



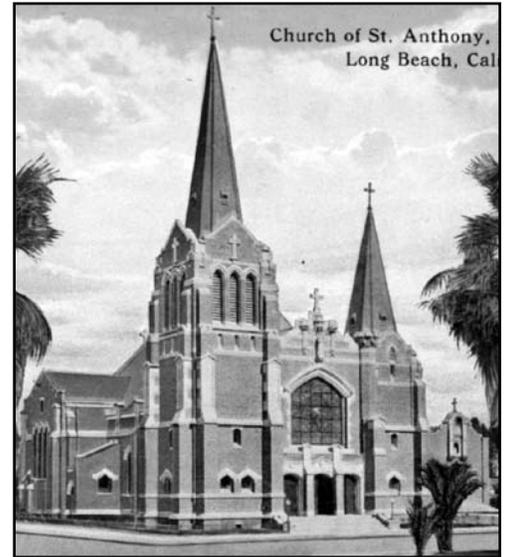
Saint Anthony's Church in Early Long Beach

By Louise Ivers

The first religious structure in Long Beach was the Methodist Tabernacle of 1885 where camp meetings were held, but in the early years of the twentieth century numerous churches were constructed in the city, whose inhabitants became known for their piety and temperance. All of these turn of the century buildings, except the Methodist Church of 1899 designed by Henry Starbuck and Saint Anthony's Catholic Church of 1902-03, have been demolished. Both of these edifices have been moved from their original sites and only St Anthony's still retains its original aspect. Relocated to 1851 Cerritos Avenue some time after 1914, it was renamed Our Lady of Refuge when it served as a mission in a Hispanic neighborhood. More recently it became the Mount Carmel Cambodian Center, reflecting a change in the demographics of the area.

In 1899 Bishop Montgomery attended the annual Southern California Catholic picnic, which was held in Long Beach that year, and urged the founding of a church here. At that time Catholics had to make an time consuming journey to Wilmington to attend mass on Sundays. Soon after the bishop's visit a group of prominent Long Beach citizens formed a building committee and purchased land at the corner of Sixth Street and Olive Avenue.

Ground was broken on 15 September 1902 and on 19 October Bishop Montgomery laid the cornerstone of the first Saint Anthony's Church. [Los Angeles Times, 20 October 1902, 13] On 19 July 1903 Bishop Conaty dedicated the building and celebrated mass in the midst of "banks of floral greenery" in the newly decorated interior. [Los Angeles Times, 20 July 1903, 9] According to the Fortieth Anniversary brochure of Saint Anthony's Parish, Capt. J. M. Morris and D. J. Driskill were the cement masons, Mr. Kelly was the carpenter, and A. R. Marsom was the painter. These individuals were church members who donated their expertise to the construction effort. The Los Angeles Times described the church as "modern style, and seats about 300 persons. The choir loft at the rear of the building will seat about 150. In the south end is a stained glass



Left: First St. Anthony Church, 1902-03

Photo by Louise Ivers

Right: Frank T. Kegley, St Anthony Roman Catholic Church, 1913-14.

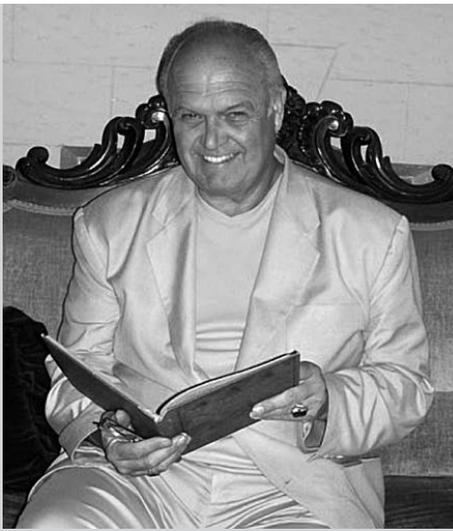
window, of oval shape, which cost \$200, and is the gift of H. C. Dillon. In the other end of the church is a similar window, put in at about the same cost by the people of the parish." These windows are still in the structure today and portray Saint Anthony with Christ and the Virgin Mary.

The "modern style" referred to by the Times was the popular Mission mode, which was loosely based on the Spanish missions of California. Saint Anthony's was constructed with a wood frame and clapboard siding, however, which was unusual for buildings of this type which generally had stucco walls. A curved and stepped parapet at the top of the structure held a bell pulled by a rope, which is still extant. The exterior of the small church remains intact, except for the corner pilasters, which are now stuccoed. After the building was moved to Cerritos Avenue, the predominantly Mexican-American congregation placed stained glass scenes of the miracle of the Virgin of Guadalupe in the three arched windows on the sides of the building. The interior of the first Saint Anthony's has been freshly painted with peach walls and brown details, purportedly the original colors. The oak altar in the apse is flanked by niches with modern statues of Mary and Joseph and a

wooden staircase winds around the 1903 confessional.

A Mission Style rectory was built in 1904 at Sixth Street and Olive Avenue next to the church and this structure was moved to Lime Avenue around the time of the construction of the second Saint Anthony's. Between 1903 and 1907 Father Ramon Ferrer was the priest at the Long Beach parish and he moved into the rectory as soon as it was finished. However, he also journeyed by Pacific Electric car to celebrate mass in Compton every Sunday, so services in Long Beach were held at irregular hours. Father James A. Reardon was appointed parish priest at Saint Anthony's in 1907 and he remained in this post until 1922.

During Father Reardon's tenure in Long Beach he oversaw the construction of a school and a larger, more imposing church. On 19 October 1913 Bishop Conaty "laid the cornerstone of the new St. Anthony's commodious and handsome brick edifice, when completed and furnished will have cost \$50,000." [Los Angeles Times, 20 October 1913, 116] Frank T. Kegley was the Kirk was the contractor for the building on the site at Sixth Street and



By Stanley Poe

It is the beginning of a new year for Long Beach Heritage, and I have returned to the position of president once again. The last time I was president historic preservation in the city seemed to be progressing in a positive way. This time, however, the outlook is not quite as rosy. Projects that were begun with great promise have fallen flat. The most obvious of these is the Press-Telegram Lofts, which includes the Meeker-Baker building. Vandals have entered the buildings and I have yet to see an alternative plan.

A situation that is somewhat disturbing to me is that there are a large number of homes, both single family houses and units in historic condominiums, that are in foreclosure. Often financial institu-

Message from the President

Please encourage anyone who cares about the future of our historic and cultural resources to join us.

tions send in their crews who are armed with spray guns and instant kitchen and bath remodeling kits and destroy previous preservation efforts in order to sell these properties. I was in an historic home recently where the clawfoot bathtubs and door hardware were ripped out and sold. The future of the American Hotel is also of grave concern to Long Beach Heritage. Proposals for adaptively reusing the building have been submitted, but these do not replicate the original façade as it appeared in 1905. I sincerely hope this historic monument will not become another victim of the economy.

On the brighter side, the Art Theater has been restored beautifully. Many people have restored their homes and beautified their property. The number of historic homes that have been repainted in period appropriate colors is astounding. This activity has even been going on in areas that are not designated historic districts, and it is reflective of the growing appreciation that people have for their classic homes.

I recently attended a Mass in the original St. Anthony's Church located at 1851

Cerritos Avenue. The structure was built in 1902-03 and was restored this year to its original appearance. It was moved around 1920 to the present location from 6th Street and Olive Avenue and is now called Mount Carmel Cambodian Mission. It is open every Tuesday evening at 6:30 p.m. for prayers and once a month for Mass and is certainly worth visiting.

I am still volunteering as a historic preservation consultant in the Long Beach Department of Development Services. The Cultural Heritage Commission has also been meeting for over a year and is granting or denying Certificates of Appropriateness. The CHC currently meets monthly in the Council Chambers and many of its members are preservation professionals.

Unfortunately some previous Long Beach Heritage members did not renew this year. Please encourage anyone who cares about the future of our historic and cultural resources to join us. We have a full calendar of events planned that should be fun, interesting, and informative. Remember, preservation is everybody's business.

First Casa Alegre, then off to the Hollywood Bowl

On August 14 a busload of Long Beach Heritage members and their guests made their annual pilgrimage to the Casa Alegre and the Hollywood Bowl. Our thoughtful hosts at Casa Alegre, Rick Hobbs and Brad Seeley, provided a delicious dinner of Cajun style food which we ate before we attended the Harry Connick, Jr. concert at the Bowl. Since our last visit to the Casa, Rick and Brad completed the stunning additions to the house, a Spanish Revival style hacienda built in 1924 for Dr. Russell Best. Brad has lived there since 1983 and Rick moved into the house in 1991. They began restoration, renovation, and additions to the Casa in 1997 and finally completed them in 2009, adding two levels to the building which climbs up

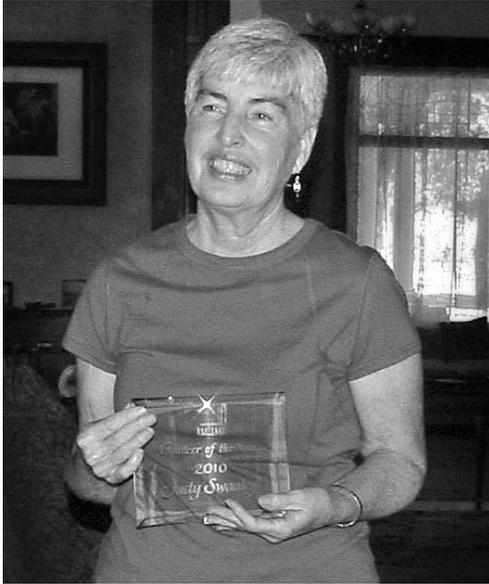


Long Beach Heritage members at Casa Alegre.

a Hollywood hillside. Brad actually did all of the spectacular tile work himself using hand made tiles from Mexico and Italy. As

always, we had a wonderful evening on the twelfth anniversary of our Hollywood Bowl event.

Judy Swaaley: LBH 2010 Volunteer of the Year



By Karen Clements

Erma Bombeck reminds us that –

"Volunteers are the only beings...who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience and just plain loving one another."

Our volunteer of the Year for 2010, Judy Swaaley, began donating her time and talent when asked if she would like to help at the Bembridge Homesite. She came with gloves and began working in the garden, then she helped with the Archives and has been coming every week ever since. This was more than two years ago.

Next Judy took the Bembridge docent

training and joined the docent team. This past year she worked on the silent auction at the Annual Awards Benefit and she will increase her responsibilities in 2011. Judy also joined the Bembridge House committee a year ago. She helped move the furniture, books and thousands of other items for the floor-refinishing project at the Bembridge Homesite. She was there for the May Day and Christmas events, the recent Quilters Convention tour, and the list goes on.

The 2010 Long Beach Heritage Volunteer of the Year Award is our way of expressing our great appreciation to Judy Swaaley because she is a beautiful and helpful person. Thank you from all of us, and especially from me.

LEFT: Judy Swaaley receives the 2010 Volunteer of the Year Award.

What's up at The Bembridge Heritage Homesite

By Charlotte Mitchell

The Bembridge House was a busy place during the month of July. 140 third grade students from Lafayette School took public transportation to the Homesite for tours given by our docents on three different days. This was quite an undertaking for the students, teachers, and docents, but all went well, and next year's third grade class will visit as well.

Later in July a group of 54 people from all over the United States who were attending the Quilters Convention in Long Beach came to see the house and the numerous quilts we displayed for their enjoyment. They learned about the history of these quilts and some of them actually gave us new information about our pieces.

Although Christmas is three months away, the members of the Bembridge committee are already planning another special Victorian Christmas event. Please mark the date, December 5, 2010, on your calendar now so you won't miss the festive decorations provided by many Long Beach historic districts, a visit by Santa Claus, and crafts for the children.

We are working on obtaining grants for landscaping and much needed work inside the Bembridge House, but we need

Bembridge Quilt



The pictured quilt, "Doves in the Window" was identified by one of the experts attending our tour. This was one of several family quilts on loan made over 100 years ago in Kansas. We also learned that the brown fabric seen in some of these quilts was originally green but the green is a "fugitive" color which converts to brown after washing. A Bembridge piece called "Mariners Compass," which was recently fully quilted by our volunteers, contains fabrics from the Civil War, including some taken from men's shirts as well as "conversation fabrics," which have images of horns and other recognizable items for discussion.

more volunteers, especially for grant writing. The garden committee has done a great job transforming the site with appropriate flowers and shrubs this sum-

mer. Last but not least, many thanks go to Kathryn Gregory and Maeva Aline who generously donated two chairs apiece to our Bembridge fund.

William Andrews Clark Memorial Library University of California, Los Angeles

This article is reprinted with permission from the West Adams Heritage Newsletter.

The William Andrews Clark Memorial Library at 2520 Cimarron St., L.A. is one of UCLA's major libraries for rare books and manuscripts, with particular strengths in English literature and history (1641-1800), Oscar Wilde, and fine printing. It is located thirteen miles east of campus (about a half-hour drive), in the West Adams District of Los Angeles north of USC. It is administered by UCLA's Center for 17th & 18th Century Studies and provides a

forum for discussion of central issues concerning these studies. It provides resident fellowships and scholarships to support research in early modern studies and other areas central to the Clark's collections. In addition it offers a variety of public programs, including chamber music concerts.

The interior of the library is extremely impressive. Designed by Richard Farquhar in 1924, it rivals any 18th century pavilion in England. The two story entry hall has a hand painted, vaulted ceiling deco-

rated in the style of the Sistine Chapel. The hall is flanked by two library spaces with bronze bookcases and shutters. The rear of the library contains a two story chamber finished in carved oak and monumental paintings of Cleopatra and Mark Anthony. The chamber is used for musicales.

The library and its collections were founded by William Andrews Clark, Jr., and named after his father, who had built a mining fortune in Montana. The son, a prominent

See Library page 5

Continued from page 1: St. Anthony Church

Olive Avenue. Both were headquartered in Los Angeles. The congregation had experienced tremendous growth since the first church was built. On 27 July 1913 the Los Angeles Times published a drawing of the new Saint Anthony's, accompanied by an article which described it as "Gothic design...." The new structure had twice as many seats as the old one, as well as two steeples of differing heights.

On 24 October 1914 an image of Eugene Alker carving an ornate Gothic Revival bishop's throne for Saint Anthony's appeared in the Times. It had a cross at the top formed by olive branches and a cross, a heart, and an anchor on each side symbolizing the cardinal virtues, faith, hope, and charity. Three doves, emblems of peace, completed the composition. Portions of the beech wood throne were highlighted with gold leaf. A costly white Carrara marble altar with onyx columns, imported from Italy, was placed in the apse of the new church. It had Gothic Revival tracery as well. Dedicated on Thanksgiving in 1914, the exterior of the second Saint Anthony's had brick walls and stone trim articulating pointed arches and other details. In 1915 a bell weighing about 1,000 pounds and costing \$75,000 was lifted up into the taller tower. [Los Angeles Times, 15 March 1915, 117]

The devastating earthquake that hit Long Beach on 10 March 1933 left the second Saint Anthony's in ruins. Two days later the Press-Telegram reported that "it is a complete wreck." Not only did the brick masonry walls crumble, but the beautiful marble altarpiece crashed to the floor. Undaunted, Bishop J. J. Cantwell and Father Robert E. Lucey, pastor of Saint An-



LEFT: Interior of St. Anthony's after the 1933 earthquake.

RIGHT: Newton and Murray, Third St. Anthony Church 1933-34

thony's, soon commissioned Henry Carlton Newton and Robert Dennis Murray of Los Angeles to draw plans for a new church and school. [Los Angeles Times, 20 March 1933] However, Emmet Martin and Lawrence Waller designed the final version of the third Saint Anthony's. The cornerstone was laid on 10 December 1933 and the building was dedicated on 4 February 1934. Constructed in a simplified Gothic Revival style with a rose window, the new church had a steel frame to minimize future earthquake damage. The plain façade was replaced in 1954 by glittering red, blue, and gold mosaic panels crafted in Italy. The Assumption of the Virgin was portrayed in the large gable with contemporary figures at her feet. These included Bishop John J. Cantwell, Pope Pius XII, Cardinal Francis J. McIntyre, Bishop Joseph T. McGucken, and Bishop Timothy Manning. Twelve smaller mosaic

panels portray the patron saints of the Long Beach parish churches. Both the exterior and interior of Saint Anthony's were also remodeled in 1953-54. Two 80 foot tall towers were constructed and marble elements were added in the vestibule and sanctuary. [Press-telegram, 19 September 1954, B1]

It is very fortunate that the first Saint Anthony's church has been preserved and restored. Although it is of modest size, its importance in the history of Long Beach cannot be understated. It is one of the oldest remaining buildings in our city and it is still being used for its original purpose. Not only is the structure intact, but the stained glass windows have survived in their original positions. The building was a labor of love and faith literally constructed by its congregation. Hopefully it will be around for another hundred years.

Continued from page 4: Library

Los Angeles book collector and philanthropist, had a house at the corner of Adams Blvd. and Cimarron Street, and from 1924 to 1926 he constructed the present library on the same lot. Shortly afterwards he announced his intention to donate the collection, the buildings, and the property to UCLA. When he died in 1934 the deed passed to the University.

It is open to readers Mon. through Fri. from 9:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Call 323-731-8529. This historic site is definitely worth a visit.

RIGHT: William Andrews Clark Memorial Library at University of California, Los Angeles



Membership Report — September 2010

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Incoming president Stanley Poe speaking at the Long Beach Heritage Annual Meeting held in the historic Wilmore Building. Photo by Chris Luani

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CALENDAR

- Sept 27** LBH Board
- Oct 25** LBH Executive
Committee
- Nov 12** Loft Walk -
postponed to March
- Nov 22** LBH Board
- Dec 5** Victorian Christmas at
Bembridge
- Feb 17** LBH Awards Benefit
- June 5** Great Homes

Long Beach Heritage

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LBH Membership

Long Beach Heritage is a non-profit education and advocacy group promoting public knowledge and preservation of significant historic and architectural resources, neighborhoods and the cultural heritage of Long Beach. Dues are due on May 1st each year.

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