VOLUME 37 | NO. 3 | SUMMER 2019

LONG BEACH HERITAGE

ANNUAL MEETING AT JOE JOST'S

The Long Beach Heritage annual meeting will be held this year in Joe Jost's back meeting room at 2803 E. Anaheim Street on July 28 at 2:00 p.m. This meeting is free of charge for Long Beach Heritage members and their friends. Joe Jost's, a Long Beach institution, was founded in 1924 by Joe Jost Sr. It is one of the oldest continually operated taverns west of the Mississippi River. It opened during prohibition so instead of liquor, they served "near beer," a non-alcoholic drink, along with ice cold root beer. After the repeal of prohibition in 1934 they began serving a selection of some of the patrons' favorite beers and sandwiches. Along with beer, Joe Jost's is also famous for its unusual pickled eggs served on a mound of pretzels with chile peppers. Another staple is Marmion's Peanuts. Marmion's was another Long Beach institution which was located at Fourth Street near Pine Avenue from 1907 to 1989. When the business closed, Joe Jost's purchased the peanut roasting machine and installed it at the Anaheim Street location.

SUNNYSIDE CEMETERY IN DIRE NEED OF RESUSCITATION

By Louise Ivers

Plans to create a new privately owned cemetery in Signal Hill, then part of Long Beach, were reported in December 1904 in the Daily Telegram and the grand opening of Sunnyside was held on September 26, 1906. In 1915 the Long Beach Press stated that a reinforced concrete, marble, and bronze mausoleum would be built on the site at 1095 East Willow Street, but this structure never came to fruition. By April 1923 the plot intended for the mausoleum was sold to United Oil, which planned a drilling rig right next to the cemetery. Early photographs of Sunnyside portray numerous oil well superstructures near the graves. The present small office building with its brick clad façade was constructed at a cost of $800 in 1923 and a basement vault for burial records was added in 1954 by architect J. Richard Shelley. The cemetery became a city historic landmark on May 30, 2000. [cont'd on page 3]

Photos by Louise Ivers - Office building at Sunnyside, built 1923

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LONG BEACH ARCHITECTURE WEEK HAS A LIVELY INAUGURAL YEAR, FEATURES GREAT HOMES TOUR

By Sarah Locke

Great Homes Tour, house in Bluff Park

The inaugural Long Beach Architecture Week, an initiative of Long Beach Home + Living, was a ten-day event featuring nineteen different opportunities to explore history and architecture. We were honored to be selected as their nonprofit partner and our eighteenth annual Great Homes Tour was included as a signature event. The program also included a Historic Downtown Tour and a Modern Architecture and Sculpture Tour of the California State University, Long Beach campus in partnership with the University Art Museum.

The Great Homes Tour featured six distinctive houses that ranged from a Bluff Park house, built in 1913, to a Virginia Country Club Ranch House from 1965. Visitors also enjoyed a Miner Smith "bungalow mansion" and a Colonial Revival in Belmont Heights. Two more Modern houses, the Twentieth Century House (1936) by Hugh Davies and a Cliff May Home (1953), completed the lineup. It was a well-rounded group of houses that represented decades of development across Long Beach and showcased our diverse architecture and neighborhoods. Proceeds from the event will support the maintenance and operation of the historic Bembridge House. Thank you to the homeowners, the Home Tour Committee, the many volunteers that made the day possible, and everyone who attended the event.

The Modern Architecture and Sculpture Tour was part of our Modernism Initiative which featured historic resources from the mid-twentieth century and the CSULB campus is a treasure trove of Modern architecture. The tour highlighted the early history of the University, the 1960s master plan by world-renowned architect Edward Killingsworth, and the incredible range of architecture and artwork integrated into the picturesque 323-acre site. Thank you to the University Art Museum for providing context for the recently restored outdoor sculpture collection that includes celebrated artists from the International Sculpture Symposium in 1965.

A special edition of Long Beach Home + Living dedicated to Long Beach Architecture Week featured an article on Long Beach Heritage and can be picked up at the Bembridge House. Proceeds from all Long Beach Architecture Week events benefited Long Beach Heritage and we are excited to join forces and begin planning for an exciting lineup of events for next year.

MARK THE MAP

The city of Long Beach is updating its Historic Context Statement, a critical resource for to our local history and preservation of historic resources. The document is used by city staff and professionals to determine which places must be protected in order to appropriately convey our local history.

Mark the Map is an initiative that requires your participation in order to learn about places that are important to you and your community. Together we can tell a more accurate and complete story about our heritage. Our current list of designated Long Beach Historic Landmarks primarily focuses on buildings of architectural value from the first half of the twentieth century, but there is an opportunity to highlight Modern buildings, cultural landscapes, and properties that represent our diverse community, such as places associated with people of color, the LGBTQ community, and women's history.

Participating in this initiative does not mean the place you submit will become a historic landmark, but it does allow for us to gain a better understanding about our community so that the city of Long Beach can plan for our future. Use your voice and include places that matter to you at markthemaplb.org.

SUNNYSIDE CEMETERY

[cont'd from page 1]

Sunnyside Cemetery c.1940 by Ansel Adams
Courtesy of the Los Angeles Public Library

Quite a few Civil War veterans were buried at Sunnyside in the teens and many notable Long Beach families bought grave sites for their deceased relatives in the last century. A number of individuals of Japanese and Mexican descent were interred at Sunnyside from the 1920s through the 1980s as well. Now, however, there are very few empty plots left.

Around 1922 Ted Decker became superintendent of the cemetery and in 1987 Dean Dempsey took over this job. However, the latter was arrested in 1996 for stealing money from the endowment fund. "The defunct State Cemetery Board began investigating Dempsey in 1994 after complaints that the grounds at Sunnyside had fallen into disrepair, and it quickly moved to seize the park's bank accounts." [Los Angeles Times, January 6, 1996] Dempsey was sentenced to four years in prison and restitution of $400,000. In addition to the loss of much of its endowment, over 300 graves at Sunnyside were desecrated by vandals, who caused an estimated $300,000 in damage, in 1999. The cemetery fell on hard times due to lack of funds and little new income from recent burials.

For more than 20 years volunteers have kept Sunnyside functioning, but the recent drought has parched the once verdant grounds and many grave stones have been subsumed by dirt and gophers. Valiant efforts, such as the Festival Obscura and a GoFundMe page, have raised some money for the upkeep of the cemetery. The Historical Society of Long Beach holds an annual Cemetery Tour there in October. Hopefully, the Board of Directors and the City Council will find a way to rescue Sunnyside and restore it to its former glory. The cemetery is extremely important to Long Beach history and should be preserved intact for posterity.

PRESERVING AND CURATING THE LAFAYETTE'S HISTORY

By Linda Dragga

Photo by Louise Ivers - Sharon Hays

While the city of Long Beach designated the Lafayette Complex as a Historic Landmark in 1987, that designation does not itself guarantee that a building will receive necessary and appropriate maintenance. Residents of Long Beach are grateful to Sharon Hays for her twenty years of conscientious attention to the needs of the three buildings that compose the spectacular Lafayette Complex: the 1928 Spanish Renaissance Campbell Apartments, the 1929 Art Deco Lafayette Hotel, and the 1948 International Style addition. When Sharon took over as property manager in 1998, she inherited major challenges: financial reserves were at zero, cats were nesting in several of the walls, some units were behind on their dues to the Home Owners Association, taxes were owed on newly acquired business units, and building schematics for plumbing and electrical were only memories.

In cooperation with the board of directors, Sharon organized a financial framework and stabilized the fiscal situation while also learning where the pipes were located, how the building was wired, which systems were working and which were failing, and who could be called for reliable repairs. It wasn't always easy, but in Sharon's words, "There was no time to quit."

As residents moved out, they sometimes left furniture and equipment behind. Seizing the opportunity, Sharon moved unwanted exercise equipment into an area that gradually turned into a well-equipped modern facility. She saved period-appropriate furniture and placed it in various public spaces, as well as created a bike storage room. She also found many Lafayette Hotel historical artifacts, including stationery; matchbooks; post cards; menus; photographs; and newspaper clippings, and built a small museum that highlights the history of the Lafayette.

Sharon navigates the restricted spaces of the building with a sense of pride and humor - the stripped and emptied chapel that once offered weddings without the usual waiting period, the basement that housed a number of bars and restaurants before it was dedicated to storage. She knows where and how to turn off the water to the building—and has been called on to do so more often than she would like.

Sharon has many stories about the people who have lived (and died) at the Lafayette over the years she has served as manager. Such as one early morning that she answered a fire alarm and was squirted with a fire hose by a building intruder. Other stories she will diplomatically take with her when she retires this summer. She leaves a legacy as a preservationist and curator of a vital element of Long Beach history.

EFFORT TO SAVE PETROLEUM CLUB PART OF PRESERVATION MONTH

By Sarah Locke

This Place Matters event at the Petroleum Club

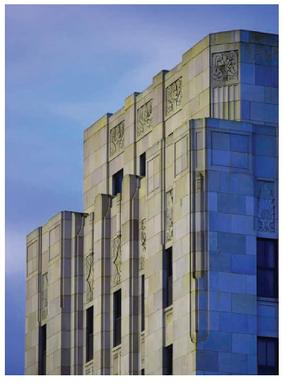
Long Beach Heritage received a proclamation from the City of Long Beach to celebrate Preservation Month, an annual initiative co-sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the National Park Service every May. All month long we had various events and the community gathered on May 23 for a This Place Matters meetup at the Long Beach Petroleum Club to voice their concern for the future of the building.

Long Beach has many historic preservation incentives available and rehabilitation or adaptive reuse is exactly what the community would like to see for the Long Beach Petroleum Club. More than fifty people shared their memories and created vision cards that expressed their hopes for this mid-century modern building that has become such an important resource for the community it served for more than sixty years. We gathered everyone for a This Place Matters group photo, which has been an effective tool for drawing attention to historic places at risk, and are circulating the photo and cards with decision-makers. It is not too late to show your support for the Petroleum Club. Send comments to preservation@lbheritage.org.

In addition to the Petroleum Club meetup, we offered several other ways to highlight historic places and explore our city. Our North Pine Walking Tour, held quarterly, coincided with Preservation Month and Jane's Walk, an international event celebrating activist and urbanist Jane Jacobs, the author of The Death and Life of Great American Cities. A walking tour of Craftsman Village was also featured later in the month for Jane's Walk. Thanks to nonprofit organization Walk Long Beach for partnering with us on this event.

We also celebrated with a Preservation Month photo contest on social media with a new theme each week throughout May. Winners received an invitation to the Roaring Metropolis party that kicked off Long Beach Architecture Week. Featured below are two winning entries, but check out the hashtag #PreMo2019 to see all the fantastic photos submitted by our quickly growing audience on Instagram.

Jane's Walk in Craftsman Village



(Left Image) Photo contest winner Lucas Gordon, picture of Long Beach Post Office
(Right Image) Photo contest winner Merritt Morris, picture of Gibbs Studio

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

The Bembridge House Plant Sale and Garden Tour will be held on Saturday, August 21 from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Visit lbheritage.org for more details.

FOR THE RECORD EXPOSES TEENS TO LOCAL HISTORY

"For the Record" is a project that aims to broaden the story we tell about North Long Beach. The installation highlights lesser known events and people who have shaped our city and this unique neighborhood. The project started in 2017 with the idea that local residents could be empowered to love and advocate for their neighborhood by recognizing its unique and significant history. North Long Beach has traditionally not participated in other types of historic recognition, but this project includes the input of North Long Beach residents to try a new approach.

The installation will include decals on Atlantic Avenue along the sidewalk between Jordan High School and the Michelle Obama Library. Every weekday, hundreds of local teens walk this path. They will be exposed to the history of their city and learn more about the place they call home.

We need your help to move forward with this project! Long Beach Heritage has joined our community partners and We Are the Next to raise the remaining funds for installation of the project by the end of summer. We invite you to learn more about the project and experience the timeline at lbtimeline.org, and make a tax-deductible donation to help fund this project which will be matched by a generous donor who wants to broaden the story we tell about North Long Beach. Checks made payable to Long Beach Heritage can be mailed to PO Box 92521, Long Beach, CA 90809 or make your donation online at lbheritage.org.

SOROPTIMIST HOUSE WILL BE DEMOLISHED

By Louise Ivers

Designed by local architects Francis O. Merchant and J. Richard Shelley, the Soroptimist House opened its doors on the California State University Long Beach campus on January 20,1957. Originally built at a cost of $18,000, the structure was enlarged by 650 square feet in 1961. This fine Mid-Century Modern building originally served as a meeting place for student organizations and other special interest groups. It has a gable roof with exposed rafters and was once connected to a pergola of similar construction. Cited in a CSULB report for having asbestos in its roof, ceiling, and floor, it is slated for demolition and will be replaced by a new Alumni Center. The Soroptimist Club is a service organization for women and the Long Beach chapter was founded in 1923.

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BEMBRIDGE HOUSE NEWS

By Chris Hogan

As usual, the Bembridge House saw its share of activities during spring. There were the typical, a few special, and the last of the school tours. The Long Beach Sketchers Meetup Group met in front of the Bembridge House one Saturday for an art session. I was lucky enough to see their drawings and watercolor paintings – such talented artists creating beautiful artworks! A new location scout also thoroughly photographed the House – cross your fingers for another Hollywood studio filming.

The House's two springtime events were both very successful. First was the Bembridge Gardens Spring Tour. Because of much exposure and interest on social media, about 200 visitors came to enjoy the bountiful garden. Even though the roses had had too much rain to show many early blossoms, the other plants in the gardens put on a lushly colorful display. The gardeners gave tours, offered lots of planting tips and answered innumerable specific questions. They raised over $600 during the plant and garden accessories sale. It was an incredibly busy day!

The following week was the Bembridge Springtime Tea inside the House. Sheila, Alan, and their hospitality committee once again wowed all 29 guests with the impressive spread. It certainly was a "High Tea" – delicious scones with jam and cream, tasty finger sandwiches, mouth-watering desserts, and different kinds of tea to choose. The guests also spoke with "Mrs. Bembridge" (and even little brother Neil) about the family and the House history. What a fun afternoon! Thanks, of course, to everyone who was involved with both events.

The Bembridge House is definitely in need of more docents. So, if you have a love of architecture, history or just being with groups of interesting people, please consider becoming a tour guide. It is easy (and painless) to become a docent. Go to the lbheritage.org for more information.

Happy Summer!

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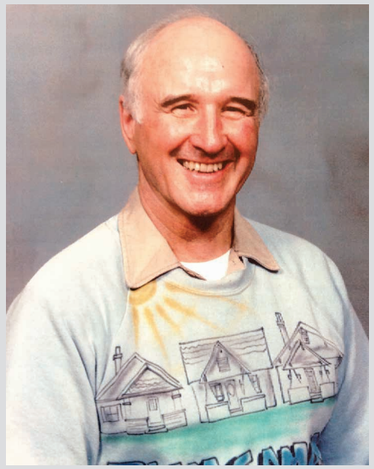
AN INTERVIEW WITH PETER DEVEREAUX

Karen Clements interviewed Peter Devereaux, one of the founders of the Long Beach Heritage organization, about his long involvement in historic preservation:



Peter Devereaux

"After spending a number of student years in Europe (and finding that I should not be a teacher of theology), I settled back in Long Beach. My interest in designing and building houses continued to develop. As I worked toward projects in that field I became interested in what was going on around town. I found myself opposed to many initiatives promoted by the old-time elite and that the Redevelopment Agency was able to tear down important buildings and whole sections of downtown. This was when I joined individuals and groups working through the new Coastal Commission to offer resistance. Along a similar line I joined the campaign to change the way the City Council was elected—from at-large to district elections.

"I became a disciple of what I will call the Jane Jacobs school. She wrote the important book The Death and Life of Great American Cities, which made a strong case for confronting urban problems by strengthening neighborhoods and resisting large scale demolition for construction of highways; super blocks; high-rises in parks; shopping malls; and civic centers. Jacobs advised me regarding the Hahn proposal to drop a shopping mall into the center of Long Beach, eliminating buildings like the First Christian Church and Morey's Music store.

"Interestingly, many people who found themselves drawn to improving existing city sectors and neighborhoods were attracted to the historic preservation movement picking up momentum all over the country. As I think back, I see that my interest in local politics and healthy cities led directly to my activities connected to historic preservation and perhaps the other way around too. Learning from the efforts of others while attending California Preservation conferences led to my co-founding of Long Beach Heritage and encouraging the hiring of the first Preservation Officer."

Peter received his state general contractor's license in the late 1970s and began to work on major Long Beach restoration projects. His favorites were the George Bixby house on La Linda Drive and the Babb/Pray/Dawson house on Country Club Drive. He was named to the Mayor's Task Force to establish a master plan for Rancho Los Cerritos, where he is working today on various preservation projects.

Thank you Peter for continuing to serve as an Advisor to the Long Beach Heritage Board of Directors.

JANE'S WALK IN CRAFTSMAN VILLAGE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Jane Jacobs was an author and activist who advocated for inclusive urban planning in which all stakeholders, city planners as well as residents, should have a say in how their city environment is built. Each year, around the country, neighborhoods organize Jane's Walks in order to invite residents to explore their urban surroundings. Craftsman Village hosted its Second Annual Jane's Walk on Saturday, May 18.

This year's walk was led by Michelle Arend-Ekhoff, Co-Chair of Craftsman Village Historic District. Participants gathered at Craftsman Village Park and were treated to donuts and coffee provided by Susan Wyant from Team Pennywise Real Estate. Craftsman Village Park plays a key role in this historic district because of the community-led effort to turn the once empty lot into a small neighborhood park for all of the residents to enjoy.

There was so much to see and talk about as the group looked over the mural at 7th St. and Orange Avenue and hurried quickly back to the park to enjoy refreshments provided by Feel Good Salsa, a local business in Craftsman Village.

Craftsman Village appreciated the opportunity to present this tour and specially thanks Steve Gerhardt, Executive Director of Walk Long Beach, the key person who organizes these tours throughout the city each year. Everyone had a great time and Craftsman is ready to host more tours!

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CALENDAR

Annual Meeting
July 28th @2:00 p.m. Joe Jost's

WALKING TOURS
Every 2nd Saturday - East Village
9:30 a.m. @Linden Ave & Ocean Blvd

Every 3rd Saturday - Downtown
9:30 a.m. @205 East 3rd Street

Every 4th Saturday - Willmore City
9:30 a.m. @953 Park Circle

August 3rd - North Pine Walking Tour
A featured event for Jane's Walk
9:30 a.m. @345 Pine Avenue

BEMBRIDGE TOURS
Every Tuesday at 1:30 & 2:30 p.m.

Every 4th Saturday at 1:30 & 2:30 p.m.

LONG BEACH HERITAGE

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BECOME A MEMBER!

Long Beach Heritage, a nonprofit organization supported by members and volunteers, is the preeminent resource for advocacy and education about the integral role architectural heritage and historic places have in the city's unique character and its future development. Read about membership levels and benefits at www.lbheritage.org/get-involved/become-a-member.

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❍ Call me with information on how I can volunteer with the Long Beach Heritage

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❑ Heritage Household.....$75
❑ Heritage Preservationist.....$100
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