



# 2011 Long Beach Heritage Endangered Properties Watch List

By Louise Ivers

May was National Preservation Month and Long Beach Heritage celebrated it by creating a list of the most endangered properties in the city. This list is posted on our website and has been sent to the media. We hope that this list will encourage potential developers to restore and adaptively reuse significant buildings in our city. The properties we have selected are:



**1** The former Southern Pacific Railroad Depot, built in 1906, was originally on West 2nd Street near Pacific Avenue, facing the park. One of the oldest remaining structures in Long Beach, it was moved to 1475 San Francisco Street



in the City Yard, but is now facing either another move or possible demolition. It was designed in the Mission Style, characteristic of railway buildings around the turn of the century. It had a tower, mixtilinear gables, ornamental windows, and Plateresque reliefs on the façade. It is an excellent example of the Mission Revival and its exterior remains intact.

**2** Celebrating the merger of two Long Beach newspapers, The Press and The Daily Telegram, the Classical Revival building at the northeast corner of Pine Avenue and Sixth Street was designed by the first major architect in the city, W. Horace Austin. Although the interior



Top: the Long Beach Civic Center; left: the Southern Pacific Railroad Station; and right: Ray Vines Chrysler.

has been gutted, the exterior retains its original tall piers, arched windows, and plaster reliefs. Now abandoned, the Press-Telegram building was slated for an adaptive reuse project that has fallen through the cracks.

**3** Part of the same failed project as the Press-Telegram, but at the other end of the block at the southeast corner of Pine Avenue and Seventh Street, the Meeker-Baker Building of 1923-24 has also been abandoned. It originally housed the Long Beach National Bank on the first story and offices above on the second story. Designed by another

pair of noted local architects, Hugh R. Davies and Edwall D. Baume, the neo-classical buff brick exterior has art stone trim. A striking Palladian motif remains on the Seventh Street elevation. The developer was charged by the city to preserve the interior details of the lobby and second floor woodwork, but these may have disappeared. This structure is a Long Beach Historic Landmark.

**4** The Art Deco hotel at 628 E. Anaheim Street is one of the few remaining buildings in this style on the Anaheim corridor, which once boasted many

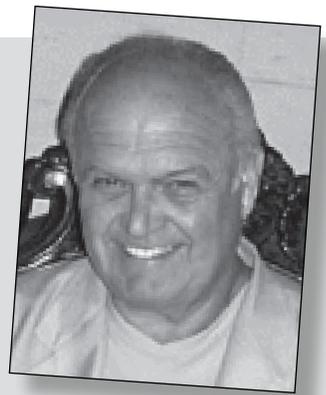
## Message from the President

# Financial Incentives for Renovations Enrich the Community and Can Make a Difference

By Stanley Poe

"The returns on a renovated historic building pay dividends in the long term," says Dabne Whitmore, Program Director, Historic Building Recovery Grant Program, Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office. Owners can save on future costs for home improvements by preserving historic building materials. Adaptive reuse creates increased sales and income and payroll taxes as new businesses open in commercial buildings, providing local and state governments with additional revenue. "Local schools get the added benefits of increased property tax revenue when previously blighted buildings or unused historic structures are renovated for homes or businesses," Whitmore concludes. Financial incentive programs lead to increases in retail or business establishments, creation of construction jobs and new revenue for individuals and business owners, and increased tax revenue for federal, state and local government. Also, investments in structures that could have been abandoned provide places to shop, places to entertain or be entertained, and homes for families which enrich the community.

The Mills Act, which reduces property taxes for individuals with eligible historic structures, needs to be reinstated in Long Beach, where it can provide a strong financial incentive for purchase and rehabilitation. It is not designed to be a free tax break. The tax savings would be used to restore and renovate the properties. There are seventeen historic districts in Long Beach, with many properties eligible for the Mills Act. The program should be renewed by the city's Historic Preservation Office and would be contingent upon applicants meeting all eligibility criteria and all repairs meeting federal standards. Future Mills Act applications should be reviewed by the Cultural Heritage Commission. Historic properties, in general, require more maintenance than newer ones so the Mills Act incentives help the owners to restore not only their own homes and businesses, but improve neighborhoods in the city. Unfortunately, Long Beach suspended the program several years ago due to fears of revenue loss. The Mills Act incentive is a program that must be addressed and reinstated.



## Victorian Magic at the Bembridge House, July 22 at 7 pm

Brian Smith, Victorian Conjuror and Clairvoyant, is a Southern California-based performer of magical and



psychic entertainment who appears regularly at private parties, corporate events and charity galas. Currently, he is also starring in his own interactive one-man show, Victorian Magick, which will soon debut at the Bembridge House on July 22 at 7:00 p.m. His unique style of performance takes participants on a journey back in time when wealthy patrons regularly invited magicians, mind-readers, and mediums into their Victorian homes to amuse and amaze

intimate gatherings of family and friends. In those surroundings the parlor became the stage and the audience, thoroughly enthralled, looked on gleefully, mere inches from the show.

Visitors witness demonstrations in nineteenth century conjuring, observe experiments in Victorian mind-reading, and even participate in an authentic antebellum séance where spirits appear. As friends and families joined together over a century ago to explore the mysteries that lie beyond, spectators join together today to experience

the unknown and possibly even travel beyond the veil to partake in a small slice of the supernatural. Victorian Magick combines magic, mind-reading and mysticism to deliver a unique experience to the participants. With an intimate audience limited to 40 individuals guests will be treated to an enchanting evening of exceptional entertainment in an authentic setting.

Tickets are \$40 for LBH members and \$45 for guests. They can be ordered through PayPal at [www.lbheritage.org](http://www.lbheritage.org), or by mailing a check made out to Long Beach Heritage at P. O. Box 92521, Long Beach, CA 90809, or by calling the office at (562) 493-7019 and charging them on Mastercard or Visa.

# Annual Meeting to be held at the Historic Streamline Moderne Long Beach Airport, Saturday, July 16 at 2 pm

Long Beach Heritage's Annual Meeting will be held at the historic Long Beach Airport on Saturday, July 16. We will meet at the AirFlite Building at 3520 Airflite Way at 2:00 p.m. You can reach this building by driving on Cherry Avenue, turning east on Wardlow Road, and then turning right on AirFlite Way. Parking is next to the building and the room for our event is on the third floor. The meeting will include an update on all of the exciting happenings at Long Beach Heritage and our Bembridge Heritage Homesite. In addition, the election and installation of our Board Officers will be held. Following the meeting we will hear about the history of the Airport and will take a shuttle bus to the Streamline Moderne facility designed by noted Long Beach architects W. Horace Austin and Kenneth S. Wing.

The famous barnstormer Earl S. Daugherty leased the area that later became



*Original Daugherty Field and present Long Beach Airport.*

the airport for air shows, stunt flying, wing walking, passenger rides, and the world's first flight school in 1919. In 1923, Daugherty convinced the Long Beach City council to set aside 150 acres near the intersection of Spring and Cherry Streets for use as an airfield. It was later named Daugherty Field and was the first municipal airport to serve Southern



California. The Airport's main terminal built in 1941 is a Long Beach Historic Landmark. It is one of the few airports in the United States that retains its original architectural style. Inside are striking tile mosaic murals created by California artist Grace Clements symbolizing aviation, shipping, oil production, and ocean life pertinent to the Queen of Beaches. The Long Beach Municipal Airport was funded by a WPA grant and was one of four in the entire country specifically constructed for national defense purposes shortly before we entered World War II. Be sure to attend the meeting and learn about an important era in Long Beach history, as well as view one of Horace Austin's last and most impressive buildings.

Reservations are necessary and guests are welcome. Please call our office at (562) 493-7019 or send an email to [reservation@lbheritage.org](mailto:reservation@lbheritage.org). Refreshments will be served.

## Long Beach Heritage: A Day at the Races



*A group of Long Beach Heritage members enjoy a tour of historic Santa Anita Park.*

## Continued from page 1: Endangered Properties Watch List

of these commercial structures. Built around 1932, this brick and concrete building has numerous Modernistic (the name for Art Deco current in the twenties and thirties) motifs. These include a stepped tower at the corner, superimposed layers of vertical piers terminating in leafy motifs, a decorated cornice, and a wrought iron grille with chevrons and scrolls above the entrance to the second story hotel rooms. This structure is presently abandoned and for sale to a developer by the RDA.

**5** In 1963 Ray Vines built a Chrysler dealership at 4201 East Willow Street at the corner of Lakewood Boulevard. It was constructed by J. W. Greig in a Mid-Century Modern mode with folded roof planes, angular plate glass windows, and soaring gables. The building complemented the sixties cars with their projecting fins and exemplified a daring type of design now referred to as Google. It is one of the few examples of this type of structure in the city. A developer has designed a plan that adaptively reuses most of the structure and saves the distinctive façade.

**6** Another example of Mid-Century Modern architecture that is slated for demolition is the North Long Beach branch of the Farmers & Merchants Bank at 3290 East Artesia Boulevard. This notable building was designed in 1962 by the local firm of Francis Heusel and Frank Homolka in a sleek modern style with exposed roof beams and transparent glass walls. The open, airy two story banking room is flooded with light and even the vault is placed in a glass walled space. It is a great sixties design that has not been altered by insensitive remodeling. The bank continues to occupy the building, but plans for new

apartments on the site do not include its adaptive reuse.

**7** The Long Beach Civic Center is threatened with replacement in the near future. Many complaints about the safety of the buildings have been heard in the city offices. The County Courthouse at 415 West Ocean Boulevard, designed by Kenneth S. Wing and Francis Heusel in 1957-60, will be abandoned after the construction of a new building on Broadway at Magnolia Avenue. Ground has already been broken for this structure by AECOM. Although some mechanical features of the Mid-Century Modern Courthouse are in disrepair due to deferred maintenance, the façade of the building with its alternating bands of glass and enameled metal panels has a signature modern effect. The City Hall and Public Library were completed in 1976-77 by a consortium called the Allied Architects, which included Hugh and Donald Gibbs; Kenneth S. Wing Senior and Junior; Killingsworth, Brady & Associates; and Homolka & Associates. These firms were the major architects in Long Beach at the time. The buildings combined rough textured concrete, steel, and glass, as well as landscaping, in a design that spoke the language of Late Modernism. Originally, the Library had a rooftop garden that was abandoned due to leakage caused by poor maintenance. The employees in the City Hall state that it is badly equipped to withstand an earthquake.

**8** Originally called the Edgewater Inn when it was constructed in 1961-63, the Seaport Marina Hotel at 6400 East Pacific Coast Highway is in immediate danger of being razed and replaced by a twelve story skyscraper and a low

rise shopping mall. It is a delightful Mid-Century Modern building with Y-shaped piers, folded roofs, and textured walls. The hotel was designed by Roy Sealey, an important African-American architect who worked in Los Angeles, beginning his career in Paul R. Williams' office. The Seaport Marina Hotel was a popular place for prominent Long Beach social events in the sixties and its Google style exterior remains intact. It could be adaptively reused as a shopping mall.

**9** The American Hotel at 224 East Broadway was built in 1905. It is the only brick commercial building of its era left standing in Long Beach and has distinctive arches with cast art stone keystones and a corbel table on the upper part of its facade. These motifs were common elements of the Panel Brick Style, a mode that was popular in the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The Cultural Heritage Commission approved an excellent plan to adaptively reuse this structure, but it might lose its funding if the State Legislature votes to abolish the Redevelopment Agency.

**10** Also approved for adaptive reuse as an arts center, the former Acres of Books building at 240 Long Beach Boulevard was originally a market when it was constructed in 1924. It was remodeled in a Streamline Moderne style in 1936 with curved corners, a mini-tower, and horizontal bands of ornament to house the Glenn Thomas Used Car Store. Acres of Books was a nationally renowned used book store that stocked everything from rare tomes to recent paperbacks. Like the American Hotel, it will lose its funding if the RDA ceases to exist.

# What's Up at the Bembridge House

By Charlotte Mitchell

All the volunteers at the Bembridge House have been very busy the last few months. In April the Mary Lou Heard Memorial Tour took place and I just have to let you know how hard the Garden Committee labored under the direction of Elisa Trujillo. It took many hours over several weeks to get the gardens into tiptop condition. The guests were impressed and wanted to return for a docent led tour of the house. This was wonderful PR for the Bembridge House and Gardens. On May 7 we helped host the Health Fair at Drake Park and the May Day event. A large crowd came

to the park for all the festivities and kept our docents, under the leadership of Jill Black, busy for over two hours with tours of the Bembridge House.

We have had many tours the past months which keep our hard working docents very busy. Several schools have taken tours which are very popular with the children as evidenced by the wonderful thank you letters they have sent to us. We have also had many small groups who have arranged to have their own private tours. If you would like to arrange a tour for an organization you belong to please call the LBH office.



Bembridge House Garden.

## Mary Lou Heard Garden Tour

On April 30 the Bembridge Home-site landscaping was included in the annual Mary Lou Heard Garden Tour, a charitable event honoring that notable horticulturist. The Bembridge gardeners, all volunteers, worked nonstop for eight weeks to make our homesite look spectacular. Visitors saw the Victorian rose garden, shade garden, cottage plots, sitting areas with benches, back courtyard, and herb garden. 650 guests visited the Bembridge house on the tour and both our gardeners and docents were on hand to answer questions. In addition, they toured a new garden with a bench dedicated to Dorothy Bembridge now located within Drake Park, thanks to the efforts of Councilman Robert Garcia. Work on the Bembridge landscaping has been going on for over two years and by the next Mary Lou Heard Tour the patio in the back of the house should be completed.

## Membership Report — June 1, 2011

### **PRESERVATIONIST MEMBERS AND ABOVE**

*Dues are due in May so many names are missing from this report. If your name is among them, be sure you have paid your dues for the 2011-2012 year.*

#### **BENEFACTOR**

RMS Queen Mary

#### **SUSTAINER**

The Ackerman Family

#### **PATRONS**

Mike & Andrea Burrous  
Enid Busser  
Mary Lou Martin  
& Chris Byrne  
Melinda Roney  
& Walter Wojak  
Kenneth Walker, F&M Bank

#### **CONTRIBUTORS**

Dawna & Gary DeLong  
Bob & Nancy Foster  
Chris Hogan  
Gina & Tom Maguire  
John & Dianne McGinnis  
Ana Maria  
& Kevin McGuan  
Maureen Neeley  
& Dan Roberts  
Jenny & David Shlemmer

#### **PRESERVATIONISTS**

Sarah & Craig Arnold  
Mary Anna Bailer

Barry & Kathy Blodgett  
Michael & Kathleen Bohn  
Dave Breiholz  
Kaye Briegel  
Bobbi Burket  
Claudine & Paul Burnett  
Betty Chaney  
Karen & Dick Clements  
Sherry Cragg  
C.J. & Dave Crockett  
Vicki & James Cunningham  
Bill Cwiklo  
Robert Elkins  
Robert & Scarlett Finney  
Jack & Carol Frank  
Kathleen Fry  
Janice Furman  
Jim & Ria Gerds  
Kathryn Gregory  
& Richard Roth  
Liz Handley  
Rick Hobbs & Brad Seeley  
Harriett Ibbetson  
Louise Ivers  
& Allen Guerrero  
Steve Iverson  
Harvey Keller  
Laura Killingsworth  
Mary Klingensmith  
Duane Kuster  
Jim & Kathy Lingle

Elaine & Tom Marks  
Carol McCafferty  
Janeice McConnell  
Bettye Mitchell  
Jeff, Wan & Holly Moore  
Marky & John Morel  
Richard Mosely  
Marion Nickle  
Meg O'Toole  
Cheryl & Mark Perry  
Sharon & Ken Pleshek  
Richard Powers  
Marshal Pumphrey  
& Roxanne Fitzgerald  
Patricia Randolph  
Ron Rector  
Gary Roderick  
John Royce & Kent Lockart  
Batya & Ed Sanchez  
Paul & Judy Schmidt  
Norbert Schurer  
Pamela Seager  
Julie Stindt  
Mary Sullivan  
Betty Sunofsky  
John & Patricia Walker  
Dorothy Wise

## CALENDAR

June 27 LBH Executive Committee  
July 25 LBH Board  
July 16 Annual Meeting  
July 22 Magician at Bembridge  
July 25 LBH Board  
Aug 13 Hollywood Bowl  
Sept 25 Preservation Fair

## 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 \_\_\_\_\_

Make your check payable to:

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