LONG BEACH HERITAGE

Volume 17, No 3 Summer 2007

Introducing Long Beach Heritage's Exciting and Informative Website

As a result of the great work of Kerrie Aley, our tireless new Webmaster, the website of Long Beach Heritage has been transformed.

It offers information about Heritage meetings, events, initiatives and position statements as well as Long Beach's historical past. Please take a look at the new website and check it periodically to find out about events, developments and notifications between newsletters.

Our website is in the process of being linked to the Long Beach Convention and Visitors Bureau website, which will provide Heritage with even greater exposure regarding events, initiatives and the like.

The website can be accessed online at www.lbheritage.org. Take a look. We guarantee you'll be impressed!

Membership Renewal

If, like me, you are annoyed by the recent raise in postage rates, you may be acutely aware of how much "mail money" you are spending each month. It's a particular issue for volunteer organizations such as ours, and the membership mailing is a good example of that. We know how those envelopes tend to work their way to the bottom of the mail pile, and then get put off until the next month. You can help us save a few pennies if you will send in your renewal now, before we need to mail out all those reminder notices. Actually, that mounts up to quite a lot of pennies.

Share Local History

The *Signal Tribune Newspaper* wants to borrow historical photos for their "Reminiscing" feature. Share your photographs with over 25,000 readers in the Long Beach neighborhoods of Bixby Knolls, California Heights, Los Cerritos, Wrigley Heights and the City of Signal Hill.

For more information call (562) 427-8678 or send an email to newspaper@signaltribune.com.

Photo credit will be provided.

Save The Date!

Long Beach Heritage Annual Meeting Will Be Held at Gaytonia Apartments July 22 from 2:00 to 4:00

Entrance to the Gaytonia. *Photo by Louise Ivers*

History of the Gaytonia and its architect

Located at 212 Quincy Avenue in Long Beach, the Gaytonia resembles a large French chateau in Normandy, complete with hipped roofs and turrets sporting conical caps. Quoins, half-timbering, pointed arched windows, and a projecting third story supported by elaborate brackets enliven the design. A huge neon sign atop the roof proudly proclaims the name of the building and can be seen from afar when lit at night.

The architect of this Norman Revival structure was Reginald F. Inwood and the builder was George L. Gayton, who was the owner and named it after himself.

The Gaytonia cost about $100,000, had 27 apartments which were originally furnished, and provided maid service and other amenities for the residents. It had a heated swimming pool, sunbathing terraces, gymnasiums, an on-site laundry, and an underground garage. Many Navy officers stationed in Long Beach during the 1940s and 1950s lived there.

Members of Long Beach Heritage who attend the meeting on July 22 will tour the Gaytonia after the installation of the new Board for 2007-08.

Reginald F. Inwood lived at 5659 Bayfront in 1930 and he also designed the Belmont Shore Theater on East 2nd Street in 1928-29. George Gayton was the contractor for this theater, which was owned by the Woodworth brothers. This unfortunately remodeled building was originally a striking Art Deco movie house with geometric ornamentation and a turquoise façade. The interior had murals featuring a waterfall: the Roman goddess of the hunt, Diana; a snake charmer; and numerous exotic birds. This theater and the Gaytonia are the architect's most well known structures in Long Beach.

Inwood had another office in Laguna Beach, where he was commissioned to design an addition to the Community Presbyterian Church in 1937. He also built the First Methodist Church in Inglewood in 1941, which had Spanish Colonial Revival motifs, and the Chapel of St. John at the Valley Methodist Church in Canoga Park, which was completed in 1959 in a modern style.

Message from the President

Recently a fire occurred in a landmark building, the Galaxy, on Ocean Blvd. in Long Beach, CA. For some unknown reason, one of the occupants of this building, who had escaped the fire, returned to the apartment where he needlessly lost his life. Subsequently there has been a hue and cry by politicians to require sprinkler systems in all apartment buildings. The intention is a good one, but let us hope that it is approached in a rational manner and not simply the knee-jerk reaction to a fire victim's unfortunate choice.

As a historian and preservationist, I initially took the stance that the outcome would be to force the owners of every historic apartment house into a chaotic situation which would destroy the original fabric of the buildings. I have since reformulated my opinion based on a comment I read stating that if a fire starts, sprinklers can be your first line of defense. A system can be costly and can disrupt the fabric of the interior, but if a fire occurs, there may not be any fabric left. I thought that this was an excellent point as I reviewed my stack of Preservation magazines and noted that most historic structures mentioned in each issue were lost due to fire and not the notorious "march of progress."

Without a thorough investigation of the alternatives to the costly sprinkler system, which in fact could force condo owners to lose their homes as a result of overwhelming assessments, there are a number of alternatives which are affordable and can be almost as effective. Recommendations include upgrades such as a hard-wired, central-station fire detection system. An electrician can check panels, circuitry, outlets, and fixtures, and correct hazards. Moving out storage items and enclosing mechanical systems with fire-rated partitions reduce other risks at reasonable cost.

Acknowledging a building's own strengths and offsetting its weaknesses, rather than simply forcing the owner to meet stated mandatory requirements, is the intelligent approach to fire protection. Using computers, fire protection engineers can predict the growth of blazes, as well as study ways to improve a building's overall fire resistance. They can look at how each structure performs as a self-contained system.

Pursuing regulations better suited to historic buildings, city engineers are now creating performance based fire codes. An engineer, working with a property owner, can determine the specific safety features that suffice in protecting the structure. Risk indexing offers a similar strategy without the cost of an engineer. A risk index assigns values to a building's protective features and sets performance goals. When a building scores high enough, it meets the code.

In terms of fire, preservation is a "catch-22" situation: A structure is most likely to burn during and immediately after rehabilitation since opening up walls, floors, and ceilings reduces its fire resistance. At the same time, more hazards are introduced such as tools, equipment, and heat producing appliances. Additionally, a building under construction offers a plethora of combustible materials: solvents, finishes, paint remover, sawdust, adhesives, and the ever-evil oily rags, which deserve their bad reputation. In May during a rehabilitation, the public library in the Georgetown section of Washington, D.C. was consumed by flames, which resulted in the destruction of innumerable treasures of our nation's history.

There is no argument that fire is a terrible threat to both life and property, but any approaches to improve our fire codes and the issues of safety need to be considered rationally and intelligently.

—Stan Poe

Nomination Slate 2007-2008

The following slate of officers will be presented for election at Annual Meeting: Starred (*) positions are voting Board members and require Board attendance. Anyone interested in open positions should contact John Thomas

President * ..... Stan Poe
President Elect * ..... John Thomas
Secretary * ..... Laura O'Connor
Treasurer * ..... Cheryl Perry

VP Education * ..... Diane Jordan

Walking Tours * ..... (open)
Special Activities * ..... (open)
General Meetings * ..... (open)

VP Bembridge House * Charlotte Mitchell

VP Advocacy * ..... John Thomas
Advocacy Coordinator * ..... David Waller
City Council Liaison..... John Thomas
Planning Commission Liaison... Jonathan Glasgow
Redevelopment Liaison ..... David Waller
Cultural Heritage Liaison..... Stan Poe
Cultural Arts Liaison..... Eve Kilger
Neighborhood Outreach..... Catherine Morley

VP Public Awareness * ..... Melinda Roney
Public Relations * ..... (open)
Newsletter Editor * ..... Louise Ivers
Web Master * ..... Kerrie Aley
Mailing Chair * ..... Gary Roderick
Photographer ..... Chris Launi
Historian ..... Christina Yanis

VP Membership Development * ..... David Waller
Advisors * ..... Maureen Neeley
Board Development * ..... John Thomas & Stan Poe
Membership * ..... Kate Braid
Volunteers/Docents * ..... Bobbi Burket

VP Fund Development * ..... Kate Braid
Awards Benefit ..... Patty Moore
Awards Jury ..... (open)
Great Homes Tour..... Mary Lou Martin
Loft Tour ..... Jill Aversa
Hollywood Bowl..... Sandra DeDubovay

Advocacy Update

By John Thomas

As a part of the General Plan update known as "Long Beach 2030", the city has begun the outreach for the Historic Preservation Element (HPE). The current General Plan does not contain a HPE and its absence has proven to be problematic for ensuring adequate reviews and protections for our historic and cultural resources. The LBH Advocacy Committee will play a strategic role in the out reach and stakeholder information process. We have been a proponent for the HPE for many years and with the support of the current city officials, the process of developing the HPE is underway!

The following are the goals for discussions for the Historic Preservation Element this year.

Goal 1: Develop/implement a comprehensive, citywide historic preservation program.

Historic preservation should be integrated in all aspects of city government, with special attention devoted to coordination between departments responsible for building and safety, planning, redeployment and economic development. By adopting a complreshenive, citywide historic preservation program, the city will put the necessary mechanisms in place to protect the historic resources and preserve a unique sense of place.

Goal 2: Identify and evaluate historic resources on a regular basis.

A current inventory of historic resources is essential to historic preservation planning. Collecting and maintaining accurate information for properties in the City that may be considered historic and for those that have been designated as landmarks or contributors to historic districts allows staff and the public to make informed, supportive decisions about historic resources and land use. The inventory is especially useful for the Cultural Heritage Commission, Planning Commission and the City Council, who all rely on such information in deciding historic designations. The inventory is also very useful to proerty owners, developers and local residents in that it provided information on potential historic landmarks and lends predictability to the development and/or rehabilitation process.

Goal 3: Increase public awareness of the city's history and historic preservation.

A critical part of any historic preservation program is public education that facilitates public awareness of the city's history and historic preservation by providing information, encouraging community participation in decision-making efforts, partnering with local historic and preservation groups and encouraging heritage education programs.

Goal 4: Protect historic resources from demolition and inappropriate alterations.

By establishing procedures that allow for landmark designations and discouraging inappropriate alterations and demolition of historic resources, the city can safeguard its historic built environment. The city is also responsible for complying with federal and state regulations, including Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Goal 5: Promote preservation of historic resources through incentives.

Incentives and technical assistance programs aid owners, developers and others in the preservation of historic resources. Financial incentives at the federal, state and local levels can make a difference in the development process, which encourages preservation. Incentives also facilitate in the implementation of rehabilitation techniques that may be unfamiliar, labor intensive or perceived to be more costly. Incentives reward good stewardship of historic resources.

Goal 6: Integrate historic preservation into economic development strategies.

Commercial redevelopment, new housing construction, tourism promotion and business improvement strategies should be integrated with historic preservation to create a cohesive and holistic approach to land use planning and community economic development. Protecting and preserving historic resources encourages community pride, stimulates investment and maintains quality of life and neighborhood character.

The Long Beach Heritage Advocacy Committee applauds the efforts of the city and will support at all levels the realization and implementation of the goals listed above. We look forward to working with city staff as part of the outreach and community information process. Please monitor both the LBH web site and the City web site for upcoming public information outreach sessions and participate with your thoughts and ideas to support proactive historic preservation through the Historic Preservation Element!

Membership Report June 2007

Benefactor
Joseph Prevratil
& Howard Bell -
RMS Queen Mary

Sustainer
The Ackerman Family

Sponsors
Kenneth Walker – F&M Bank

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Mike & Andrea Burrous
Kathleen Bursley
Laura Killingsworth
Jan & Michael Leight
Mary Lou Martin & Chris Byrne
Patty Moore & Jean Shapen
Marsha Naify
Melinda Roney
& Walter Wojak

Contributors
Betty Chaney
Vicki & James Cunningham
Dawna & Gary DeLong
Layne Johnson
Maureen Neeley
Meg O'Toole
Dan & Peggy Peterson
Jenny & David Shlemmer

Preservationist
Sarah & Craid Arnold
Rosemary & Don Ashley
Carol Bellmaine
Barry & Kathy Blodgett
Lynn Brandt
Michelle Bridges
Karen & Dick Clements
Gloria Raven & Dick Coleman
Matthew & Carol Craig
CJ & Dave Crockett
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Robert Scherzinger
Judy & Paul Schmidt
Richard & Iris Schutz
Pamela Seager
Renee Simon
Mary Sullivan & John Sanders
Betty Sunofsky
Marlene & Con Temple
John Thomas
Joan & Joseph Van Hooten
Christina Yanis

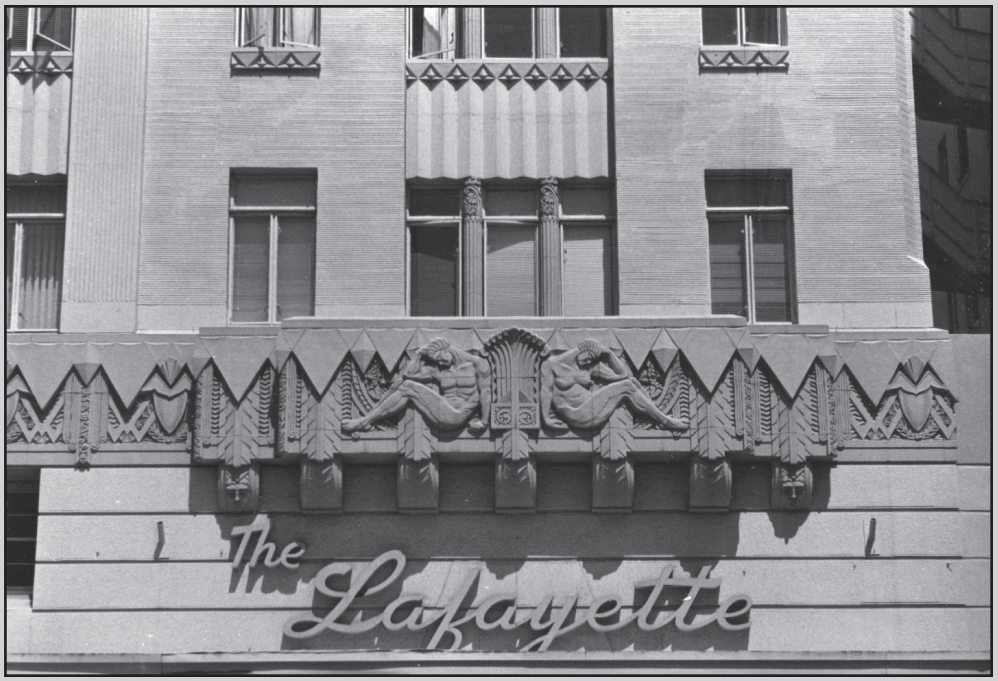
Discover Art Deco Long Beach!

Join noted Art Deco expert, author and Long Beach Heritage Vice President John Thomas on a walking tour of Downtown Long Beach and receive a signed, complementary copy of his book, Long Beach Art Deco.

Downtown Long Beach is rich with many buildings of the Art Deco or Streamline Moderne style from the 1920s and 1930s! The tour will examine wonderful examples of architecture and design and discuss how they were influenced by world-wide events. Art Deco design styling includes cast art stone reliefs, geometric designs, metal motifs, etched glass, and streamlined curves.

Downtown Long Beach will never look the same to you again!

In addition to the walking tour, photos of original buildings destroyed over the years will be available to give attendees a sense of the wonderful Art Deco era of historic downtown Long Beach. Long Beach was a premier ocean resort that catered to tourists during the "roaring twenties" and the upcoming tour will introduce the audience to some of the marvelous structures that still remain in the "Queen City."



Lafayette Hotel. *Photo by Louise Ivers*

Join us for this fabulous event!

Date: Saturday August 11, 2007

Times: 10:00 am and Noon

Cost: $50

Please call the office for reservations.

An Afternoon at Bembridge House

By Bobbi Burket

I want to take a minute to tell you about my afternoon at Bembridge House today. I had assembled four friends to help me get the mailing out to the 90 volunteers for the Great Homes tour.

We gathered in the work room (former kitchen) while two women coordinated at the large dining table, meticulously reconstructing one of Dorothy's old quilts. Karen got help with a computer program in our room, Iris scurried from one task to another and conferred with the plumber, and Gary concentrated on fixing things.

The house was still flower-bedecked in the wake of the very successful music concert Friday evening, and people munched left-overs from last night's board meeting. Marilyn Cragin composed a thank-you note to Friday's young musicians.

Some of the conversation was about the hordes of people who participated in the recent May Day activities at the house and in the park—particularly the many children who delighted in touring the home.

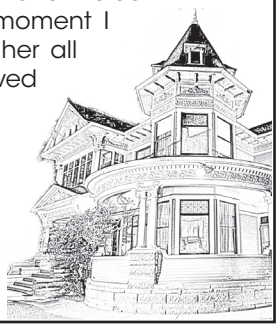
We finished our project and my friends left, but my car was trapped in the long driveway by someone's van, so I sat in the parlor for a few minutes to enjoy the afternoon sun.

Mary Kay was in the next room signing papers for the new security system, and Jill Anne and Iris conducted a tour for a small group of women. Their laughter drifted down from upstairs, usually a sign that they had reached one of the bathrooms; those Spartan accommodations usually occasion either merriment or gasps of horror.

It seemed to me that the only thing missing was the sound of a child practicing scales on the piano.

If I could have channeled Dorothy at that moment I would have told her all this. They have saved her house and given it a brilliant new life.

I can only imagine her pleasure in the news.



Other Happenings

July 14

Celebration on the Colorado Street Bridge. 6:00-11:00.

Pasadena Heritage. For information call 626-441-6333.

July 21

Trees – Pillars of the Garden by Paul Comstock 10:00-1:00. $20.

Rancho Los Alamitos. For reservations call 562-431-3541.

July 29

Living History Tours 1:00 – 4:00.

Rancho Los Cerritos. For information call 562-570-1755.

August 1-29

Evening Walking Tours. Los Angeles Conservancy.

Many other walking tours are also offered. For information call 213-623-2489.

August 19

Mud Mania – A Celebration of Adobe! 12:30 – 4:30.

Rancho Los Cerritos. For information call 562-570-1755.

What's Up at the Bembridge Heritage Homesite

May Day Event

Living history tours that focused on the year 1932 were given to over 350 adults and children. The attendees loved the experience and were very interested in the history of the house and what was going on in the city and country at this time. The event was so successful that at the evaluation meeting all agreed to do a similar event next year and feature 1933, the year of the Long Beach Earthquake. Among the many activities taking place that day were giving books away to the children, story telling time with an author who read her books to the children, dancing around a May Pole, a health fair, face painting, and free hot dogs. Many thanks to Karen Clements and her wonderful committee.

We were very fortunate to have the living tour taped. This DVD was shown in the carriage house to four different people in wheelchairs and they said it was just like being in the house. The carriage house is now ADA accessible, but we need a donation of a DVD player and TV in order to continue this program.

May Day at the Bembridge House.
Photos by Christina Yanis

Celebrating 100 Years of Music at the Historic Bembridge House

Outstanding music students from Long Beach Polytechnic High School under the direction of Andrew Osman presented a wonderful program. About 50 people attended and were amazed by the talent of these young people. After the music, there was a reception with tasty sweets for all to enjoy and time for friendly conversation. About $2,000 was raised for the piano fund. Our thanks to Marilyn Cragin for her hard work.

More Great News...

The Naval Trust awarded us a grant of $30,000 to fund the painting of the Bembridge House. We are all very excited and can't wait to see the results. The carriage house is finished and looks great. One more item, the three pieces of furniture that have been upholstered are now back in place and look fantastic. Thank you Catherine Morley and Stan Poe for your input on this project.

Thanks to Kay Tortorice, Cheryl Perry and Carol Ann Smith for the many hours they have put into writing grants for the funding of the many projects that we are now undertaking. Also, a great big thank you to the whole committee for all their hard work in making this busy year so successful. We have accomplished a great deal and are looking forward to another great year at the Bembridge Homesite.

At this time, tours of the Bembridge House are available by reservation. Call the office for information.

Leadership Long Beach Plants Garden at Bembridge House

On May 19, ten members of the Leadership Long Beach Class of 2007 planted a garden at the Bembridge House. As part of their class curriculum, the students were required to complete a project in the Long Beach Community which signified their commitment to Leadership and Volunteerism.

There were four projects completed by the entire class, and this particular group chose to do a garden project in the City to incorporate sustainable and native California plants. Long Beach Heritage member, Dennis Moore, mentioned to the group that Bembridge House might be a good site for them to consider. Well, he was correct.

The Leadership Long Beach adult students took a look at the opportunities before them and agreed that creating a Victorian style garden with California native plants would add to the renovation work going on at the Bembridge House.

The students collaborated with several other community groups and businesses to initiate the garden. Long Beach City College's Horticulture group contributed all of the plants for the garden and a number of the worker volunteers.

The City of Long Beach's Facilities Management group supplied the flat bed trucks and tools necessary, as well as the talented landscape architect, Sandra. Other local businesses donated decomposed granite and pavers for the garden walkway.

Everyone worked extremely hard on Saturday. The finishing touches will be completed June 9.

The Leadership Long Beach Class is preparing a presentation of the project to be unveiled at their graduation ceremony in late June. They will be giving Bembridge House a copy of that presentation that can be used later on as an education component when school groups tour through the house.

LONG BEACH HERITAGE

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 22	Annual Meeting
July 23	Board Meeting
July 28	Hollywood Bowl
August 11	Art Deco Tour
August 27	Executive Committee
September	Loft Walk
September 24	Board Meeting
November 4	Queen Mary event
February 21	Awards Benefit

Long Beach Heritage
Newsletter Editor: Louise Ivers
Layout: Barbara Holbrook, Bard's Art

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email: preservation@lbheritage.org
website: http://www.lbheritage.org

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

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

❑ Call me with information on how I can participate in LBH as a volunteer

❑ Heritage Friend	$ 45
❑ Heritage Student/Senior	$ 30
❑ Heritage Household	$ 75
❑ Heritage Preservationist	$100
❑ Heritage Contributor	$250
❑ Heritage Patron	$500
❑ New member _____	

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