LONG BEACH HERITAGE

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Richard Poper to Receive the Long Beach Heritage Excellency In Architecture Award At The 2008 Benefit

"Architecture is the finest of the useful arts and the most useful of the fine arts", —John Ruskin.

Sixty years of Richard L Poper's architectural artistry can be seen and enjoyed in the over 6000 homes built for Lloyd S Whaley and the Mac-Bright Corporation in Long Beach. These include houses in Park Estates and Ridgeway Heights, Campus Homes, Los Altos Junior Executives, La Marina Homes and a Better Homes and Garden's "Home for All America".

Richard Poper was a principal in the firm of Jones, Lockett and Poper that designed these housing developments, as well as many individual projects. Examples are the Charles Z. Walker house at 844 Roxanne Street, the Grace Brethren Church at 3601 Linden Avenue, the Immanuel Presbyterian Church at the corner of East Sixth Street and Termino Avenue, the Los Altos YMCA, and Long Beach Fire Stations #10, #16, and #21.

The firm also designed numerous educational buildings, for example, nine structures at Long Beach City College, the Book Store at California State University Long

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2008 Long Beach Heritage Awards Benefit

777 Cedar Avenue *Photo by Chris Launi*

Each year, Long Beach Heritage presents awards at a major event, the Annual Awards Benefit, to meritorious members of the community for commercial, residential, adaptive reuse, and restoration projects.

Long Beach Heritage will hold its nineteenth Annual Awards Benefit on February 21, 2008 in the Grand Salon aboard the Queen Mary. At this Benefit we will be honoring those individuals and organizations who have made significant contributions to the preservation of the architectural and cultural heritage of our city.

The 2008 Excellence in Architecture award is going to be presented to Richard L. Poper, AIA. He has been a noted architect for sixty years.

His artistry can be seen and enjoyed in over 6,000 homes which he designed for Lloyd S. Whaley and the Mac-Bright Corporation. These homes are located in Park Estates, Ridgeway Heights, Campus Homes, Los Altos Junior Executives and La Marina Homes. He also designed homes in Naples, Belmont Shore, and the Bixby area. Included in his contribution to the streetscape of Long Beach is a myriad of commercial buildings, banks and schools. Mr. Poper is definitely deserving of this award.

The Preservation Awards are intended to recognize efforts in the areas of adaptive reuse, restoration, and creative solutions to preservation problems. This year's awards are being presented to three homes in different sections of the city.

The Olson residence, located at 727 Cedar Avenue, is in the Willmore City Historic District. This magnificent wood frame, Colonial Revival home was constructed in 1907 by Mr. Merriman. Through the years, it was divided into apartments. The home was purchased by Tom and Juliette Olson with the intention of restoring it to a single family residence. Soon after beginning work, a disastrous fire on the second floor burned up through the attic and roof. The Olsons not only repaired the damages, but they restored the interiors to their original magnificence.

The Von Hemert residence is located in Belmont Heights. This home was constructed on a prominent hillside at 121

See Bixby Park Page 2

Message from the President

My pronouncement for the year is that preservation is alive and kicking in Long Beach. I was recently involved in two situations that gave evidence of that observation. The first was in the fall when I was asked to participate in the "University by the Sea" event which was held in downtown Long Beach. I was initially skeptical as to how many people would flock to attend my lecture on the history of Long Beach when such a large smorgasbord of options was being offered. My concerns were assuaged, however, when I received a call from the organizers to ask if I would agree to teaching two classes because the first one had filled immediately. I finally gave two sessions of my power point presentation showing one hundred historic post cards to outline the history of Long Beach. There were other historic offerings as well, including walking tours and lectures by our Vice President, John Thomas, and our mayor, Bob Foster, and the opening of the Jergins Trust tunnel where Ken Larkey provided a film presentation of some historic events in the city.

I believe that the event was vastly more successful than the planners had hoped for. The classes filled quickly and a great many people had to be turned away, but they still brought a huge number of people to the downtown area of the city that they normally don't visit. It really made participants aware of our built environment and the importance of preserving our history. My understanding is that plans are already underway for next year!

The second incident of affirmation occurred in early December at the Bembridge House. During an afternoon meeting, I heard a bit of a commotion on the front porch. When I investigated, I found a very smartly dressed young lady of elementary school age surrounded by a number of young children. I listened to her for a few moments and realized that she was captivating her audience with the history of the house and the families who had lived there. The amazing fact that she had all of her information absolutely correct was almost eclipsed by the fact that all of the kids were listening intently and appeared to absorb what they were hearing. They asked me some good questions while I stood there. When I asked the young lady, who was a neighborhood child, where she learned all of that, she told me that her school had toured the house, and that she and her mother attended every function that we have presented for the community. She said she especially liked our members who portrayed the family during these tours.

This vignette was significant to me as it demonstrated the success of our efforts in that these children have begun to appreciate the history and culture of their community. Indeed, the young lady, who found it important to pass the information on to her friends, possessed great poise. The concept of preservation should begin in childhood.

The three precepts that I have held foremost have been education first, followed by preservation and advocacy. I am truly fortunate to have a board of directors and general members who support me in this, and apparently we are all right on target.

In addition to our constant efforts in the area of advocacy, on-going dialogue with the city of Long Beach, preservation of the Bembridge home and various programs that we provide are an invaluable means of conveying the message that preservation is a concept that everyone in the city should embrace..

—Stan Poe

Richard Poper cont'd from page 1

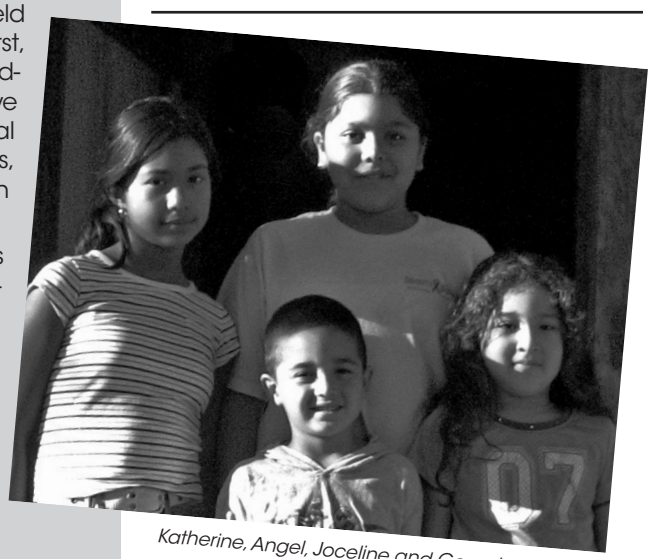
Beach, five buildings at Copper Mountain College in Joshua tree, eleven structures at Crafton Hills College in Yucaipa, and fourteen buildings at San Bernardino Valley College.

Richard L Poper graduated from USC in 1949 after his service with the US Air Corps in World War II. He served in the Army Air Force in the headquarters architectural office at Wright/Patterson in Dayton, Ohio as a draftsman and designer. After completing four years in service and resuming his studies at USC, Poper passed the California architectural licensing exam.

Prior to his Army service he worked as a draftsman in the office of Jess J. Jones at Fifth Street and Termino Avenue. Jones was the successor to Kirtland Cutter, a well known Long Beach architect in the 1920s. Also working in that drafting room were another USC graduate, Thomas Curley, and Long Beach's first woman architectural designer, Virginia Thompson. These three later formed the nucleus of the team in Jones' office at 1870 Long Beach Blvd. when the firm known as Jones, Lockett and Poper was founded.

Mr. Poper was instrumental in the founding of the Cabrillo Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and became its first president. He received awards for his excellent work at Crafton Hills College in Yucaipa and Long Beach City College and was inducted into the latter Hall of Fame in 1997. Richard Poper was also recently honored by the Mayor of Lakewood for his eight years of service on the Development Review Board.

As Ruskin also said, "When love and skill work together expect a masterpiece".



Katherine, Angel, Joceline and Genesis Garcia

Long Beach Heritage Advocacy Report

"A major component of an ARO is the review of development standards and relaxation of some requirements to allow existing buildings (especially historic) to be considered for reuse."

Adaptive Reuse Ordinance: Proactive Incentives for Historic Preservation

Many older cities have developed ordinances or incentives designed to encourage the reuse of existing buildings. When buildings are brought back to life through Adaptive Reuse Ordinances (AROs), they contribute to revitalizing neighborhoods by preserving historic and cultural resources, creating new housing and mixed-use opportunities, and increasing public safety in "transitional" urban areas. Adaptive Reuse promotes buildings and areas long overlooked and stimulates economic growth in our older commercial and urban cores. A major benefit is the protection of architecturally significant and historic buildings.

What is an Adaptive Reuse Ordinance?

Adaptive reuse allows for the conversion of commercial buildings to new uses including apartments, live/work lofts, retail shops, and hotels. Many developers have stated that Adaptive Reuse Ordinances encourage the preservation of existing buildings, revitalize older business corridors, and stimulate economic investment. Another positive benefit of an ARO is increasing housing opportunities that allow employees to live closer to work sites or adjacent to transportation facilities such as light rail and transit centers.

Properly adopted AROs can also streamline the process developers must follow to get their projects approved, resulting in substantial time savings. A major component of an ARO is the review of development standards and relaxation of some requirements to allow existing buildings (especially historic) to be considered for reuse. Allowances can be made for parking requirements and land use/density codes. Additionally, the amount of time for plan check and approvals is reduced. This incentive is by far the most attractive for developers. Establishing clear, concise, and non-arbitrary codes attracts more experienced developers and design professionals to communities, thus securing a positive outcome and successful project.

The Long Beach Heritage Advocacy Committee strongly encourages the City Council, Planning Commission, Redevelopment Agency Board and Staff to review and analyze the positive effects of the City of Los Angeles Adaptive Reuse Ordinance. Currently the Downtown Visioning Project and PD 30 (a modified land use zoning guide for downtown) are being evaluated. Now is the time to combine the results and recommendations of the Visioning process and modify PD 30 to create a truly progressive Adaptive Reuse Ordinance.

When policy makers and staff attempt to find innovated ways to provide more work force housing, encourage transit oriented development, and rescue our older business cores from economic blight and public safety ills, the solution is Adaptive Reuse Ordinances. Long Beach does not need to "reinvent the wheel," but merely look at the positive results just next door in the City of Los Angeles.

Membership Report January 2008

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121 Belmont Avenue.

Sympathetic addition to 2828 East 1st Street. *Photos by Chris Launi*

Belmont in the 1920s in the Italian Renaissance Revival style. In 1930 it was the home of William Hosking, business manager of the *Press Telegram*, and his wife Mary Lou. Within the last decade a process of restoration included some minor cosmetic changes to the exterior, preservation and enhancement of the interiors, and the inclusion of spectacular gardens.

The residence of Helena and Elbert Segelhorst is located in the Bluff Park Historic District at 2828 East First Street. This award is for the sympathetic addition to the rear of the notable 1908

Edwardian home that the Segelhorsts had previously restored. The nearly seamless alterations stand as an example for anyone wishing to enlarge his/her historic home without destroying its charm. The architect was Kevin Motschall, the contractor was Peter Devereaux, and the color consultant was Michael Caponigro.

Merit Awards are presented to individuals, organizations, or public agencies who have made significant contributions to the preservation of Long Beach through initiative and innovative leadership. This year there are four recipients in the area of cultural resource studies.

Meighan Maguire, in conjunction with Rancho Los Cerritios and the Long Beach Unified School District, created an invaluable and innovative program entitled "Handling History: Exploring Daily Life on the Rancho in the 1840s". This program includes a comprehensive and extensive teacher's guide as well as thirty trunks filled with representative items of the period to enhance the learning experience for fourth grade students in the district.

The Long Beach Firefighters' Museum receives a Merit Award for its collaborative work on the book entitled Long Beach Fire Department, part of the Images of America series by Arcadia Publishing. It is an interesting collection of photographs and text that traces the history of the department from its inception. It provides a valuable resource for researchers. The Firefighters' Museum also created a CD, "Long Beach Firefighters-The Early Years," which is a compilation of early films depicting events from the horse-drawn steamer era.

The award to John Thomas, Christopher Launi, and Suzanne Tarbell Cooper is for their book *Long Beach Art Deco*, another Images of America publication. John and Suzanne researched and wrote the book, which is an illustrated survey of buildings and artifacts from the 1920s and 1930s. The photographs include historic as well as contemporary images of "survivors" by Christopher Launi. The book is an important tool for students of the Art Deco style. It has made a large segment of the population aware of the period treasures which are located in Long Beach.

The third Merit Award is for the Paul Revere Williams documentary by David Kelly and the Advanced Media Production Department at CSULB. This award is for a cultural resource which advances local historical knowledge and educational awareness.

This fascinating documentary details the architecture and career of the first African-American to gain success in his field in Los Angeles. Mr. Williams designed more than 3000 structures including the Long Beach Naval Station and homes in Park Estates and Virginia Country Club. The film was funded by the Long Beach Navy Memorial Heritage Association.

A Merit Award is being conferred on Magnum Builders for their expert craftsmanship and preservation technology on a historical restoration project, the seismic retrofit and restoration of the Bembridge carriage house and driveway.

These were daunting undertakings, but the final result leaves nothing wanting. The completed project, with partial siding replacements, window rebuilding, and flipping the huge floorboards over to achieve a smooth surface while retaining the century old wood, exudes the ambience of the original even down to the hay chute.

The final Merit Award is being presented to the Rancho Los Alamitos Foundation for the restoration and preservation of a man-made landscape environment having particular historical significance. The restorations were completed under the guidance of Pamela Seager. The gardens were all created during the 1920s and 1930s.

There are a total of eleven distinctive spaces, each with its own enchanting features. One is the "Native Garden," which includes many water elements with a rock streambed and waterfalls, designed by the Olmstead brothers. The "Cactus Garden" was designed by William Hertrich, who created some of the gardens at the Huntington Gardens in San Marino where he was superintendent for over twenty years. The geranium walk and rose gardens were designed by Florence Yoch, who was responsible for the landscape sets in the film "Gone with the Wind".

Early Long Beach Architecture Exhibit

"Early Long Beach Architecture," an exhibit curated by Dr. Louise Ivers, Professor of Art, will be held at the California State University Dominguez Hills Art Gallery from February 6 to March 5, 2008. The opening reception is from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. on February 6.

At 6:00 p.m. Ivers will conduct an informative gallery tour and discuss the buildings constructed during the first few decades of the "Queen of Beaches." The exhibit will consist of historic post card images, photographs by Ivers of both demolished and extant structures, and water color paintings of numerous early buildings by Carl Aldana.

Admission to the University Art Gallery is free, but parking costs $3.00.

Mark Your Calendar

The 2008 Great Homes of Long Beach Date has been set for Sunday, June 8th from 12:00 – 5:00 pm

The Great Homes of Long Beach tour is the perfect way to spend a Sunday afternoon.

The tour begins with our docents describing the significance of each home and how the neighborhood has evolved in the area. Along the way you will get to stroll through a variety of gardens and grounds and enjoy a sip of lemonade under a shady tree.

So mark your calendars. We look forward to seeing you at this year's event!

Historical Society opens in Bixby Knolls

December 17 opening of the Historical Society of Long Beach at 4260 Atlantic Avenue.

Design Approved for Downtown's Ocean Center Building

by Joe Segura
(Reprinted from the Press Telegram)

Above: Proposed restoration of the Ocean Center Building by Interstices. Below: Historic photograph.

An 18-month effort was capped when the Cultural Heritage Commission approved the conceptual design for modifications to the historic landmark Ocean Center Building. The 1928 landmark, with its whitewashed exterior that presents a stark contrast to the neighboring modern marble-slabbed structures, is on the southwest corner of Pine Avenue and Ocean Boulevard.

The building, according to Interstices architect Jonathan Glasgow, was originally built as a mixed-use retail and office building. The mixed-use feature will shift to retail and residential—the latter with 82 boutique hotel rooms and 18 condominiums, Glasgow said.

The archway at the base of the building along Pine initially served as the entrance to the original Pike Amusement Park. The base of the building was right on the beach at the time of construction, according to Glasgow. Swimming pools and sun decks will be introduced to two of the roof-tops, the architect said.

A unique feature of the project is a lantern cupola that originally capped the tower. Glasgow noted it was removed after the 1933 earthquake.

Long Beach-based Interstices, according to Glasgow, has designed several other adaptive reuse projects in the city, including the Kress Building, the Walker Building, the Newberry Building and Courtyard Lofts.

Share Local History: The *Signal Tribune Newspaper* wants to feature your 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.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 28	LBH Board
February 21	Awards Benefit
February 25	LBH Executive Committee
March 24	LBH Board
April 26	May Day at Bembridge House
June 8	Great Homes Tour

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

❑ Heritage Friend	$ 45
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