

AT HOME WITH HISTORY: TOUR NEW LOS ANGELES HISTORIC DISTRICTS ON NOVEMBER 6

The City of Los Angeles' burgeoning Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ) program will be showcased in an upcoming tour sponsored by the Los Angeles Conservancy – "At Home with History: Exploring Los Angeles' Historic Preservation Overlay Zones" – on **Sunday, November 6, 2011, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.** Tickets are \$30 for L.A. Conservancy members, \$40 for the general public, and \$10 for kids 12 and under.

You'll have the chance to explore three historic neighborhoods and enjoy docent-led tours of at least five private residences, ranging from a turn-of-the-century mansion to a 1930s apartment complex.



A home in the recently designated Wilshire Park Historic Preservation Overlay Zone

"At Home with History" is a self-paced tour. See first-hand how owners preserve their historic homes while keeping them wonderfully livable, adding their own personalities and layers of history. You can visit the homes, explore the neighborhoods, and talk with "neighborhood ambassadors" at your own pace, and in whatever order you choose. Vis-

iting all of the tour homes will take about four hours. The City of Los Angeles now has 29 HPOZs, with more in the works. This special, one-time-only tour features three recently designated HPOZs, coined "the triplets" by residents. Country Club Park, Wilshire Park, and Windsor Village are adjacent to one another, sharing a border along Crenshaw Boulevard near Olympic Boulevard, and sharing a single HPOZ Board. Developed in the early to mid-1900s, each neighborhood has diverse styles and types of housing, and each has a unique and fascinating history.

Office of Historic Resources staff will also be participating in the tour, providing information to tour-goers about the City's HPOZ program and historic preservation resources available from the City and the community. To order tickets for the tour, please visit

www.laconservancy.org.

HOW TO BECOME YOUR OWN LA HISTORY DETECTIVE

"Was this apartment building constructed before 1939?" This was the question that came before the OHR's Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ) staff team a few months ago. Answering that question took our staff down a research path that offers lessons for anyone seeking to learn more about our local historic properties and neighborhoods.

The owner of a four-plex in the South Carthay HPOZ insisted that her building wasn't supposed to be

included as a Contributing Element (HPOZ speak for "a historically significant building") in the historic district because it wasn't a part of the neighborhood during South Carthay's Period of Significance, the neighborhood's main period of development, which ended in 1939.

South Carthay is a residential neighborhood that was subdivided and developed during the 1930s. In many ways, the historic district,

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HOW TO BECOME YOUR OWN LA HISTORY DETECTIVE

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adopted in 1986 as the City's second HPOZ, is a case study on the Spanish Colonial Revival house. While there are other architectural styles in the neighborhood (its Moderne apartments and are not to be missed) South Carthay is best known for its Spanish Colonial Revival houses and duplexes. With generous balconies and patios, comically large windows and wide-opening casement windows, South Carthay shows us how Spanish Colonial Revival might be the best way to embrace our glorious weather here in Los Angeles.

So when the question came up as to whether or not a boxy four-plex, built in the Minimal Traditional style, should really be identified as a Contributor in South Carthay, it certainly piqued our staff's interest. Usually when this question comes up we look to a short list of quick and easy ways to learn more about a property's history.

First, we'll check in on a property's Historic Resources Survey page. The surveys compiled for most of our recent HPOZs are filled with information about a property's original construction, ownership, architectural features, and so on. However, some of our older HPOZs have much less information, and South Carthay's survey, certified in 1985, offers only a photograph of the building and an address.

Second, we usually check building permit information to learn about when a building was constructed and occupied, as well as when any subsequent construction occurred. The property owner investigated with the Department of Building and Safety's records division, and the only permits were available for the property were a Certificate of Occupancy for the four-plex, with a 1948 date. Now we were intrigued. The Certificate of Occupancy didn't really prove much about when the structure was built, but it certainly seemed to suggest that there was some merit to the property owner's claim that the four-plex was not a part of South Carthay's 1930s development era.

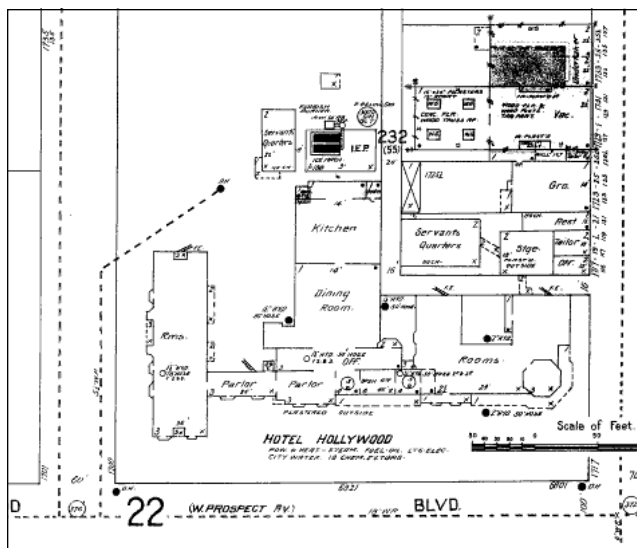
At this point, our third option to learn more about a property's vintage is to investigate Sanborn Fire Insurance Company Maps. The "Sanborns" are maps that were updated periodically

between the 1900s and the 1960s and that show building footprint information for every developed lot within the City. Using a cryptic coding system, they also show the user information about cladding and roofing materials as well as land uses. Originally intended for insurance purposes, the maps have become a treasure of information for researchers and preservationists. The maps can be browsed on the Los Angeles Public Library website, but should be consulted in-person when extensive research is required. Unfortunately, the only maps for South Carthay that we were able to find offered no conclusive indication as to when this four-plex became a part of the neighborhood.

This left us with a fourth option: photographic research. The Los Angeles Public Library provides an extensive photo archive that is searchable online (see www.lapl.org). Though the online content is just a fraction of the library's complete archive, it is an excellent starting place. UCLA's Geography Department also houses an extensive photo archive, including aerial photographs taken by several companies between the 1920s and 1970s. UCLA's archive is housed in a basement, where photographs are filed away by year and geography. Our search brought us to the Spencer Air Company aerials, where we perused the 1930s file drawers for the Mid-Wilshire area. Within minutes we found a plethora of photos of the South Carthay area dated between 1930 and 1939, many of which showed conclusively that the lot of interest on Crescent Heights near Pico Boulevard was vacant throughout South Carthay's original building period.

The property owner's claim that the four-plex was moved onto its lot in the 1940's was accurate and also helped to explain why there were no original building permits for the structure. The four-plex was re-designated as a Non-Contributor by the Cultural Heritage Commission.

Research using many of the well-maintained photo archives in existence, including the public library and UCLA, is an excellent way to learn more about L.A.'s historic neighborhoods, pinpoint construction dates, and even identify lost architectural features or buildings.



Screen capture of a 1913 Sanborn Map showing the old "Hollywood Hotel" at the corner of Hollywood and Highland, where the Kodak Theater is today.

CULTURAL HERITAGE COMMISSION TO DISCUSS FATE OF THE SIXTH STREET BRIDGE

With a final City Council decision on the proposed demolition and replacement of the Sixth Street Bridge (HCM #905) likely during November, the Cultural Heritage Commission will be holding a special hearing on the bridge project at its November 3rd Meeting.

At the November 3 meeting, at 10:00 a.m. in Room 1010 of City Hall, the Commission will hear a presentation from staff of the Bureau of Engineering and will discuss the preservation alternatives outlined in the project's Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR). City Council action on the FEIR is tentatively scheduled for November 16.



A recent image of the Sixth Street Bridge.

The bridge, nearly 2/3 of a mile long, is the largest and longest bridge constructed over the L.A. River. Unfortunately, the bridge is suffering structurally from Alkali Silica Reaction (ASR), a chemical

reaction that is causing destruction to the bridge's concrete.

While it now appears likely that the ASR will require replacement of the bridge's concrete, the Cultural Heritage Commission has previously requested that BOE fully evaluate a reconstruction alternative consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, akin to the approach taken in Pasadena during the early 1990s with the Colorado Street Bridge over the Arroyo Seco. If reconstruction is not feasible, the Commission also previously requested that BOE consider partial preservation alternatives that maximize retention of the bridge's key historic features.

Please contact Edgar Garcia, Preservation Planner with the Office of Historic Resources, at 213-978-1189 for more information on the proposed project.

OHR INTERNS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The Office of Historic Resources (OHR) is benefiting from the work of two talented interns this fall:

Laura MacDonald is a Master's student in Historic Preservation at the University of Southern California, from which she expects to graduate next May. She comes to the OHR and USC with a strong background in cultural resources, having worked as an archaeologist for several firms, including LSA Associates, Archeological Resource Management, and Pacific Legacy, Inc. She has a B.A. in Anthropology, specializing in Archaeology, from San Francisco State University. Laura is providing crucial support to the OHR's Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ) unit.

Amanda Yoder is a 2011 *magna cum laude* graduate of the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD), with a B.F.A in Historic Preservation and a Minor in Art History. Through her preservation program, she gained experience in completing National Register nomination forms and National Park Service Historic Preservation Certification Applications, and was named SCAD's "Preservationist of the Year" for 2011. New to Los Angeles, Amanda is already making significant contributions to the pre-survey and post-survey work on SurveyLA.

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SURVEYLA BEGINS WORK IN NEW COMMUNITIES

SurveyLA, the Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey Project, continues its progress across Los Angeles to identify historic resources in every corner of the city. This fall, SurveyLA is launching field surveys in six additional Community Plan Areas of Los Angeles.

This fall's surveys encompass two Community Plan Areas on the Westside (Palms-Mar Vista-Del Rey and West Los Angeles), the Central City North neighborhood (which includes Chinatown), and three Community Plan Areas in the Harbor (San Pedro, Harbor Gateway, and Wilmington).



Ivy Park Substation, Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #182, in the Palms-Mar Vista-Del Rey Community Plan Area.

While this work is taking place in the field, the SurveyLA team is finalizing the preliminary survey findings in the first five Community Plan Areas: West Adams-Baldwin Hills-Leimert, Hollywood, Sunland-Tujunga, South Los Angeles and South-

east Los Angeles. The voluminous survey findings are undergoing a detailed internal "peer review" by survey consultants and an external review by a Survey Review Committee of top experts in the historic preservation field. Once this process is complete, the OHR will begin sharing these results for public review in the coming months.

In addition, the OHR is finishing the extensive "MyHistoricLA" public outreach in the communities where survey work will begin in early 2012. We still need your help to identify the hidden gems in your area that may be less obvious to the professional survey teams. If you live in any of the following areas, it's not too late to tell us about significant historic places in your neighborhood. Please see article on Page 5 for additional information about participating in "MyHistoricLA."

Our 2012 surveys will be in: Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake-Cahuenga Pass; North Hollywood-Valley Village; Canoga Park-West Hills-Winnetka-Woodland Hills; Encino-Tarzana; Brentwood-Pacific Palisades; Bel Air-Beverly Crest; Westchester-Playa del Rey; Arleta-Pacoima; Mission Hills-Panorama City-North Hills Silverlake-Echo Park-Elysian Valley; and Westlake.

Whether you want to serve as Neighborhood Coordinator for SurveyLA in your area, or just want to tell us about a single historic place that matters to you, we hope you'll get involved now to help make SurveyLA a success.

If you have any questions about how to get involved with MyHistoricLA activities or about how to submit information on historic places, please contact Janet Hansen for SurveyLA, at janet.hansen@lacity.org.



What Is SurveyLA?

SURVEYLA: THE LOS ANGELES HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY PROJECT is the first-ever comprehensive inventory of our city's historic resources.

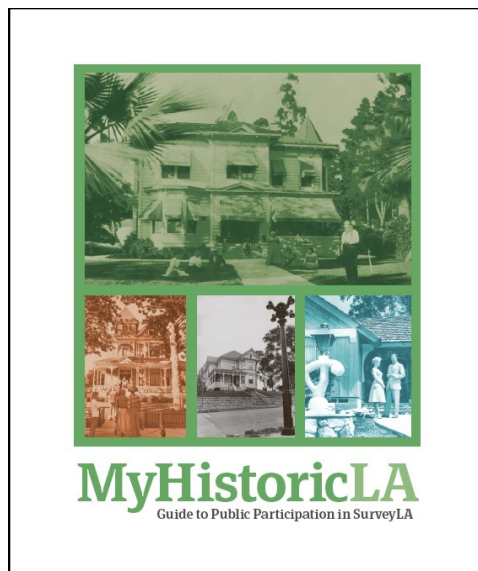
The survey findings will have a multiplicity of benefits and uses: it will help direct future growth, shape the revision of Los Angeles' 35 Community Plans, streamline environmental review processes, provide opportunities for public education, assist in disaster planning, and spur heritage tourism and the marketing of historic neighborhoods and properties.

The J. Paul Getty Trust and the City of Los Angeles have entered into a grant agreement for SurveyLA under which the Getty has committed to providing up to \$2.5 million to the project, subject to matching requirements by the City. Field surveys and evaluations will occur from 2010 through 2013. The Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) is also providing technical and advisory support for SurveyLA. For more information visit the SurveyLA website, www.SurveyLA.org.

INTRODUCE US TO YOUR HISTORIC LA!

Do you have information about a local lesser-known building or place that is an important part of your community history? The OHR wants to hear from you! Tell us about your favorite Los Angeles gems: the homes of your early community leaders; the locations of transformative social and political movements; the buildings that reveal the strong ethnic diversity of the city; significant cultural institutions; and intact districts of early homes or commercial buildings.

The “MYhistoricLA” component of SurveyLA gives you an opportunity to contribute your knowledge about Los Angeles, assisting the project’s professional survey teams in identifying and evaluating potential resources and districts in your community. Identifying a potential resource through “MYhistoricLA” does not mean that your site will receive historic designation – it may not ultimately be found to be significant – but your submission will ensure that potentially significant places are not overlooked during the survey.



SurveyLA’s “MyHistoricLA” Guide to Public Participation

In recent months, the OHR has received some fascinating submissions about hidden Los Angeles treasures.

Here is a sampling:

Bonnie Brae House: The small house at 216 N. Bonnie Brae Street was the original meeting place for members of the congregation that later became the Pentecostal Azusa Street Revival. The house, built in 1896, was the residence of two believers, John and Ruth Asberry. When African American preacher William Seymour, born to two slaves in 1870, was barred from

preaching at a local church, he began participating in the sermons at the home. Word spread about the inspiring services held at the small house, and the number of attendees grew rapidly until they needed more space for worship. After finding a new, larger meeting place on Azusa Street, the Revival, also called the Apostolic Faith Mission, became the largest congregation in the city at the time, with over 1,000 in attendance during services.

Kester Avenue Elementary School: Alumna Carol Coates brought Kester Avenue Elementary School in Sherman Oaks to our attention and has many fond memories of being a student there. Famed Austrian architect Richard Neutra was responsible for the groundbreaking 1951 design of the school which included special considerations for natural air circulation as well as the layout of classroom and outdoor spaces. Although the design kept the school cooler than most buildings, air conditioning was installed on the roof--so as not to disturb the historic appearance--in 2001. The school's design was so well-received that it was replicated for many other schools in the region that were not necessarily designed by Neutra himself.

Lois Wilson House: With information gathered during a pre-survey walkabout, SurveyLA discovered that a Spanish-influenced home built in 1935 on Hesby Street in Valley Village was the former residence of silent film star Lois Wilson. Wilson was a school teacher for a short time before segueing into a short stint on stage and then breaking into film. She was most prolific throughout the 1920s, starring in over one hundred films as well as numerous television, radio and stage productions but her career continued steadily into the 1950s when she retired. She is known for her memorable roles as Shirley Temple’s mother in *Bright Eyes* and as Mrs. Lowery in *Guiding Light*.

Finn House: Bonnie Finn, daughter of Los Angeles City Councilman (1981-1986) Howard Finn, shared information about their longtime Sunland family home with SurveyLA. The home was built in 1951 next door to an existing house on land purchased by the Finns in 1944. The new house was the first completed in the Shadow Island/Shadow Way subdivision. The subdivision was built by Finn in an efficient, simple, Mid-Century Modern style that complimented the peaceful, hilly street-- so peaceful that visitors to the Finn House liken it to a tree house. Finn’s work as a developer involved continuous interaction with City Hall and eventually led to his election to City Council where he served until his untimely death in 1986. The family continued to live there until Mrs. Finn’s death in 2010.

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L.A.'S NEWEST HISTORIC-CULTURAL MONUMENTS

The Cultural Heritage Commission and City Council have designated three new Historic-Cultural Monuments (HCMs) from July to September 2011. Los Angeles' newest monuments include the following:



HCM #1003: Ralph J. Chandler Residence (1926 North Hobart Boulevard)

Built in 1921 in Los Feliz and modified in 1931, the Ralph J. Chandler

Residence was designed in the Mediterranean Revival style. The residence was designed by noted architect Henry F. Withey for Ralph J. Chandler, nephew of the *Los Angeles Times* publisher, Harry Chandler, and vice president and general manager of the Los Angeles Steamship Company, which provided wooden ships for the government during World War I. The smooth stucco building is L-shaped in plan and has a red clay tile roof, leaded bottle glass windows and a recessed arched entry, decorated with a keystone, cartouche and quoins on the primary façade. Significant interior features include cathedral ceilings, decorative wrought iron work, hardwood floors, fireplaces and light fixtures. The later 1931 additions were designed by a second notable architect, Carleton M. Winslow.



HCM #1004: Richard Henry Dana Branch Library (3320 Pepper Street)

Serving the Northeast Los Angeles community of Cypress Park, the Richard Henry

Dana Branch Library was built in 1926 and designed in the Georgian Revival style by the architectural firm of Henry Sims Bent. The built-in wooden bookcases, light fixtures, hardwood and tile floors, wainscoting and paneled double doors lend significance to the library's interior. The library was named after Richard Henry Dana, the 19th century author (*Two Years Before the Mast*) based on public suggestions of regional literary figures and California pioneers. It was later renamed Cypress Park Branch in 1969 when the Library Department began renaming city libraries after the communities they served. Although the building is currently vacant, plans are in development for its adaptive reuse as a senior center.



HCM #1005 Catalina Brent Pico House (220 South Wilton Place)

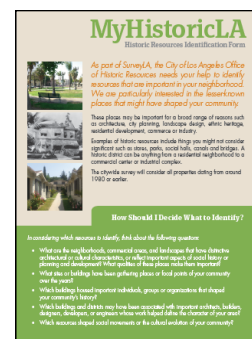
Built in 1912, the bungalow is an excellent example of a Craftsman style residence with Tudor, Swiss Chalet and Japa-

nese design inspirations. The house is located near Hancock Park, in the Wilshire community, within the National Register Wilton Historic District along with several other exemplary bungalows. The square plan residence has a cross gabled roof with mission-inspired decorative verge boards and wood clapboard and shingle siding. Rough stone pillars, double hung windows with diamond pane upper sashes and grouped wood porch supports add to the building's ornamental features. Significant interior elements include a large, recessed rough stone fireplace, Tudor arches, box-beam ceilings with pendant lighting, built-in cabinets and barrel-shaped glass doors in the dining room. The house was built for Catalina Brent Pico and her husband, Romulo Pico, son of General Don Andres Pico and member of one of the most influential California families at the time. Pico lived in the bungalow until 1918, several years after her husband's death. Another residence of Catalina Brent Pico and Romulo Pico in the San Fernando Valley, the Andres Pico Adobe (also called the Romulo Pico Adobe,) is also a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument (#7) as well as a California Historical Landmark.

INTRODUCE US TO YOUR HISTORIC LA!

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How can you pass along this information? Simply go to the SurveyLA website today and click on the "MyHistoricLA" form at:



<http://www.preservation.lacity.org/survey/historic-identification>.