is shown as a young woman standing on the La Jolla Shores beach with a large black dog watching a seining party with the caves in the background.

Although she never married, Anson’s diaries – always written with a loving eye toward his daughter – indicate she “kept company” with a number of local men.

By the time she started her association with the Journal in 1922, she was 40 years old and no longer a young woman on anyone’s most eligible

list. She turned her life to a full-time professional newspaper career and remained in that mode until her death in 1940, functioning mainly in the role of city editor. During her tenure the Journal, first established in 1912, grew from a four-page, six-column paper to one of eight-to-10 pages running eight columns across. The years from 1924-1930 when some of La Jolla’s major hotels were built and more



expensive subdivisions such as the Muirlands and Lower and Upper Hermosa were laid out also were times of great growth for the community newspaper in operation with offices at 900 Silverado St. Local and national advertising grew. National columnists such as Arthur Brisbane became contributors and readers were treated to a hefty amount of ongoing melodramatic serials, a page of “clean comics that will amuse both young and old” and local news ranging from cultural

happenings to social notices along with the nuts and bolts of births, deaths, weddings and the latest proposals to alleviate parking issues in the village (yes, it was also a problem in 1939!).

As city editor, Mills job was co-ordinating and editing copy as well as seeing to the layouts and placements on the pages. Although many of the short stories and features don’t carry her by-line, one can surmise that she also wrote a great deal of the copy. Many of the social notices reflect her journalistic touch along with some of the front page stories, most often referred to as hard news but which reflect Mills softer, more personal approach. In a few paragraphs printed, for instance, in one of the 1936 editions under the headline, Fire Menaces Home on Fay Avenue, the writer identifies the conflagration victim as Nellie Fitzpatrick and points out a tender

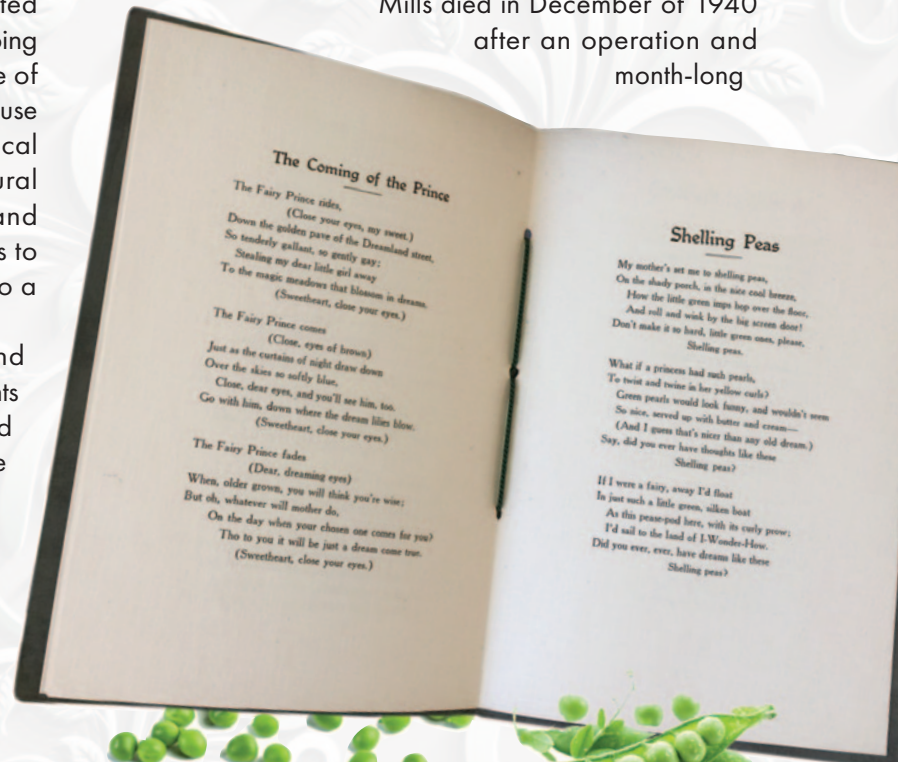
detail by informing the reader: “A fireman, in the thick smoke, rescued the dog and a policeman sorrowfully brought to her her canary, a victim of the smoke.”

The La Jolla Mills wrote about whether in prose or poetry was inevitably a place of kind associations between people and respect and love for the natural beauty of the California spot they had chosen to call home. In the first stanza

of “The Brown Hills Call,” one of 13 verses in her “The Little Road” book, she wrote:

“ I want to see the old brown hills of home!  
 I’ve seen your parks, all laid out by the rule;  
 Cemented ponds ain’t like a forest pool.  
 Your trees are barbered up, like city sparks.  
 Birds here seem tame – they ain’t like meadow-larks!  
 I’m sick of cities; thought I’d like to roam,  
 But now I want the old brown hills of home.”

Mills died in December of 1940 after an operation and month-long



illness that confined her to Scripps Memorial Hospital. She held the post of the Journal’s city editor at the time of her death.

The Journal continued to publish until 1964 when it merged with the present-day La Jolla Light. The post-World War II years saw it continue to grow with advertising and editorial copy as well as expanded reportage of community news in a journalistic style far more straight-forward than tinged with the tenderness and melodrama that marked Mills time. Fire stories generally no longer included what had happened to the pet canary!

**Above left:** Ellen Mills with favorite examples of her shell collection  
**Above center:** Ellen on an outing in the Mills’ family car with her father, Anson.  
**Right:** Flanked by her mother, Nellie, in left foreground and father, Anson, holding Simon Bolivar, the cat, Ellen appears in family snapshot, circa 1910.

Photographs from La Jolla Historical Society Collection



Eight-foot sculpture of jazz trumpeter Louis Armstrong by Niki de Saint Phalle was installed on Wisteria Cottage lawn in 1999 through efforts of Tasende Gallery.

Courtesy of Tasende Gallery

# NIKI IN LA JOLLA

Shortly after Niki de Saint Phalle left Paris in 1993 for health reasons and to get away from maddening crowds in Europe, she came to live in La Jolla and purchased an unusual historic Spanish Revival-style house at 7907 Princess St. at the corner of Torrey Pines Road. Formerly owned by an artist associated with the eurythmic dance movement, the house had a 51-ft. living room with unusually high ceilings and a series of eight-foot windows opening onto the Princess Street side.

De Saint Phalle quickly turned the living room into a large working studio. The house filled with art work, her own as well as that of the heady New Realist group she had been associated with in Europe and America--Tinguely, Rauschenburg, Kienholtz and the rest of the gang. Despite her fame as one of the leading revolutionary artists of the Mid-Century and beyond, Niki led a relatively quiet life in La Jolla. One of her favorite pastimes was walking at the beach.

Her granddaughter, Bloum Cardenas, remembers: "She loved the La Jolla Shores beach and walked there every day observing the regulars and visitors. . . watch the surfers, feed the birds. . . She loved the beach full of seals. They appeared in her art."

Within the smaller art world of San Diego and La Jolla, Niki's friends included the late Martha Longnecker, founder and director of the Mingei Museum; Mary Beebe, the founder and director of UCSD's Stuart Collection, who had placed her monumental "Sun God" sculpture on campus in 1983 and Jose Tasende, owner of La Jolla's Tasende Gallery at 820 Prospect St., who assisted in the placement of several of her oversize sculptures -- including a striking interpretation of Louie "Satchmo" Armstrong blowing his trumpet -- on the Wisteria Cottage lawn when the building housed John Cole's Book Store.

Mr. Tasende recently shared these thoughts about Niki with *Timekeeper*:

Martha Longnecker introduced me to Niki. She was already well-known as a great international artist and, of course, did not need my professional help to promote her work. During this time she was obsessed with finishing a group of gigantic sculptures that with great effort she planned to install in Escondido (Queen Califia's

Magical Circle now in Kit Carson Park). While discussing this with me she mentioned earlier she had created another great sculpture garden in Tuscany.

Soon I visited her Tarot Garden near Florence. It is comprised of truly impressive and huge sculptures. During my travels I also came across other gigantic works by Niki displayed in various European cities -- airports, parks, museums. Therefore, I knew it would not be easy to impress Niki with projects, programs or initiative that could further her career. From me, she needed nothing of the kind. She did this for herself.

Nonetheless, I was able to contribute with something she eventually came to appreciate. During that time (1990s), Niki often sold her work to a New York dealer who visited her studio here in La Jolla. She needed to make those sales because the sculpture park in Escondido required considerable financial input from her. During a memorable dinner at a restaurant owned by her friend in La Jolla Shores (Barbara Beltaire of Barbarella), Niki confessed she hated to repeat the same subject over and over again for that dealer. I told her, 'I never reject any work you offer me. Do the same with him. Tell him your dealers need to show the public what you chose. If he wants to purchase the same subject, also make him buy other subjects as well.' She later called to tell me that the suggestion proved successful.

Encouraged, the next day I recommended she cease making editions and only offer variants of each sculpture. 'To offer both confuses your collectors,' I told her, 'who are often time busy people.' After a highly excitable objection, I had to remind her I do not paint nor sculpt, my expertise is only in the business of Art.

It pleased me to see that in the last few months of her life she began using variants in her sculptures and avoiding editions.

I wish my professional contact with Niki was longer and more productive, but, more than anything, I miss her friendship. She was a woman highly determined to achieve her projects which she then generously shared with her innumerable admirers.

La Jolla's MCASD will re-open Spring 2022 after a four-year, \$105 million renovation with an exhibition, "Niki de Saint Phalle in the 1960s," focusing on the artist's early work in Europe decades before she arrived to live the last nine years of

...continued on page 16

Right: De Saint Phalle totems inspired by Native American culture occupied Wisteria's south lawn in 2000. The artist completed them while living in La Jolla and researched ideas for the pieces at D.G. Wills bookstore.

Courtesy of Tasende Gallery



Photography by Aitor Tasende



her life in La Jolla trying to recover from a lung disease believed to have been caused by exposure to chemicals in some of her art work.

While living here on Princess Street – and despite health issues – Niki continued to add to her vast repertoire of international art work primarily in the sculptural medium. She completed Guardian Angel (1996) for the Zurich Train Station, the Noah's Ark installation in Jerusalem (1997-2001) and a collection of prints for the Versailles Press (1995-2001). She also started work in 1999 on what became her only major public project in the United States – Queen Calafia's Magical Circle for Escondido's Kit Carson Park – leaving this legacy, however, to be completed by associates after her death at age 71 in 2002 at Scripps Hospital.

Lita Montiel, Niki's household manager at Princess Street, recalled: "Niki worked every day! She loved to work. There's no Sunday or Wednesday or Monday, only days for creativity. Every day's for creations. And she never complained even if she didn't feel well."

Despite her celebrity status in the art world, Niki preferred to keep a low art profile in La Jolla. She was closer to scientists in general, than other artists, said Bloum, "and she knew some amazing ones – Roger Guillemin, Francis Crick, Dr. U. S, Ramachandran, Andrew Benson. She always loved them and they loved her back. But she appreciated her art anonymity."

As one of the most celebrated contemporary artists in Europe, Niki's life had been filled with gala openings, media events, installation unveilings and public appearances. In La Jolla she lived at a much slower pace meandering around shops and frequenting restaurants such as Tapenade, El Pescadore and the Marine Room when friends visited from abroad. Some of her favorite haunts were bookstores. Dennis Wills, owner of D.G. Wills on upper Girard, recalls Niki browsing his shelves for books on Native American culture of the Northwest when she was researching ideas for the Totem series of oversize sculptures she was working on. She also frequented John Coles and Warwicks and loved poking around clothing stores (where she was always on the look-out for her two signature accessories – scarves and hats). Another favorite was some of La Jolla's small antique shops.

As the compiler of this article, I can readily attest to the latter when, as I was working at a small shop called Leslie's Antiques on Fay Avenue in the early 1990s, Niki made a surprise visit. It was around the Christmas holidays and she bought a basket full of 1940s tree ornaments, later returning to inquire about who had made the shop's lampshades. They were all fashioned out of brightly colored Dupioni silks and decorated with as many fringes, beads and crystals that a small lampshade could possibly hold. I had to confess they were my creations whereupon Niki invited me to Princess Street to make about a dozen for the assorted floor and table lamps she had accumulated for her house. She gave me total carte blanche for the design ideas



Niki de Saint Phalle with her sculpture Buddha at Cole's Bookstore, (now Wisteria Cottage), La Jolla, 1999 © 2021 Niki Charitable Art Foundation, All rights reserved. Photo: © Giulio Pietromarchi

and it ended up being a great deal of fun.

Her granddaughter Bloum laughed when I brought it up. "I still have one of the lampshades, the orange one, and I love it," she said. "I also have the Christmas ornaments. We had so much fun in La Jolla playing Christmas for my son. She really got into it... spying on Santa, although (sometimes) we played it more French. She wanted children to believe in magical stories and prove they could be true."

– Compiled by Carol Olten

Right: a copy of Niki's handwritten explanation of her life journey through illness and a happy ending in La Jolla.

Courtesy of Niki Charitable Art Foundation archive

## DEATH and Resurrection

When Jean Tinguely died I went home to the city where I had been brought up - New York I needed to be alone with my grief.

I walked the city block after block with no destination in mind, clutching my hand bag so it wouldn't be stolen.

When I wasn't roaming the streets, I'd sit by the big bay window overlooking the East River (in the apartment lent me by my first husband Harry Matthews) I'd watch fascinated for hours, the enormous variety of tug boats moving in front of me. The East River became the River Styx. Sometimes I imagined each boat carrying Jean's mortal body in a golden coffin taking him to his new mysterious life. I thought also of all the close young friends who had died over the last few years of Aids.

Being in the city, my city, I started to think about the life around me. The vibrant city life, visually exploding, rushing, ever gives bursting. Other thoughts took hold of me. How the world was fragmenting into racism, religious wars and hates.

Out of this dark journey came light. I had a vision of a painting Exploding, then coming together - REJOINED.

I HAD TO DO IT. I asked the best technicians I knew. They said the idea was too complex, probably impossible. My obsessive stubborn self PERSISTED.

I would NOT GIVE UP, and Eureka!! I found a way - an electrical engineer Juan Carlos Etcheberry and my assistant Marcelo Zibelli helped me to make my vision a reality.

The first tableau éclaté or Bursting painting was of the God Ganesha, a popular Hindu God of good luck, new beginnings and success in overcoming obstacles.

With this work and others that followed I began to reassemble the shattered pieces of my soul and psyche.

My body was another story. I was often dangerously sick. I wandered around, dragging my oxygen tank, trying to get some good weather.

A climate where I could breathe and move without pain. I wandered into Seville and there.

I came in contact with "Vanitas paintings" of the 17th century. These somber fascinating images of death (not devoid of black humour) stuck in my mind



and suited my mood and I began drawing a series of Vanitas tableaux éclatés. I plunged into this world.

I felt doomed and <sup>but sure I</sup> would soon join my numerous friends in the new unknown world waiting for us. The Vanitas reflected how I was feeling with skulls bursting open to reveal the SUN.

I went to see Dr. Saly in New York and told him life wasn't worth living dragging an oxygen bottle around. He advised me to go to San Diego.

It was my LAST CARD. If this didn't work I would join the hemlock society. To Breathe or not to breathe had become the question.

RESURRECTION IN LA JOLLA! Health, joy and curiosity for life came back with a BANG.

I was rejuvenated by the open spaces, the desert, the ocean, leaving my past life, starting over.

New Museo arrived. In my 20's I painted for 8 years without formal training. I had developed a way to paint that allowed me to achieve the effects I wanted. Today I wanted to paint in a new way that I could not achieve on my own. I nearly joined a painting class under an assumed name when my friend Marina Kazella came to the rescue. She became my "professor". She taught me, matting, glazing blending of colors to give the feeling of space and light that has overwhelmed me living in California.

It's never too late to learn! What next? My work has changed. The Vanitas vanished and dream like scenes in the desert and ocean took their places. From a conscious work (the Vanitas) I moved to the land of the unconscious. I intuitively tried to recapture the Mirage like feeling and light that enveloped the sea and desert.

In Southern California I became a sponge, permeable to the sea, mystery, immensity of nature, trees, air, animals, earth, sand, people.

The Vanitas reflected a certain disillusion in the human race. NATURE Restored my faith. I've left the Oxygen bottle behind.

Now I walk, breathe and feel life is Vital once again.

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MAY 13, 2022

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**SNAPS**

On Sunday, December 12th, LHS celebrated the season with the first-ever Holiday Family Hullabaloo! Families gathered on our front lawn to dance and sing along to the foot-stomping sounds of San Diego folk band, Hullabaloo, led by musicians Steve Denyes and Shawn Rohlif. Attendees also created original artwork with a musical twist with artist Xuchi Naungayan Eggleton using colorful, varied materials.

We are immensely grateful to our sponsor, BFree Studio, who made this event possible. Thank you also to the National Charity League whose volunteers assisted at the event and provided delicious cookies for all to enjoy.

– Lauren Lockhart

Photography courtesy Rebecca West.



Jan. 27, Feb. 11 & March 11

**Guided Walking Tours**

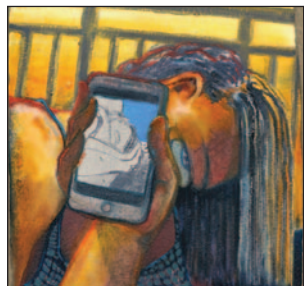
Wisteria Cottage  
3pm



April 22 -24

**Concours d'Elegance Car Show**

Ellen Browning Scripps Park at the Cove



Feb. 5 - May 15

**Memory Traces: Artists Transform the Archive**

Exhibition, Wisteria Cottage Galleries



May 14

**Secret Garden Tour of La Jolla**

(Preceded by Friday Night Candlelight Garden Soirée, May 13, private home)



March 5

**Celebration: Wind 'an Sea Surf Shack 75 Years**

10am



June 4 - September 4

**Voices From the Rez**

Exhibition  
Wisteria Cottage Galleries



March 13

**Landmark Group Gathering & Jewel Award**

Reception  
6126 Avenida Cresta



June 17

**Meet the Artist: Johnny "Bear" Contreras**

Lecture  
Wisteria Cottage Galleries  
6-8pm



March 17

**La Jolla's Cottage Centenarians**

Lecture/Webinar  
Balmer Annex, Wisteria Cottage  
7pm



July 10

**Gordon Johnson: A Reading From His Works**

Reading  
Wisteria Cottage Lawn  
6-8pm



March 19

**Walking/Driving Tour**

La Jolla Cottages  
10am - 3pm



August 21

**A Musical Evening With Tracy Lee Nelson**

Concert  
Wisteria Cottage Lawn  
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# LANDMARKS on the March

Celebrating La Jolla's Cottage Centenaries will be among the historic themes the La Jolla Landmark Group will focus on during a series of events in March honoring work in preservation and recognizing La Jolla's architectural and cultural heritage.

Launching the series will be a Saturday morning event starting March 5 paying tribute to one of La Jolla's most iconic landmarks – the Wind 'an Sea Surf Shack – celebrating its 75th birthday. Representatives of the Friends of Wind 'an Sea and the Wind 'an Sea Surf Club as well as individuals who have worked to preserve and maintain the Shack through the years will gather with the community for festivities at the beach starting at 10 a.m. The Shack was initially constructed in the late 1940s by pioneer surfers and soon became a symbol of Southern California surfing culture. It is on the National Register of Historic Places and was recognized as a historic site by the City of San Diego in 1998.

The second Landmark event will be a reception and award presentation starting at 4 p.m. March 13 held at a historic Lower Hermosa home at 6126 Avenida Cresta designed by architect Cliff May. Participants will gather to present a 2022 Jewel Award for

restoration and rehabilitation of historic homes in La Jolla.

La Jolla's Cottage Centenaries – cottages initially built in the village and along the cliffs during the late 19th and early 20th centuries that now are more than a hundred years old – will be addressed in a lecture and webinar program at 7 p.m. March 17 in Wisteria Cottage's Balmer Annex. Speakers will include the La Jolla Historical Society's historian Carol Olten and architect Matthew Welsh. Olten, owner of a 1908 cottage on Park Row, has written extensively on early La Jolla cottages. Welsh, who has worked on the design and restoration of numerous historic homes including the Dr. Martha Dunn Corey House in Heritage Place, will discuss one of his latest projects – moving a small historic house to his architectural complex on Silverado Street from an adjacent village location.

Concluding the Landmark March events will be an all-day self-guided walking or driving tour based on the Society's map and brochure on cottages of La Jolla. It will be held March 19. Anyone wishing to participate may pick up brochures at Wisteria Cottage, 780 Prospect St., or at the Society's office, 7846 Eads Ave.

...continued from page 7

Muirlands, Upper and Lower Hermosa, the Barber Tract and La Jolla Shores would not happen until the 1920s. Finally, attempts to promote the project as an "Atlantic City of the Pacific Coast" and "Coney Island of the West" may have helped kill it – the La Jolla Village Improvement Society founded in 1895 to preserve the natural beauties of the coastline, may not have liked the idea of boardwalks, a pier and an arcade with vendors hawking circus-like curiosities.

But what inevitably ended La Jolla Strand's development as a major subdivision was Curtis' back account running low and his investors either disappearing or wanting their money out. He tried numerous "fire" sales of the lots, often advertising sizeable price reductions with fashionable graphics on full pages of the metropolitan newspapers, but without success. (One, in particular, stands out for its depiction of The Strand as a lovely paradise by the sea with easy proximity, via a small trolley, to "work in the city" – San Diego – and "live at The Strand" – La Jolla at the edge of the great Pacific; it ran in Feb. 18, 1912, in The San Diego Union and Daily Bee, although by that time Curtis appeared to already be plotting his disappearance from the area to start other business ventures in Northern California.)

Remaining today are a few scarce remnants of Curtis' Strand including evidence of footings drilled into beach rock between Kolmar and Rosemont streets for the ocean pier along with old newspaper clippings about people strolling on the actual structure. There are no

known photographs of the pier, however, or of the 1,000-ft. board walk reported to have been built along what is now Neptune Place. A photograph, along with descriptive copy, exists of a house built as part of the Strand subdivision by Orlando Giannini, a ceramicist, glass artist and mural painter once employed by Frank Lloyd Wright who came to La Jolla to live in 1907 and had multiple addresses in the neighborhood. His home in the photograph was built at the top of Playa del Sur on the east side of La Jolla Blvd. but was demolished many years ago. The site of the La Jolla Strand (aka Wind 'an Sea) Hotel at Neptune and Playa del Sur is now a large condominium building known as One Neptune Place.

Curtis' prediction that Strand real estate where lots were once for sale for a few hundred dollars would one-day be worth millions came true. First, there are no more lots for sale unless a building on it is demolished. Secondly, a relatively small single family home with proximity to the ocean in the present-day sells for about \$2.6 million. Waterman Woody Brown rode the first surfboard at the Wind 'an Sea beach in 1936 initiating the beginning of the area's fame as a world famous surf spot and the addition decades later of the Surf Shack to the National Register of Historic Places.

For better or worse, Curtis' "Atlantic City" in La Jolla stayed in. . . New Jersey!



Funding has been provided by California Humanities and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) as part of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.



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# ❖ CODA ❖



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ary Lou Daves, left, wife of Hollywood director and screenwriter Delmer Daves, who lived in La Jolla, models a fancy hat at a beach club luncheon in 1947.

Right: Photographer Charles Schneider recorded this group of Ladies who Lunched at the beach club, c 1950.

Below: Julie Fleet, left, and Ruth Stoefer attired for beach club lunch in 1946.



## *Ladies Who Lunched*

In the pre-feminist era of post-World War II – decades before “Ladies Who Lunch” became a satirical look at upper-class women who sputtered their lives away at lunch with their peers at chi-chi restaurants in a Stephen Sondheim musical called “Company”, later, in comedy skits on “Saturday Night Live” and, still later, in a movie with Meryl Streep – groups of a similar persuasion were donning proper hats and white gloves for lunch in La Jolla, frequently held at the La Jolla Beach and Tennis Club. The luncheons were sometimes fund-raisers for causes such as the Red Cross, but more often social gatherings precluding events such as the Charity Ball, an orchid show or a garden party. Sometimes they were a cause for a fashion show. And sometimes simply a cause to dress up and wear a hat. From the archives, Timekeeper presents a selection of photographs of La Jolla’s “Ladies Who Lunched.”



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