

Hollywood[®] HERITAGE INC.

Winter/Spring 2007

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Volume 26, Number 1

Hollywood Heritage is a non-profit organization dedicated to preservation of the historic built environment in Hollywood and to education about the early film industry and the role its pioneers played in shaping Hollywood's history.

**Wattles
Turns
100**

WELCOME!
CPF Conference
May 3-6!

**Chinese Theater Marquee
Saved at Last Minute**

**Part 2 of Allan Ellenberger's
Biography of Gurdon Wattles**

Museum Gets Major Donation

Evenings @ The Barn Updates

**Hollywood Heritage
Files Suit Over
Historic Demolitions**



President's Message

Committee System Reactivated

by Marc Wanamaker

The beginning of 2007 for the officers and members of Hollywood Heritage has been an ever growing set of challenges related to the organization as a whole and its goals for the new year. Wattles is constantly being main-



tained and the 107 year-old barn continues to upgrade its exhibits and physical infrastructure. Committees have been set up to take on some of these challenges which includes vigilance when it comes to preservation issues in Hollywood.

This President and the committees related to the barn and its museum operations will continue to improve the facilities there and will be slowly re-configuring the exhibit spaces and creating a proper book and souvenir store. The programs have already started with great

success and will expand with interesting and informative programs all related to Hollywood's heritage.

The committees have already started or are continuing various projects for outreach into the community, one such being committee chair George Kiel's walking tours. We are approaching summer and time is of the essence. Everyone on the Board, the committees and members are looking forward to making an effort to meet the challenges of this coming year and I am hopeful that we all will accomplish many of the goals we have established.

If you're interested in serving on a committee or helping in any other way, we're always looking for active members. Please write to: webmaster@hollywoodheritage.org and we'll be happy to "sign you up."

In May Hollywood Heritage is proud to be a co-sponsor and co-host of the 2007 California Preservation Foundation Conference. On behalf of all of Hollywood Heritage, I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome them to our home, **HOLLYWOOD!**



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This is a special color double issue of the *Hollywood Heritage Newsletter* commemorating Wattles 100 years and the CPF Conference in Hollywood

Hollywood Heritage member Ted Otis captured the demolition of the historic properties at 1810 Whitley Avenue on January 9, 2007

photo by Ted Otis

Historic image of Wattles Mansion Hollywood Heritage Museum archive



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Chinese Theater “Dragon” Marquee Saved

by Robert W. Nudelman

On Friday, December 8, Hollywood Heritage learned by accident, that the historic, marquees, neon dragons, canopy, and other items that were in the Chinese Theater courtyard from 1958 to 2001 were to be salvaged as scrap metal the next day from their storage area. Finding this out at 5:30 that evening, it took an hour to track down a Paramount Studio official who could stop the action and allow for Hollywood Heritage to remove the items for preservation and eventual display.

Step back to August 2001 when the Chinese Theater restoration, based on a deal negotiated by Hollywood Heritage as part of the Hollywood/Highland project, was commencing. The neon marquee and canopy were to be removed and Hollywood Heritage worked out an agreement to receive all but one neon dragon, which was to go to the Museum of Neon Art (MONA). At the last minute, that deal was cancelled and Paramount Pictures (co-owners of Mann Theaters, operator and owner of the building) decided that they wanted the items and hauled them away to storage in Burbank.

There they sat for over five years. When Paramount's president of studio operations, Charlie Armstrong called to see if we were interested in some miniature ships from the 1940s (12' to 25' long) that were to be thrown out, Hollywood Heritage president Marc Wanamaker and I went to the storage site went. We agreed to move the seven ships out to Debbie Reynolds' studio for even-

tual joint display after restoration. I asked about the sign and was shown it in the back outdoor deck.

Looking more chipped than chipper after a couple of moves and the residency of several cats, this treasure had managed to survive. There were no plans at the time to do anything with it, but we reminded the studio of our interest, past and present. Later that day, when scheduling a Saturday pickup time for the ships, we found out it would be fine as the recycler was coming to



remove the signs. Asking for a clarification of what signs, I was told the Chinese Theater's as the space was being rented out to another company (the reason the ships were leaving as well).

Luckily, someone that night knew who Hollywood Heritage was and agreed to halt the removal until we could talk to Mr. Armstrong (who was unaware of any of this) to get permission to save the signage, et al. The following Monday began a process to get permission to get the signs to us. I contacted Kim Kogen, director of the Museum of Neon Art, that Friday (where I could reach her because they were having their Christmas party that night) to get information on repairing and moving the signs and to see if they were still interested in one of them.

She was, and the next week began contacting sign movers and the per-

son who had done their repairs on the sign for its last ten years (who had also removed and saved some of the neon). Numerous cost estimates were made to move it ASAP, and ideas were tossed around as to where to put all of it.

Hollywood Heritage member Todd Fisher, Debbie Reynolds' son and director of her museum project, was coming into town with a 45' flatbed trailer over the New Year's holiday. With the help of his wife, Christy, their son James, and associate Eugene Shlugleit, we filled the trailer with the canopy ceiling and supports on December 30 (the previous week Todd had brought an enclosed trailer to move the

ships, one at a time).

Next came the question of where to locate a 40' long marquee (in two 20-foot sections) and the rest of the items. The neon dragons both went to MONA to be eventually repaired. The remainder went to the Hollywood Heritage Museum, stored in different areas until repairs can be done. It took two fully loaded 60' flatbed trailers to bring all of it to the museum with a crew of six to unload it. Unfortunately, one of the marquees could not be saved as its condition from removal and storage was so poor that it was beyond repair. We were able to save everything else.

Needless to say, a lot of people helped to make this happen, especially occurring as it did, during the holidays. Shawn Butler of Western Studio Service went out of his way

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Another Landmark Demolished, Hollywood Heritage Files Suit

by Robert W. Nudelman

After over a year of discussions between Hollywood Heritage and the Community Redevelopment Agency of Los Angeles (CRA), councilmembers Garcetti and LaBonge and their staffs, and Ed Young from the city attorney's office, their actions spoke loudly to us—historic preservation and planning laws will not be enforced in Hollywood. Having no other recourse left and several more historic buildings currently being threat-

signed off on the demolition and variances for the new condo project to be built there.

Hollywood Heritage had nominated the building as a city landmark when the CRA refused to acknowledge its landmark status described in the 1986 and 2003 Hollywood Redevelopment Plans.



The Demolition on January 9, 2007 of the 1921, near perfect condition 1810 Whitley (seen in top photo) is an example of the city's disregard for previously designated structures in the Hollywood Redevelopment area
photos by Ted Otis

ened with demolition, Hollywood Heritage filed suit against the City of Los Angeles, the CRA, and Whitley Investment Group on April 5.

This problem came to a head with the demolition of 1810 Whitley Avenue. Our last newsletter described the history of the 1921 fourplex's protection under the Hollywood Redevelopment Plan. Despite this, the CRA, with the support of, if not following the lead of, City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo (Ed Young handles the CRA for the city attorney)

The Cultural Heritage Commission approved the nomination and submitted it to the city council for final approval. Located in Councilman Tom LaBonge's district (about 80 feet north of Garcetti's district), LaBonge made no commitment either way during the process. During the nomination and since January 2006, LaBonge and his staff were notified. I personally told Tom of the planned nomination at that time. Since January 2006, every written response to the owner's plans to demolish the

building to build condos was sent to the councilman's office (he also receives our newsletters).

Despite all of this—the almost year's worth of communication, personal contact with the councilman and his staff, and numerous requests for his position, the councilman said nothing, except that he told me in May that his staff would handle it. All indications from his staff were that the councilman would support the nomination. The nomination was, after all, a reaffirmation of the 2003 Redevelopment Plans that he voted for, and which included all of the information giving 1810 Whitley protective landmark status.

Finally, at the October 17 city council's planning and land use sub-committee, his position was announced—he would oppose the nomination. The claim made at that time was that the nomination was “unfair to the developer” to make this nomination at the last minute and he and his staff had no knowledge of the demolition concern until August. Nowhere in the city landmark regulations is there a time limit when a nomination can be made. There was no response to how the legally binding designation of 1810 Whitley as a historic structure, could be ignored or refuted.

Again, our timing for the nomination base based on the city's refusal to uphold the law as clearly laid out in the Redevelopment Plan and its Environmental Impact Report. Even so, Hollywood Heritage continued to negotiate with Councilman LaBonge, and several conversations between us and his staff, as well as the councilman, took place. We had pledged to work to find a buyer that could purchase the property and the

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Earl Carroll, Madame Tussauds, Sears, Columbia Square, and More

The Hollywood real estate market continues to put pressure on historic resources. The issues described in our lawsuit illustrate some of the problems caused by the development surge. But the other problem is the many variances given away to developers, especially when they are given to make large scale, non-compliant projects possible.

These amount to taxpayer giveaways. A developer will ask for a variance to build a project 30% larger than allowed by code, then claim he has no subsidies. Yet,

historic buildings or open space. Removing the density from these sites protects them as development pressure is reduced. Facade easements can be then more readily added for additional protection.

For now though, developers are simply given the additional density by the city. Density transfers would require paying the donor site's owner compensation which would make historic preservation or open space more economically viable.

Almost every development in Hollywood today demands a den-

thy. They, on a whole as there have been voices of dissent, opposed any project that looks like it may have a basis in the historic architecture of Hollywood. Many developers have presented quality projects to the DRC only to have them stripped of detail and merit. No Spanish, no Streamline Moderne, no Art Deco, no fantasy (such as the Chinese or Egyptian Theaters), etc. Witness their success with the Hollywood and Highland project, a bungled design they approved and that cost the developers a \$500 million loss, and compare it to The Grove at Farmer's Market, built with a historic and fantasy context for its architecture and is a large financial success. Yet the DRC still favors the design of Hollywood and Highland to the Grove; a design they would never approve in Hollywood.

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every variance issued for density increases, setback reductions, parking reductions, signage increases, etc. is a free gift from the city. Some of these gifts amount to millions of dollars in subsidies, yet neither the developer nor the city put a price tag on it. Also, the city almost never asks for anything in return and when it does it is only a token amount.

There is a way to partially mitigate this when densities are increased. If a TFAR program were in effect, as there was supposed to be here 20 years ago, increases in density would be transferred from

city bonus. Despite the extra stress on the city's overburdened services this will cause, the city routinely approves these at no cost to the benefitting developer (although developers would point out that there are political costs to be met).

Additionally, the problem with design has been going on for years as the notorious Design Review Committee (DRC) of the council office only favors modern design, preferring something of a 1970s vintage. They have approved every attempt to design buildings that look like a box with holes cut in it, while blocking anything with a historic sympa-

We Get Letters

In Defense Of All The Sites Of Hollywood

I love Hollywood, I love Hollywood Heritage and all its members because they protect the magic and work creating eternities. Congratulations Hollywood Heritage. This is a desire of Rodolfo Garavagno and his children.

Rodolfo Garavagno
Trujuí, Moreno, Buenos Aires
Argentina.

Hollywood Heritage member.

Rodolfo has written us several impassioned letters stating his support from Buenos Aires. His much appreciated message has been truncated due to space limitations. Ed.



An example of the lavish staging for the Earl Carroll Vanities
photo from the archives of The Hollywood Heritage Museum

Preservation *Continued from page 6.*

The DRC has been given tremendous power in Hollywood by Councilman Garcetti. Power that should require full disclosure of its members and use of the Brown Act as is required by state law. The meetings are finally open now, but there are other conditions that need to be met. Councilman Garcetti needs to change the DRC membership so that its members respect the history of Hollywood, not merely resulting in hack projects, lost opportunities, and financial blunders, as is its current legacy.

These are some of the reasons why Hollywood Heritage attends 25-30 public meetings, hearings and neighborhood council meetings, each month. Plus meetings with city officials and developers. Written responses are frequently made and most are on the web site. At present, we are involved with watching over 32 projects in Hollywood, plus numerous plans and studies including the Hollywood General Plan update, which is now over 10 years late (Reagan was president when the last General Plan update was done

here, the rest of the city's plans were updated in the '90s and are on their next update).

Below is a sample of projects currently being followed. Hollywood Heritage thanks the many members of the community who also attend the meetings to give their support and input.

**Earl Carroll / Aquarius/
Nickelodeon Theater**

This 1938 Streamline Moderne classic has had a rich history in many incarnations. For the past several years the Nickelodeon children's television network has been using the auditorium area as a sound stage. The elaborate lobby has been carefully restored during this time by them while the auditorium and exterior remain as they found them.

Last year the property changed hands with plans for a housing development on the site, which includes a parking lot. Early on, even before the sale, we reaffirmed to City Councilman Garcetti and the CRA that the building needed to be protected whatever developed, and we were told this would occur.

Essex Property Trust, the new developer, showed Hollywood Heritage its current plans this past February. It included housing in three different structures, two in the parking lot area and one on top of the theater. While the design was better than usual for Hollywood, and the height was limited to 6-stories, the structure over the theater was a problem. The supports would protrude into the auditorium; making it unusable as a performance space (the lobby was untouched).

The auditorium would then become "creative office spaces." Hollywood Heritage suggested that the "creative" part would be to redesign the housing to set it back and straddle the auditorium, thus preserving it for future use. Also the center building would require modification, including the elimination of a large supergraphic billboard that would overpower the theater and a setback from the Earl Carroll.

To their credit, Essex had already agreed to restore the 1938 façade, including the original neon designs and a new version of the famed wall of signature blocks. They also agreed to review modifications to the center building and continue to refine the overall design to be more reflective of the Streamline Moderne era, which they were attempting to do. Most importantly, they are reviewing the structure above the auditorium so as to preserve the theater as a theater per our request.

It is still early on in the project design phase and we hope future plans will reflect the modifications as presented by Hollywood Heritage. Essex agreed to this review of these changes as we stressed that these would be necessary for any approval by Hollywood Heritage.

A brief history of the theater. It began as the home of the Earl Carroll Vanities from 1938 to 1952 and included an 80 ft wide stage with two revolving platforms (still there today). Next came Frank Sennes'

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Signage Wars Continue

by Robert W. Nudelman

The most frequent complaint we hear at Hollywood Heritage concerns the proliferation of billboard size and larger signs in Hollywood. They cover historic and non-historic structures including several contributing buildings to the National Register Historic District. Only in Hollywood is this allowed and it is actually encouraged by the city through the many

audacity though. This concerned the V-shaped supergraphic structure that would be built on top of the 3-story 7 Seas Restaurant building, also known as the Eddie Nash Building today after its colorful current owner. Nash is selling the 1920 building to CIM Group, Hollywood's #1 sign peddlers, as well as its largest property owners. The building currently has a large billboard on it that is 25' tall x 60' long.

This was not enough for CIM though. The proposed new ones are to be 60' tall including the frame, with the actual sign panel 50' tall, while the height of the building is only 48'. The sign complex would be equivalent of over 40% of the building's length. In other words it was overpowering the National Register Historic District building. The proposed sign would cover approximately 4,

958 sq. ft. while the existing one is 1,625 sq. ft.

CIM does plan to restore the facade of the building after the purchase, which is good news. But the current blighted look of the building is due to the city's refusal to enforce codes that would force the owner to clean up his building. Also, CIM is buying the building which includes the parking lot behind it. They have approvals from the CRA to move forward on plans to build 250,000 square feet of office and retail space in the back on this lot and others to still be obtained. They are expanding the back of the existing building to add thousands of square feet of new space for office and retail,

which is fine.

Somehow though, all this is dependent on getting the larger signs. The price of the land was reported by the *Los Angeles Times* to be \$35 million, which I believe is only slightly above the actual cost. The cost and revenue of the expanded building and the large scale project planned in back would all somehow collapse if the additional signage was not granted. As Hollywood Heritage stated in a previous hearing on this sign, if a project of this size and cost (this represents an investment of well over \$100 million) will not be able to proceed without the additional signage, then it's an excessively shaky financial deal and

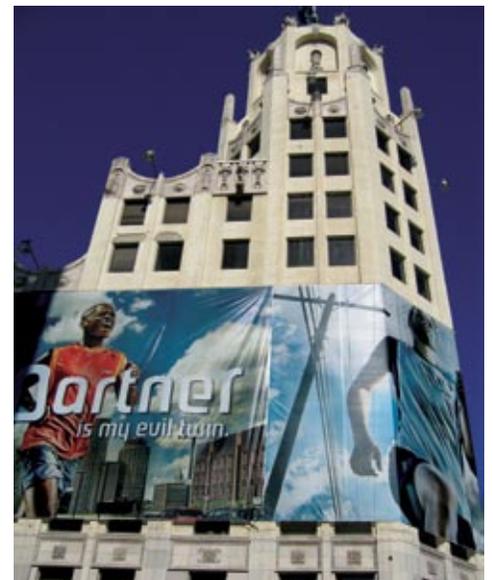


A Non-permitted Supergraphics sign covering the second and third floors of the Eddie Nash building (7 Seas) with current billboard on top
photo by Marc Wanamaker

variances granted or by the lack of enforcement of weak codes by City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo.

As recently stated in the *Los Angeles Daily News*, Delgadillo's 2001 election campaign received \$400,000 in donated billboards from sign companies. So, of course, he is reluctant to enforce the city codes. His office even signed off on the massive wraparound supergraphic covering the 1928 Security Trust Tower at Hollywood and Highland after the CRA and Cultural Heritage Department (it is a city landmark) turned it down. But that's what friends are for.

The April 10 Central Area Planning Commission set a record for



Supergraphic sign wrapped around the Security Trust Tower at Hollywood and Highland
photo by Marc Wanamaker

CIM cannot afford to go forward.

As bizarre as this scenario sounds, it was the argument made at the April 10 hearing. It was the one used by the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce in its post-hearing notification to its members as to why they supported it.

What makes this different though is that the staff report hammered the project, and they continued to

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1907-2007

Celebrate With Us As Wattles Mansion Turns 100

by Stephen X. Sylvester

Yes it's true; believe it or not, this year the Wattles Mansion is celebrating its one hundredth birthday! For the preservation minded, the fact that ANY building in Los Angeles would survive a century is hard to fathom. And for Hollywood Heritage members and those who know the rollercoaster history of the Wattles Mansion, the fact that it has not only just survived but is currently thriving, is no less than a miracle.

Past issues of this newsletter have gone into great detail on the property's trials and tribulations. The winter 2002 issue contained the entire historic report on the property funded by a grant from the J. Paul Getty Preserve L.A. program. The September 2006 issue contained Part One of Allan R. Ellenberger's article on Gurdon Wallace Wattles.

Back in 1907, the dream home of Gurdon W. Wattles was a Southern California showplace, even prominently featured in Hollywood Chamber of Commerce literature. But with the Crash of '29, the family's fortunes dwindled and so began a slow and steady decline of the mansion and gardens. When Gurdon Wattles Jr. sold the property to the City of Los Angeles in 1969, the city ultimately had full reign to do with the property whatever it wanted. They had no plans for restoring the house or gardens. Moreover, at one point the plans called for the house and gardens to be demolished, the land leveled and several playing fields taking their place. The passage of Proposition 13 helped to keep this grotesque scenario from becoming a reality. The bill, passed overwhelming by the voters, cut property taxes which in turn cut



Postcard image of "Jualita" as the Wattles Mansion was known

photo from the Hollywood Heritage Museum archive

funding for all city projects.

As the property awaited its unknown fate, it was often abandoned and unkempt, which only increased the vandalism and graffiti in the gardens and house. Likewise, the easy access to the house interior greatly increased the odds of one of the many squatters starting a fire and sealing the property's fate for good. The ultimate survival of this landmark started purely by chance when Hollywood Heritage Inc. founder Marian Gibbons was driving around the Hollywood Hills and discovered this diamond in the rough. She quickly contacted fellow Hollywood Heritage, Inc. board member Fran Offenhauser who spent countless hours writing a response to the Request for Proposals (RFP). Once Hollywood Heritage was awarded the lease from the City of Los Angeles, their army of volunteers went to work. After a great deal of effort and generous material and plant donations, the road to recovery was well on its way.

Now is the time to celebrate this glorious milestone. Heartfelt cheers to one hundred years that have seen

many good times, many bad times and most importantly, an appropriate Hollywood style happy ending.

On Sunday, June 3, 2007, from 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm Hollywood Heritage is hosting a classic birthday party for our beloved Wattles Mansion and Gardens. The day will include great music by Art Deco, a car display from the Model T Ford Club of Southern California, Silent Auction, great food, beverages, desserts and birthday cake, lots of fun and many surprises. During the festivities, we plan to honor other selected historical landmarks. Those currently being considered are Yamishiro Restaurant, the Magic Castle, Bob Barker's original Outpost Estates residence and the American Society of Cinematographers clubhouse.

A "Save the Date" card has been sent to the membership at the beginning of the year. A formal invitation will be mailed shortly and there will be a limited amount of tickets available. Make your plans now and tell your friends. Let's all make this event one to remember!

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Moulin Rouge Theater and Restaurant, where a frequent act was the Will Mastin Trio, featuring an upcoming young star, Sammy Davis, Jr. Sennes and his director Donn Arden would bring their version of Hollywood to Las Vegas by 1960, forever reinventing the Vegas stage show, based on their work here. As the Aquarius Theater in the mid 1960s to the early 1970s, it featured many of the great rock and roll bands of the era, and was the Los Angeles venue for the play, *Hair*. Television shows produced there ranged from *Queen for a Day* to *Hullabaloo*. By the 1970s and '80s it was off and on used for live theater. In the 1990s Nickelodeon took over for its current use as a television studio. The theater can currently be seen as the interior of *Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip*, while the exterior on that show is the Palladium across the street.

6000 Carlton Way

On the cover of our last issue, we highlighted five structures; four houses pre 1915 and one four-plex apartment building from 1915 that were to be demolished. These had all received federal funds through FEMA for restoration after the 1994 Northridge earthquake and were in very good condition. They backed up to another group of similar houses on LaBaig Avenue that also had received FEMA funds, all due to their historic significance.

The CRA had the developer prepare another historic report saying these homes were not significant, despite the federal acknowledgment, and approved their demolition for a new housing project. Hollywood Heritage challenged the CRA's findings and the then potential violations of federal law. Finally, the CRA reversed their position and held off the demolition as a result of our challenge.

The owners, Maripat Donovan and her sister agreed to find other

nearby locations to move the homes to where they would be preserved. One is to go to an empty lot on LaBaig Avenue, a block away, to provide infill housing in the historic area. The others are still being planned for but the owners have agreed to preserve and move them before starting new construction.

Though Hollywood Heritage would have preferred that they remain on-site, the CRA's guidelines do allow for relocation as a means of preservation. Thanks to Hollywood Heritage's challenge of the CRA's approval, these historic homes will be saved. But this should have been done automatically as the law provides, instead of being dependent on our vigilance. Carlton Way has been stripped of its many historic buildings, under the city attorney's reversing of historic statutes. Only through the threat of federal intervention did things change here. Others though, continue to fall through the cracks and are reduced to rubble including a "protected" bungalow courtyard across the street from these homes.

We do applaud the fact that the Donovans did agree to comply and protect the homes. But the city needs to do its job as not all such cases have a happy ending.

Camerford Bungalows

This unique grouping of mostly 1916 bungalows started as an L-shaped courtyard. By 1939, similar Craftsman styled bungalows, some two-stories, were added filling in and expanding the "village" of homes. Several large trees and a number of fruit trees decorated the complex.

The interiors were original, if nondescript, and the exteriors were in very good condition. But as with too many such structures in Hollywood, their days were numbered. A large scale residential and retail project was planned to cover this site and the rest of the block to Melrose Avenue (a block west of Gower Street). The housing was a typical working

class design of the era and from aerial photos appeared to be the first multi-family units in the area (which was mostly farm land at the time).

By 1916 the movie studios were opening in this part of Hollywood with Clune's (now Raleigh) and Brunton (now Paramount) both within a couple of blocks of the Camerford bungalows. It could be strongly assumed that the housing was for the newly arriving studio workers in the area, as that was the only business there. The design was similar to the Clune's Studio buildings (1915) that are still there today. By 1920 the area had boomed and the bean fields sprouted housing. But this bungalow development was the oldest in the neighborhood.

The developers, Watt Genton, refused to protect the bungalows and yet another "report" was prepared to say that they were not historic. The reasons given were that these were not great examples of Craftsman architecture. They weren't, but their age, the number (19 bungalows) and importance as working class housing (a level of significance strongly supported today by the National Register) made them unique historic treasures in Hollywood.

To protect the structures from demolition either on site or by relocation, Hollywood Heritage nominated the group as a City Historic/Cultural Landmark. Brought to our attention by Doug Haines, an ardent preservationist for historic neighborhoods, he wrote the nomination with Robert W. Nudelman and Dave Monks. Special thanks to Jay Platt of the Los Angeles Conservancy for adding excellent comments to the nomination. A letter of support from Hollywood Heritage board member Christy McAvoy dealt with the importance of preserving working class housing, and Hollywood Heritage president Marc Wanamaker provided historic aerial photos of the area and a letter of support in his position as historian for Paramount and Raleigh studios. Jay's testimony

and that of longtime Hollywood Heritage supporter Ed Hunt added to the hearing.

Despite all of the evidence presented, the nomination failed. But not until after one of, if not *the*, longest debates in the history of the Cultural Heritage Commission. For 25 minutes (not including the various presentations) the commission anguished over the nomination, with a final vote of 3-1. The nomination and debate did finally cause the commission and staff to re-evaluate how they look at working class housing in the future.

This housing is the most endangered in Los Angeles and Camerford may be the one that landed on the barbed wire so that future nominations will be approached with more importance. It was an important debate to prevent, hopefully, future demolitions of this increasingly rare type of architecture.

It is not clear whether the nomination would have passed had the commission approved it. Councilman Garcetti supported the new project and refused to comment on the nomination (his deputy was at the meeting). As expected though, within a few days the 19 bungalows, and over 40 mature trees were demolished. The new project has yet to receive its approvals.

The Sears Project

Sears, Roebuck and Company opened, with great fanfare, a department at Santa Monica Boulevard and Western Avenue in 1928. Sears is still there today, although the Spanish-style building was stuccoed over into a non-descript box in the early 1970s. Now the surrounding parking lots and a few adjacent commercial structures are to be removed for another housing and retail complex over this 2-block area.

Though not in the original version of the project the developer, Continental Development Group, now plans to remove the stucco and restore the historic department store facade, with new storefront window design (the originals were removed). Sears may or may not remain for long at one of their oldest stores, but the plan is to keep the structure for retail use.

The other concern was the surrounding development. The original design by architect Gensler Associates was an exotic Spanish-style complex, much better than the usual tripe submitted for development in Hollywood. But as with all good plans, Councilman Garcetti's Design Review Committee did not like the "historic" design, and had a new plan done, removing the architectural details. The new plan, not quite up to the design standards of a Taco

Bell, was roundly opposed by the Neighborhood Council and not even liked by the architects, but the DRC found favor with it.

Lead by the Neighborhood Council and Hollywood Heritage's support of the first plan, a third design was prepared, a compromise move toward the original plan, but still not as good. But to get the councilman's approval, this de facto commission had to sign off, and it finally did on the compromise. Though not the quite level of quality originally planned for by the developer, at least the architectural "dumbing down" of the project was minimized. And, the historic Sears building will once again anchor the neighborhood.

The Old Spaghetti Factory

When last discussed, the previous developer had proposed a 12-story residential building located over the one story 1924 landmark. The front section of the building's original interior and exterior would be restored and reused for retail.

While this was not perfect, it did protect all historic parts of the building, albeit overpowering it with the new structure. The original plan presented to Hollywood Heritage and approved by the CRA and the city was to demolish the entire historic structure.

The property was sold late last

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The current Old Spaghetti Factory Building as it looked when it was the home of CBS' KNX radio from 1932 to 1938

photo courtesy of Marc Wanamaker/Bison Archive

Preservation *Continued from page 11*

year to a new developer for a mixed use project. Though the developer, Gerding Edlen, agreed to honor the commitment to restore the historic section of the building (the back 2/3 were gutted out and/or replaced in 1973), the new project was considerably larger at 23-stories. This would make it the tallest building in Hollywood, with one floor of retail, two floors of office space, and 20 stories with 311 condos.

Different design treatments were attempted to alleviate the impact. However, on a “modern” glass structure, as proposed, the Spanish style historic façade with columns and tiled room would be dwarfed and out of place. It appeared as though the new building had accidentally landed on the site and stepped on its historic neighbor. Try as they might, the size and design of the new building was simply, and obviously, incompatible with the old.

Hollywood Heritage appreciates the agreement to save and restore the historic structure, which housed the original Hollywood Museum (1928-32) as well as CBS/KNX’s radio studio in Hollywood (1932-38), the Max Reinhardt School of Acting, followed by KMPC radio and

Gene Autry’s ownership up to the Spaghetti Factory. While good intentions were there, the new project is too much of the wrong design.

There is a problem of any structure of this size on Sunset Boulevard given the tremendous problems with traffic there now and the 3000 new housing units scheduled within 3-4 blocks of this site, plus the over 1.5 million plus square feet of commercial development. All of this and much more farther down the street is proposed without any comprehensive or cumulative planning for development or traffic. This is not all the developer’s fault. Councilman Garcetti favors such large-scale projects and his staff even opposes the restoration of this landmark structure, favoring its demolition instead. This type of reasoning is a perfect example of why Hollywood Heritage has filed its lawsuit: 1) to enforce historic landmark protections; 2) to provide sound planning; 3) to give developers and the community a clear set of rules and guidelines to work from and not allowing planning and development to be determined by the whim of the councilperson or any other individual.

Hopefully a more sympathetic and realistic project will result that is viable and legal for all sides despite Councilman Garcetti’s unfortunate position.

The Clarett / Nederlander Project

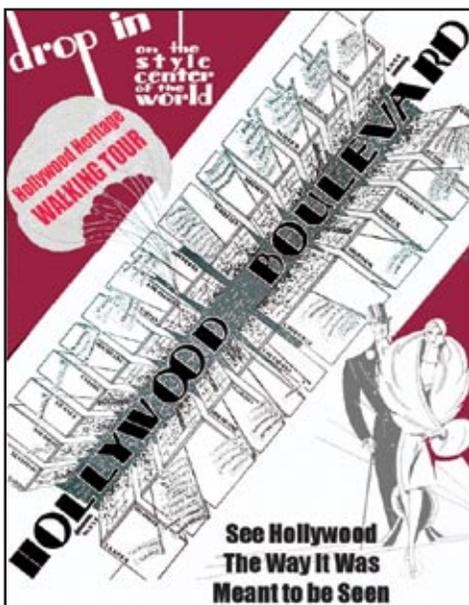
Covering approximately four blocks to the east of Argyle Avenue on both sides of Hollywood Boulevard, this new project is anchored by the 1930 Pantages Theater. The theater’s operator and principal owner, the Nederlander Company is one of the world’s most prominent producer/promoters of theater and concert productions. For 30 years they have been assembling land on these blocks for a development that has had numerous partners and plans. In 2006 they partnered with the New York based

Clarett Group for a proposed residential and retail project on the site.

The proposal resulted in plans for eight apartment buildings, containing a total of 1042 units, including 100 designated as affordable, with no government subsidy. The ground floor would include 175,000 square feet of retail space focusing on neighborhood uses. They also agreed to cap the height to a maximum of six stories and build all parking underground, including the code requirements for the housing, new retail, and the Pantages. With the exception of a few non-historic structures, the land today is parking lots.

The CRA and Councilman Garcetti have been battling this project since its announcement. While some worthwhile design comments were requested and incorporated, their preference is for taller structures and office space. The inclusions of additional space for office use would require subsidies as the market is currently not there. The shortage for that is more the fault of the city for encouraging the conversions of several Hollywood office buildings into housing. The city’s planning, not Clarett’s, created the problem. The city also wants a reduction of parking which the Nederlanders refused to do so as to avoid negatively impacting the neighbors and the Pantages Theater, and Hollywood Heritage is in full support their decision.

The city is also absolutely crazed about creating a view corridor from Hollywood Boulevard to the landmark Little Country Church, one block north on Argyle, even though landscaping would block much of the view. Councilman Garcetti’s “reason” for this is a reference to the corridor in the 1993 draft Hollywood Boulevard Urban Design Guidelines. This is the first, and only, attempt made to enforce any part of the guidelines, which has never gone to city council for approval in 14 years. No other ele-



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ments are being enforced here or anywhere else, an example of selective enforcement at its best. Plans to reduce the height of the project near historic housing were agreed to by cutting it from 45 to 30 feet; but the councilman and CRA refuse to enforce or even suggest such demands at any other location near or next to historic residences. More to the point, these homes being cited as the reason for a change in plans are currently exempt from any historic preservation protections according to the CRA and city attorney, and could be demolished if their owners decide to put in their own 45 foot tall housing project.

Once again, this demonstrates the reasons for our lawsuit: 1) enforcement of design plans, for all relevant projects; 2) enforcement of historic preservation regulations. The Claret Group project is not a perfect design. Some parts look better than others. But the scale and parking are fine and design issues are more a problem of compromises due to a lack of direction rather than the skill of the developer and architect.

Pickford-Fairbanks Studio / Samuel Goldwyn Studio / Warner Hollywood Studio / The Lot

Caught in a battle between preservation and “modernization” is one of Hollywood’s oldest studios, now known as “The Lot.” The studio’s owners in 1993, Warner Brothers, obtained a number of development entitlements that allowed for substantial expansion of the eleven acre lot’s facilities to primarily office space. Further pressure was put on The Lot when the city of West Hollywood eminent domained property adjacent to the studio for the Gateway project at Santa Monica Boulevard and LaBrea Avenue (The Lot is located in West Hollywood, two blocks from Hollywood).

The city allowed the parking structure planned for that site to also be built in the studio site. Eventually

all this development intensity resulted in a plan that would demolish almost the entire studio built prior to 1958. Only sections of the studio’s landmark two story buildings that make up its façade along Santa Monica Boulevard and Formosa Avenue would remain, all pre-1958 buildings in the studio would be demolished.

New owners purchased the facility in 1999 and with it, the entitlements. Plans were redone and a new submittal was made this year, requiring new hearings in March at the West Hollywood Planning Commission. The revised plan did save one historic structure, the pre 1930 Mill Building, and parts of the façade structures. Some would be demolished except for their façade, some partially demolished and some saved. A five to six story modern structure, probably glass, would be built just behind all surviving elements, blocking off the back side and towering over the 1920s offices.

The three 1928 soundstages, the Pickford Building, the Fairbanks



Building (both c. 1930), and the administration building (c. 1925) would be demolished. The project would take place in three phases over 12 years as currently planned, starting with the façade structures and finishing with the replacement of the soundstages. No other soundstages exist from prior to 1958 on the site since two devastating fires burned them down.

Admittedly, the current developer’s plans are slightly less damaging

than the original plan, but this version would eliminate or negatively impact almost all of the historic elements of the studio. Hollywood Heritage and the Los Angeles Conservancy argued this at the planning commission meeting and were supported by several members of the audience who also spoke. The commission still voted 4-2 to move forward with a final vote to be at the West Hollywood City Council.

Hollywood Heritage and the Los Angeles Conservancy both supported expansion of the facility and appreciate the constraints on the studio. We felt a more appropriate design could be achieved to have less impact on streetwall buildings (the vote was on massing and location of the construction, not on its final appearance, through we were told it would not be similar to the Spanish style buildings there now).

The next step is for the city council. This is West Hollywood’s most historic site and building. The 1993 project was proposed before the city had an historic preservation commission, and agree-

ments were made so that they could not interfere with the project’s approval, leaving that task to Hollywood Heritage and the Los Angeles Conservancy. As this is the site where the Pickford-Fairbanks Studio, the United Artists Studio, the

Samuel Goldwyn Studio, and the Warner Hollywood Studio were all located, a tremendous amount of Hollywood history is at stake. The plan to demolish almost all of what little remains, especially the last historic soundstages (still in use today), could not go unchallenged. Hopefully the owners will modify plans so as to protect more of the history that has been entrusted to them. This will still allow for The Lot to

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California's Premier Historic Preservation Conference Goes HOLLYWOOD in 2007

Hollywood.... it's a place, it's a state of mind and in 2007 it takes center stage as the host location of the 32nd Annual California Preservation Conference. The state's premier historic preservation conference will be held from May 3 to May 6, 2007. The California Preservation Foundation, in partnership with **Hollywood Heritage, Hollywood Arts Council, Hollywood Business Improvement District, Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, and the Office of Historic Preservation - California State Parks**, will host this four-day Conference spotlighting the best of

historic preservation in California.

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

More than **50 sessions** on key issues facing California's historic, cultural, and natural resources. This year's Educational Tracks include:

- **Hollywood: A Theater for Preservation; What is Old is New:** Conceptualizing A Remake (Adaptive Reuse) Modern Masters on the Red Carpet (Modernism) Acting Together to Protect the Past (Legal/Advocacy)
- **On Location:** Cultural Landscape Makes the 'A' List
- **Tours and mobile workshops** that highlight California's unique architectural and cultural heri-

tage of "Hollywood" – from the world-famous Hollywood Boulevard and its vast resources, to the historic film studios and museums, to historic Hollywood homes including a troika of Frank Lloyd Wright-designed landmarks.

- **Special Events** - functions that are social in nature and held in famous historic venues.

The Conference headquarters and attendee lodging will be at the historic Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, a 1927 local landmark rehabilitated in 2005. The history and allure of Hollywood linger here and it is a luxurious treat for accommodations, especially with the special CPF Conference room discount.

Registration and conference information is available at www.californiapreservation.org or at (415) 495-0349. Register for the entire Conference, a single day's activities or special events. Registration runs through April. Membership in California Preservation Foundation has its discount privileges; join as a President's Circle Member and receive a complimentary Conference registration.

The California Preservation Foundation, founded in 1976, is California's only statewide non-profit historic preservation education, advocacy and membership organization. It is the mission of the California Preservation Foundation to educate and advocate for the preservation of California's diverse cultural and architectural heritage. Hollywood Heritage is a co-sponsor of the conference. Events will take place throughout Hollywood, including the Hollywood Heritage Museum and Wattles Mansion. Several Hollywood Heritage board members and directors will be speaking at this conference.



Historic postcard image of the landmark Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, site of this year's CPF Conference
postcard from the archives of the Hollywood Heritage Museum

Part Two

GURDON WALLACE WATTLES

By Allan R. Ellenberger

From Gurdon, Jr.'s birth until Wattles' death, a governess was always near the child. In 1900 the son of Edward Cudahy, a good friend of Wattles, had been kidnapped in Omaha for \$25,000 ransom. Since then, Wattles had feared a kidnapping attempt on his own children, so the governess was constantly at Gurdon, Jr.'s side.

In January 1922, Wattles announced that he was resigning his positions as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the United States National Bank and the Council Bluffs Street Railway Company. He said that the health of his son compelled them to move to a milder climate, so they would make Hollywood their home. However, Arabella contradicts this, believing there was a deeper, more private reason for the move.

"What he always told my father," Arabella recalled, "was that being elderly, he did not want to be in a place where the seasons changed and be reminded of the passage of time. Obviously, Southern California's climate wasn't going to remind him of how old he was getting."

Although technically retired, Wattles continued to serve as a director on the boards of the Chicago Great Western Railway and the Farmers' and Merchants National Bank, and also acted as an associate at the California Institute of Technology. To pass his time, he wrote his autobiography and had it privately published, giving out signed copies to his friends and family.

When boredom set in, Wattles decided to go back to work. In January 1923, he joined with Henry W. Keller to form the Keller-Wattles Company, a municipal bonds business with offices in downtown Los Angeles at the Pacific Mutual Building. In September of the following

year, the Municipal Bond Company bought out Wattles and he became their Chairman, a position he held until his death.

By the mid-1920s, much of Hollywood was built up, with little open land for expansion. Even so, in 1924 Wattles invested in a new subdivision that he developed at the north end of Curson Avenue, just bordering his gardens. Announcements proclaimed Wattles Park as the "Garden spot of Hollywood's famed foothills." Advertising played on this, noting that Wattles Park was "held from the market as a private estate, while many have sought similar property farther away from the center of Hollywood."

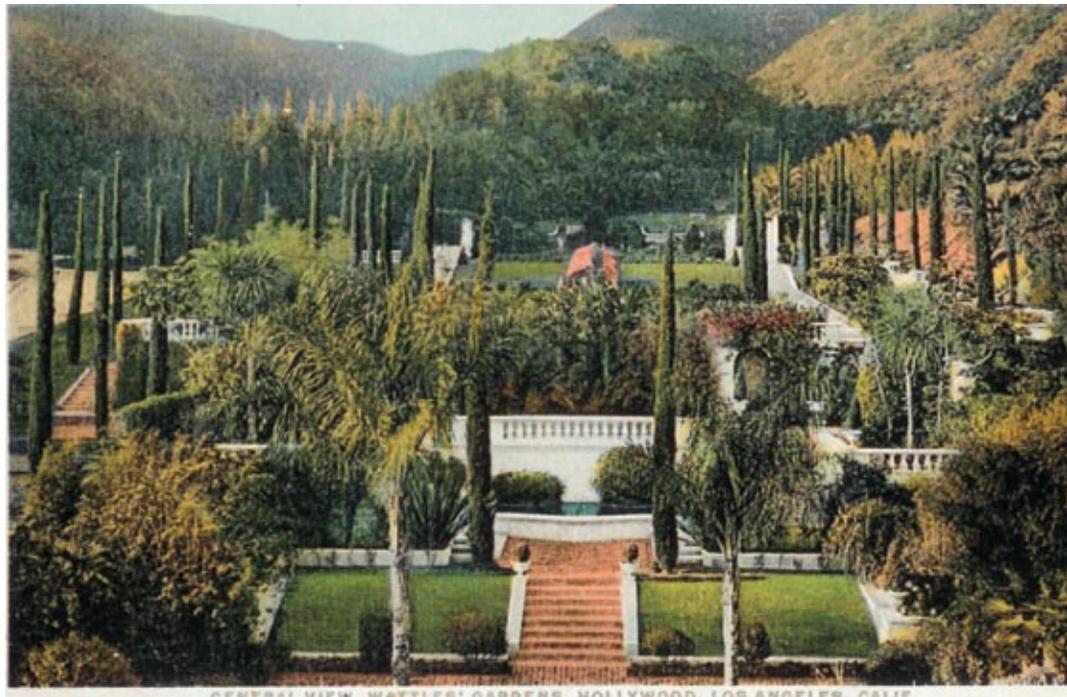
Extensive development and improvements were completed along Curson Avenue, which now extended through the property. On a rainy Sunday in February, 1925, individ-

est interest centers in the locations on the hills. Of course, those who visit the property have a wonderful example of what can be done with such

terrain when they see the landscaping of the Wattles Gardens which lies immediately next to the Wattles Park."

In 1925, Wattles brother Chauncey and his family moved to Los Angeles. Betty Brill, Chauncey's granddaughter, was around young Gurdon's age, and recalled that her uncle was always close to his family.

"My uncle was a great gentleman, always," Betty recalled. "I remember how he loved to sit in his chair beside the fireplace and play solitaire in the evening. He was also



ual lots, priced at \$3,000 to \$7,500, were made available for viewing by F. K. Hiller, general manager for Wattles Park.

"The topography of the land allows plotting of several level sites," Hiller explained. "By far the great-

very exacting. If dinner was not called at 6 o'clock, he would simply go into the dining room and sit down and wait."

Jualita was also the site of many garden parties and family gatherings over the years. "During my

father's childhood in the 20s," Arabella said, "they would have these garden parties with many people who were elderly. And tea and punch or something like that would be served with little dainties on pastel covered tables out in the lower garden – what they called the Spanish garden. That was how they entertained."

However, there was one group that that was never invited to Jualita: film industry people. Wattles' generation and background would have precluded him from associating with actors and actresses, since they were not in the same social class.

"No, my Grandfather would have played golf with people who were business leaders, but not anyone connected with the film industry," Arabella said. "Being from the Midwest, he thought actors were one step away from prostitutes and gigolos and you just did not associate with people like that."

One can only speculate what his thoughts were when one of the fastest rising stars in Hollywood moved into the house across Hollywood Boulevard. From 1923 to 1926, Clara Bow would be Wattles' neighbor.

However, years after Wattles' death, Julia made an exception for another neighbor, Charles Laughton and Elsa Lancaster who, for many years, lived across Curson Avenue. "They became good friends," Betty recalled. "The Laughtons were well educated people and she enjoyed them, but apart from them, I never knew her to associate with anyone who was involved with the film industry."

Wattles' somewhat old-fashioned expectations regarding the behavior of others extended even to young children. Although he adored his son, Gurdon had to knuckle down and behave himself as did all the children. However, as kids usually do, Gurdon and Betty would find ways to have fun. "As young children we would run up and down the stairs under the arbor," Betty recalled. "Then

we would roll down the grass hill in front of the house – all the way from the top to the bottom."

Raising young Gurdon required nearly all of Julia's energy; still, she found time for socials and charities. Her name often appeared in the society columns in connection with various works including volunteer duties at the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Hollywood Bowl, Women's Athletic Club, the Town and Gown Club, and the Opera Guild of Southern California.

One of Julia's pet projects was the Bureau of Vocational Service, where she served as president for several years. The Bureau, whose annual meetings were held at Jualita, gave professional counsel and guidance to girls and women. During Julia's six-year term (1927-1933) as president, they helped some 6,000 girls and women to earn a livelihood. "Our sole aim is to help unemployed women and to create jobs for them, if possible," she said.

Wattles had prospered in his business dealings, but when the Stock Market crashed in 1929 he lost much his fortune. "They never had the money that they had before the crash," Betty remembered. "The Municipal Bond Company had all the utilities for the city of San Clemente – the street bonds, the lights, sewers, everything. When San Clemente went down the drain, the bond company, all of my family's money and most of the Wattles money went with it."

Even so, the crash did not end Wattles' charitable interests. For years, he gave generously to a student loan fund at his old school, Iowa State College. His contributions to aid deserving students over the years amounted to \$10,000. He also remembered his boyhood home, Glidden, Iowa, when he returned there in July, 1931. The old school grounds were made into a park and Wattles gave \$500 to the fund. In appreciation, the park was named "Gurdon Wattles Park."

In recent years, many weddings have taken place at Wattles Mansion; however, the first marriage to dignify these gardens was that of Wattles' daughter, Margaret Elizabeth, to Glen Llewellyn Ritter of San Francisco. The nuptials took place as the sun was setting on July 3, 1928 in the Spanish gardens. Dr. Charles F. Aked presided over the ceremony.

As the Hollywood Trio played, and a soloist sang "Because," the bridal entourage, led by eight-year old Gurdon Jr. and his cousin, Barbara Brown, passed through an aisle of flowers to an altar of white dahlias and gladioli, played against a backdrop of ferns and potted plants with many tall lighted white candles.

Mary Louise took her own walk down the aisle with Wilson Dunlap Bryans of Omaha on June 3, 1930. The ceremony, performed by Rev. C. Rankin Barnes of South Pasadena, took place in the third of Jualita's terraced gardens. The bridal party strolled through the Spanish and Italian gardens to the Love Temple in the California Garden banked with Easter lilies and ferns.

The gardens continued to be a source of enjoyment to Wattles, who would leisurely walk about at almost exactly eight o'clock any morning. Visitors were admitted free of charge to the gardens on Tuesdays from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. On any given day, as many as 1,500 visitors would walk through those gates. "We gave them a souvenir," Julia later recalled, "avocados from our grove or oranges, when they were in season."

Inscribed on a tablet at the west entrance gate was this admonition: "Someone loves this garden and has lent it to you. Please respect this kindness and leave it as beautiful as you find it."

The estate now comprised fifty-two acres, about thirty of which was mountainous and unimproved. The gardens contained nearly twenty acres, sloping gently down from the

mountains north of them to Hollywood Boulevard. Several acres fronting on the Boulevard were set aside for citrus and other fruit trees. A high woven-wire fence, covered with climbing roses, enclosed the orchard. Across the street was a cutting garden used only for flowers for the house.

With his daughters now married and on their own, Wattles' attention now focused on Julia and their son. There is no question that young Gurdon was the apple of his father's eye. With his first wife Jennie unable to have more children, Wattles had felt for much of his life that he would never have a son to bear his name.

"I yearned for someone of my own blood to inherit the business I had established," Wattles wrote. "To carry on the charitable and civic enterprises for the help of our fellow men, and to continue the development of Jualita for the joy of creating beauty in the world, someone who would feel the moral uplift of the flowers, the mountains, the songbirds, and the liveliness of nature."

Even though love was the basis of Wattles marriage, their bond changed after the birth of Gurdon, Jr. – his attention now turned to his son. These changes, whether intentional or not, were hard for Julia to accept. "I think she was so hurt and disappointed and in some way her heart was broken," Arabella said. "She had given up her whole life to marry this man and they'd had a wonderful two years together before this kid comes along. And although she loved her son, my grandfather was unreasonably attached to him and probably ignored my grandmother more than he should have."

On Saturday morning, January 30, 1932, Wattles had gone to his office at the Municipal Bond Company and later attended a lunch with Julia at the home of friends. The following day, Wattles was alone with his son in the library when he suddenly became ill around 3:30 p.m. Gurdon, Jr., watched helplessly as his

father lay dying. Although a doctor was called, he arrived too late. Gurdon Wallace Wattles passed away from a heart attack at 4:50 p.m. He was seventy-six years old.

Wattles' death deeply affected his son. Gurdon, Jr. would later recognize the death of his father as the worst day of his life. "So much so, I think that it hastened his own death," Arabella said. "Because his father died at seventy-six, I don't believe he wanted to live past his father's life span, and he died at age seventy-five."

Funeral services for Gurdon Wattles were held on February 3 at his be-

loved Jualita. Offices of the Municipal Bond Company were closed that day. Dr. George Davidson, rector of St. John's Episcopal Church officiated at the services which were held in the front room of the house. The honorary pallbearers, selected from a list of civic leaders, included Bel-Air founder, Alphonzo E. Bell; John G. Bullock of Bullocks Department Store; The Los Angeles Times, Harry Chandler; meat packing magnate, Edward A. Cudahy; Culver City founder, Harry H. Culver, and Gen. M. H. Sherman, founder of Sherman Oaks. Afterward, in a private service, Wattles was buried in the Whispering Pines section of Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Glendale.

When his will was filed in probate a week later, it revealed that Wattles left a considerable estate consisting of stocks, bonds, and cash. Daughters Margaret Wattles Ritter and Mary Wattles Bryan each received \$1,000 each, with trust funds set up

for their benefit. Various nephews and nieces also received \$1,000; brother Chauncey and his sister Carolyn were to receive \$200 dollars a month. The residue of the estate was willed to the Gurdon W. Wattles Company, Ltd. with Julia named as executrix without bond. Jualita and its gardens were left to Julia and Gurdon Jr.

After Wattles' death, life went



on at Jualita. Julia continued her involvement with social events, although not as avidly as when Wattles was living. Julia never remarried simply because inheriting Jualita was a huge responsibility and she didn't want anything to interfere with that or with her devotion to her son.

Gurdon, Jr., attended Hollywood High School, where he graduated a year early. Afterwards, Gurdon and his mother went on a tour of Europe where he took his SATs in Berlin. On their return, he attended college at Harvard, majored in classics, and graduated summa cum laude in 1942.

Gurdon's flat feet and heart murmur prevented him from enlisting during World War II. However, the military needed scholars to learn Japanese, so Gurdon was encouraged to join the Navy. He attended language school in Boulder, Colorado, learning Japanese in a few months. He became an officer, serv-

ing in the South Pacific, where he translated diaries of captured Japanese soldiers and interrogated prisoners of war.

After the war he thought of being a professor of classics but realized he didn't have the patience to teach. Because his father raised him to contribute to society, he decided to go to law school, and returned to Harvard. "That idea of public service was passed down through my father to me," Arabella said. "Both my father and I have been lawyers but we've also worked for the public."

After earning an LL.B degree, he clerked for a while with a judge who did international work before accepting employment at the United Nations, prompting his move to New York. Much to his mother's disappointment, Gurdon never again lived at Jualita.

Even though the crash consumed a large part of their money, Julia remained resilient after her husband's death. She dismissed the chauffeur and drove her own car long into old age. With Gurdon, Jr., away, she managed the house with various servants and companions, spending much of her time keeping the opossum and deer out of her rose garden. "I go to the window and say dreadful things to them," she once remarked.

But Jualita and its gardens would never again regain its glory days. Over the years, the once-manicured gardens where guests would gather in the evening dusk to wander through acres of gardens, pergolas and Japanese lanterns became masses of shrubbery and overgrown pathways.

"The house was built when they had a staff of people to take care of it and the gardens; my grandmother did not have that when I visited her," Arabella recalled. "And at the time [1960s] there were people up in the canyon getting stoned, marauding around and vandalizing the Japanese gardens. But at the same

time, no one could afford to keep the property as it was originally designed."

Vandals destroyed the lighting, smashed the elaborate urns and inflicted chaos on the grounds despite the gates and guards. Even the deer from nearby mountains joined in the devastation. The Japanese teahouse became rickety and dangerous to enter. The further back into the canyon, the worse it became.

Upkeep of the house became increasingly difficult, and the city had its eye on the property for use as a public park. Julia became embittered by the city's attempt to use eminent domain by condemning part of the land for sewer lines in the late 1950s. Arabella believes the city gave Julia an ultimatum. "I think they told my grandmother, 'look, we want this (property) for a park so we're either going to exercise our right to eminent domain or we can come to an agreement with you.'"

In any case, the city eventually succeeded and bought the fifty acres from the family for nearly \$2 million. "The costs of maintenance and taxes rose far beyond what my mother and I could afford," Gurdon, Jr., later stated, "so we sold the place to the city in 1968, as a public park." The agreement stipulated that Julia would be allowed to live in the house until her death and that the name "Wattles Gardens" would be kept as the official name of the facility.

In January 1972, Julia became ill and suffered two strokes. Over the next five years, she was cared for by various nurses and companions. In time, Betty Brill, with Gurdon's consent, supervised Julia's care. "I was very close to her so I took care of the household for the five years that she was ill," Betty recalled. "I had all the responsibilities for all the help in the household."

As her health worsened, Julia stayed in the downstairs library to make it easier to care for her. On November 2, 1977, Julia Vance

Wattles died in the same room her husband had, forty-five years earlier. A few days later Julia was buried next to Gurdon at Forest Lawn and later there was a luncheon at Jualita for family and friends.

It was now up to Gurdon, Jr. to put his mother's estate in order. In her will, Julia left Mary and Margaret a small legacy; however Gurdon did not feel it was enough, so he invited them to come to the house and choose from items there.

"There were all kinds of things that they had been clearly thinking about for fifty years," Arabella said. "Mary was intent on having a music box that had been in my father's room which he had an attachment to because his father would turn it on when he went to sleep. But Mary wanted it so my father gave it to her."

Many in the family felt that Mary was bitter about her experience. Since their adoption, an air of "how lucky you are" pervaded, so they didn't always feel integrated into the family. Since Julia never adopted them herself, and the girls were away at school most of the time, she was never close to them.

The family gave up possession of Jualita to the city following seventy years of ownership. After more than ten years of vandalism, transients, and continued decline, the old Wattles estate began a rejuvenation process sponsored by Hollywood Heritage.

Hopefully, Gurdon and Julia Wattles would be pleased with how Jualita and the gardens look today. During her time at the estate, Julia never owned any of the picture-postcards of the house and gardens, the same kind that Mrs. Urquhart would hustle to tourists in the old days. The gardens, however, will never look exactly as they did in those postcards – and nor should they. Those days, as Julia once said, are "just a memory."

Lawsuit *Continued from page 5*

1919 fourplex for restoration.

We moved forward on this, contacting two of Hollywood's most prominent real estate brokers, John Tronson and Chris Bonbright, who also owned historic residential and office property in the immediate area. They both agreed on the significance of the buildings and submitted offers last November. The owners, Whitley Investment Group, declined their offers, despite the fact that they were for more than the owners had paid for the property—enough to cover their costs and make a reasonable profit. Whitley wanted over three times what they paid for the property (although at the time they provided no hard numbers). This represented the amount they figured they would have made had they actually built it. They wanted their full projected profit, without risk.

The rejection vote for the landmark nomination was delayed until December 1 as Councilman LaBonge tried to broker a deal. A meeting in his office on November 29 was held with all parties including Whitley, the councilman's staff, Hollywood Heritage, and our attorney, Robert Silverstein. At this meeting LaBonge's chief of staff,

Rene Weitzer, announced that he would now support the nomination at a vote in two days. Hollywood Heritage made it very clear at that meeting that we would take legal action if demolition were to occur in violation of the Redevelopment Plan and EIR.

Just before the next council vote, when we were led to believe the nomination would be supported by LaBonge, he changed his position. Now he disapproved of it because he had similar buildings in the Wilshire portion of his district and there was no need, this week, to support the nomination. It was pointed out to him that Wilshire was several miles from Hollywood and that there were few, if any such apartments there from 1921. As before, no explanation was given to refute the facts in the nomination itself nor the support given to the nomination by the Cul-

tural Heritage Commission. Instead it was too similar to non-existent apartments in the Wilshire area. Or, it was nominated "too late" according to non-existent law.

Still LaBonge asked all parties to



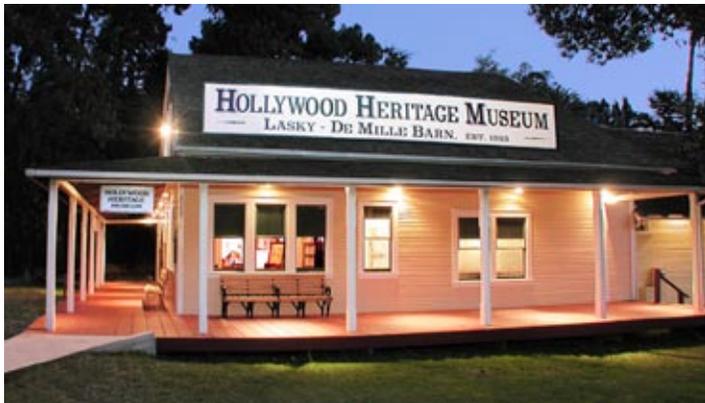
A view, during demolition, of the pristine interior of the Whitley property
photo by Ted Otis

try and resolve the issue with a new buyer, although the developer now had no incentive to sell. Our concern over the violation of the Redevelopment Plan he never addressed, deferring to the CRA and city attorney's opinions. But we tried. Whitley's principals spoke of their regard for Shaul Kuba of CIM Group, and I asked him to look at the property. He agreed to make an offer.

Kuba had a long discussion with the developers about the property and its worth. He backed up the price submitted by Tronson and Bonbright and Whitley Investment Group quickly lost their high regard for Kuba and stuck to their price.

Hollywood Heritage had brought to the table bona fide offers from Hollywood's premiere real estate brokers and from Hollywood's largest land owners and they were rejected. (Tronson also attended the last city council meeting and reaffirmed the financial reality to Councilman LaBonge). Shaul Kuba did his negotiating during the December

Visit the Hollywood Heritage Museum



Open on Weekends (Saturday and Sunday)
from 11:00 am until 4:00 pm

Ample free parking. Adults: \$5; seniors and students \$3; children 3-12: \$1.
Members and children under 3, free

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Evenings @ the Barn Gather Momentum in the 7th Season

by Kay Tornborg

Doesn't it seem like ages ago that we did our first *Evening @ the Barn* with guest Ann Savage entertaining us with stories about our screenings, *Two Senioritas From Chicago* and her 1947 noir classic, *Detour*???

This season kicked off with a novelty...meeting author Harry Medved at the Bronson Caves for a pre-Halloween tour, as recommended in his book, *Hollywood Escapes*, and observation of the 50th anniversary of the *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, some of which was shot in near-by Beachwood Canyon. We all huddled in the big Bronson cave while Harry showed us clips on his portable DVD player. Following the 'show' we camped just outside the cave for our picnics, then formed a convoy to beetle back to the Barn. Once there, Harry talked more about '50s and '60s 'creature features' and why we love 'em.

Hugh Munro Neely brought us an exotic treat for November 16th with a screening of *The Woman With the Hungry Eyes*, his biopic of Theda Bara, made for TimeLine Films and produced by Hugh M. Hefner, who joined us for the packed screening. The film offers tantalizing glimpses

of Bara's long and remarkable career and teased us with stills from her numerous 'missing' films (like *Cleopatra*, 1917). To make the evening complete, the TimeLine group even brought Theda Bara sandwiches, complete with a do-it-yourself

style that reigns here to this day although, until Kanner's book came out, surprisingly little had been written about him.

Despite the title of our December *Evening* we can claim, without fear of contradiction, that *The Story of*



Attendees get an up-close-and-personal tour of Bronson Caves by author Harry Medved
photo by Alan Simon



Hollywood Heritage board members David Greim, George Kiel, and Robert Birchard enjoy a picnic outing at Bronson Caves
photo by Alan Simon

recipe. November is traditionally time for our Annual Membership Meeting, this year combined with an *Evening @ the Barn* presentation by author Diane Kanner talking about her new book, *Wallace Neff and the Grand Houses of the Golden State*. This handsome volume covers Neff's long career, mostly in Southern California, where he catered especially to the rich and famous. As Kanner so ably pointed out, he was largely responsible for the popularity of the Spanish colonial-revival

Animation Unions from Bosko to Bart Simpson did not go 'untold' on December 14, 2006. That fateful evening marked our very first equipment failure (a software glitch) and our speaker, animator and educator, Tom Sito, rose to the occasion in the absence of his PowerPoint presentation. Amazingly, he regaled the audience, from our late start at 8:15 until the last audience member dribbled out at 11 PM. Lots of interaction and questions from the audience kept things moving apace.



Andi Hicks discusses the film *The Woman With the Hungry Eyes* as Hugh Munro Neely looks on. photo by Alan Simon

Our first presentation of 2007 featured Angela Aleiss, Ph.D. and our own Marc Wanamaker collaborating on her book, *Making the White Man's Indian*, with support by his slides. Angela also screened an illuminating short, *Eskimo* (1933), directed by W.S. Van Dyke.

We all observed Valentine's Day a little early with February's sold-out screening of *Mary Pickford, America's Sweetheart*, another biographic gem by Hugh Munro Neely and TimeLine Films. This cut featured an additional 20 minutes of film not included in the earlier version.

We have some great Evenings scheduled so watch for your reminder cards and/or check the website, www.hollywoodheritage.org. Check the back page of your newsletter for upcoming programs & events.

Lawsuit *Continued from page 19*

holidays despite constraints on his time and a bad case of the flu. Our attorney, Robert Silverstein, handled a constant flow of emails with all parties as negotiations and demolition delays went back and forth through December 23.

Having reached a standoff, Tronson prepared to make another offer when, on January 7, the demolition started. This despite our having been told at the December 1 city council meeting that it would be at least April before anything happened as the developers did not yet have

their funding. This became all too obvious when in early April Whitley Investment Group put the property up for sale for \$7.2 million, the price they had intimated earlier.

Hollywood Heritage did as we said we would and filed suit on April 5 against the city, the CRA, and Whitley Investment Group. Ignoring this situation would endanger over 200 landmark buildings leaving them to the same fate; and it would also continue to allow for Hollywood development to continue as a free-for-all instead of being planned. These many issues are referred to throughout our past newsletters. All we have

Hollywood Heritage Co-Founder Writes Tell-All Book

by John Clifford

Marian Gibbons doesn't take "no" for an answer. She is tenacious, bull-headed, and she gets things done. As co-founder and current board member of Hollywood Heritage, we've all grown to appreciate those traits that have gone a long way to make our organization what it is today.

And now she's put the entire story down in book form so everyone can understand just how much effort goes into creating a world-class organization to preserve a world-class community. *Hooray For Hollywood* is Marian's homage to the many people who worked long and hard to preserve the history that was quickly being destroyed.

All the characters are there. John Anson Ford, Mayor Tom Bradley, to the names that you regularly see in this newsletter. The complete story of the Hollywood Heritage's acquisition of the Barn and the negotiations to find a place for it and then to move it from its "temporary home" on Vine Street to the Hollywood Bowl site. The work that went into convincing the city to allow Hollywood Heritage to become the stewards of Wattles Mansion and

asked for from the lawsuit is that the laws passed in 1986 and 2003 be enforced, nothing more. This will benefit everyone, including developers, who will now know what the rules are as will everyone else. This takes away discretion from the city councilmembers, CRA, and the city attorney, and puts it back into the hands of the community.

Visit the lawsuit on our web site to further understand Hollywood Heritage's most important undertaking ever to protect Hollywood and its heritage.

gardens.

Hooray For Hollywood is an enjoyable read for anyone who loves Hollywood, loves the movies, or just likes a good story. Fortunately, it has a happy ending (for the most part).



Hollywood Heritage co-founder Marion Gibbons signs her book *Hooray for Hollywood*, during a special Evenings @ The Barn program. photo by Alan Simon

Upcoming Events Calendar

All Evenings @ the Barn start at 7:30

Thurs., April 26: Play Ball in LA: the Stadiums, the players and short films.

Thurs.-Sun, May 3-6: California Preservation Foundation conference all over LA; go to CPF.org for registration info.

Wed., May 9: Chris Nichols signing his new book, *The Leisure Architecture of Wayne McAllister* that will include a slide and video presentation by Chris and Marc Wamamaker on McAllister's work and post WWII Hollywood architecture.

Thurs., May 24: Organist extraordinaire Bob Mitchell. We will be screening Mary Pickford's *Little Annie Rooney* (1925) which Bob played for Mary Pickford 82 years ago.

Sun., June 3: Wattles Birthday Party: 100 years young!

Thurs., June 7: A program on famed costume designer Bill Travilla featuring an overview of Hollywood Studio costume departments and Travilla's work, especially with Marilyn Monroe.

Thurs., June 14: Author Jim Heilmann with a brand new program on dining out with the stars.

Evenings @ the Barn closes down after June 14th until Thurs., Oct. 11 (tentative) when we open with Curtis Harrington screening a BBC biopic on Josef von Sternberg. Stay tuned! An *Evening @ the Barn*



Theater organist Bob Mitchell will be featured at the May 24 Evenings @ The Barn program photo by Alan Simon

Thank You Jim Craig

Major Donation to Hollywood Heritage Museum

by Robert W. Nudelman

Every Labor Day weekend Hollywood Heritage works closely with Cinecon, the world's oldest classic film festival (42 years in 2007). Beside the obvious connections, several Cinecon board members are also on the Hollywood Heritage board, and many of our members come to Hollywood for their annual visit to the museum,



Invitation to the grand opening of the Blossom Room Nightclub at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel from the Jim Craig Collection at the Hollywood Heritage Museum

where we extend hours for out-of-town members to visit.

One Cinecon regular is Jim Craig, who comes each year from Chicago for the festival and the August Valentino Remembrance at Hollywood Forever Cemetery (several others come for both events from around the country). Jim got to see the museum and the archive collection for the first time in many years and was impressed; so impressed that he donated several boxes of memorabilia from his important collection. He had been looking into other locations, but felt the Hollywood Heritage Museum would best take care of his collection and create a quality display for the public (some items are on display now).

The collection dates from the 1910s to the 1970s, mostly pre-

1950. Specific areas of the donation include collections on Hollywood High School, Bernheimers/Yamashiro, Hollywood Memorial/Forever Cemetery, the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, and other Hollywood landmarks. Photos, postcards, uniforms, memorabilia, books, silverware, and programs were among the almost 200 items. Included were 28 Hollywood High School Yearbooks from 1913 to 1985, a rare Roosevelt Hotel silver coffee pot, and other restaurant items, programs/flyers from the 1910s and much more.

Hollywood Heritage and the many people who will enjoy seeing these items over the years thank Jim Craig for his perseverance in assembling this rare collection of Hollywood's heritage and then making it available for public viewing and research. Jim is a great team player and, through this donation, he is allowing everyone to participate on his winning team.

Preservation *Continued from page 13*

continue to have an economically viable property.

Madame Tussauds Wax Museum

London's world renowned wax museum had been looking for a location in Hollywood for over six years. They had settled last year on the site of the parking lot immediately adjacent to the west side of Grauman's Chinese Theater. This site, owned by Steve Ullman's Grant Parking and Larry Worchell, has been in development play since their first proposal in 1998.

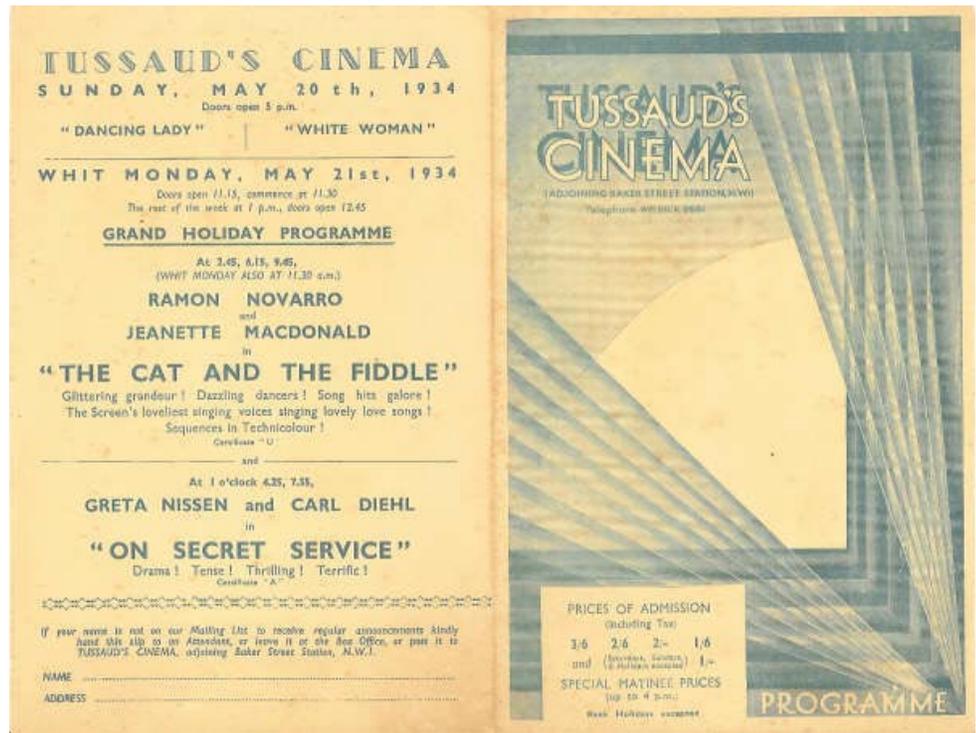
That project was challenged by Hollywood Heritage for compliance with the National Register Historic District that it is located in and by

its proximity to the Chinese and the 1927 Roosevelt Hotel across Hollywood Boulevard, and the 1930 Don Lee Cadillac building across Orange Drive to the west. The 1998 project was replaced by another version in 2000, also challenged by Hollywood Heritage. Another version showed up in 2006 with the announcement of Madame Tussauds being the sole tenant (previously the site was to house an IMAX type theater and then Frederick, s of Hollywood with a large event space.

The 2006 version was redesigned again by last fall. The 2000 and 2006 versions were all modern designs with no relationship to the National Register Historic District nor its important neighboring landmarks, which was the basis of Hollywood Heritage's criticisms. The last 2006 design was an improvement, removing several elements opposed by Hollywood Heritage. Meetings with several representatives of Madame Tussauds starting in November resulted in further design refinements, especially after we made it clear at the CRA Board meeting, January 18, 2007, that we were willing to take legal action if necessary.

At that point intensive and frequent negotiations began between Hollywood Heritage and Madame Tussauds over the design. The reduction in size was a major benefit from the earlier version and within acceptable parameters. The main concern then became the appearance of the exterior, and the signage. Offsite signage will be reduced and onsite signage will now include a more interesting design and be repositioned on the building to have less impact on Grauman's signage. These changes were agreed to at an acceptable level as was the inclusion of additional landscaping areas.

The exterior changes in appearance kept the same layout, but changed the use of materials (considerably less glass) and colors (lighter). This created a building



Tussaud's Cinema was located next to their London wax museum until being blown up during the Blitz of WWII. Today it's the site of the London Planetarium

image from the Hollywood Heritage Museum archives

more sympathetic to the historic district, especially in the context of its three landmark neighbors. Is it perfect? No, but it represents a compromise that allowed for the project to proceed but with improvements to better meet the district guidelines.

After many meetings with Tussauds officials, their architect, Michael Rotondi, and the city, certain problems became obvious. The project including all prior versions, had been approved by the councilperson (Goldberg, then Garcetti), the councilperson's Design Review Committee, and the CRA. Except for Hollywood Heritage's opposition, no others commented publically on the problems with the design. The lack of leadership by the city here is appalling. Tussauds obviously felt that they had done everything correctly and that the modern design is what was desired for the site next to Los Angeles' most famous landmark. Had they been approached to design a more historically sympathetic structure that fully met the district's guidelines it appears that they would have readily agreed.

But as has happened with other new

project developers, they were told otherwise.

The efforts of Madame Tussauds were led by company vice president Nick McKenzie, making phone calls and working diligently from London to work out details. His American representatives were Jack and Roxanne Holland who spent many hours on the phone and in meetings with each new presentation, ably speaking on behalf of Tussauds. For Hollywood Heritage, Fran Offenhauer, Christy McAvoy, and Robert W. Nudelman, spent many hours on this. We hope that the Tussauds organization will become an asset to Hollywood. They presented many operational ideas that would seem to do that, and they have a better appreciation of Hollywood's historic concerns than they did six months ago. The negotiations will hopefully lead to an understanding by the city and the CRA to better enforce the guidelines of a National Register Historic District rather than misleading developers and leaving Hollywood Heritage to clean up the mess.

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Hollywood Heritage Says Goodbye And Hello At Annual Meeting

by John Clifford

Hollywood Heritage's Annual Membership meeting was held on November 21, 2006. It was a time to review the work done by Hollywood Heritage over the past year and to hold elections for the board of directors for the coming year.

Under the bylaws of Hollywood Heritage, board members may serve for three consecutive two-year terms and then must "take a rest." As a result, we lost several long-time board members and saw the return of some long-absent board members and the addition of some "new blood" to help move the organization forward during these important coming years.

Finishing their six years of service were outgoing board members; president, Kay Tornborg, vice president Libby Simon, secretary John Clifford, Arnold Schwartzman, Phil Dockter, and Tyler Cassity. All have pledged to continue to be involved in the operations of Hollywood Heritage and they have kept their promises. Kay Tornborg continues as Special Projects director, John Clifford continues as Webmaster



Incoming Vice President Fran Offenhauser (right) presents outgoing President Kay Tornborg with a small token of appreciation at the Hollywood Heritage Annual Membership meeting

photo by Alan Simon

and Newsletter Editor, and Phil Dockter, Libby Simon, and Arnold Schwartzman continue to play an active role in our activities.

Returning to the board after a long absence is Christy Johnson-McAvoy who joins fellow co-founders of Hollywood Heritage Fran Offenhauser and Marion Gibbons. Also returning after an absence are long-time board members and early supporters Bob Birchard and Randy Haberkamp, both of whom represent the Silent Society.

Bringing fresh blood and new ideas to our organization are Rebecca Goodman, who was instrumental in saving the Los Feliz Brown Derby. Gina Zamparelli, who worked tirelessly for many years on the Pasadena Raymond Theater, and Sue Slutzky, who has been responsible for designing the printed programs for our *Evenings @ The Barn*.

No one can say that the Hollywood Heritage annual meeting is a boring affair. Each year we not only

present our members with an overview of the work and accomplishments of the organization over the past year, but we also have a guest speaker. This year's speaker was Diane Kanner, author of the book *Wallace Neff and the Grand Houses of the Golden State*, who gave us all an appreciation of this important architect and his works in the Hollywood area.

At the December board meeting, elections for officers were held. The officers for 2007 are:

- Marc Wanamaker**, president
- Fran Offenhauser**, vice president
- Keith Anderson**, treasurer
- Valerie Yaros**, secretary

Each is eminently qualified and we look forward to an exciting year under the new leadership, with the added value of 3 founders whose memories of where we've been and how far we've come will be invaluable.



Robert S. Birchard, who returns to the board after an absence, and John Clifford, outgoing secretary, assist Diane Kanner with setting up her presentation on Wallace Neff at the annual meeting

photo by Alan Simon

Palladium To Be Renovated as Home To Live Nation

The future of Hollywood's landmark entertainment venue has been the source of much speculation of late. On April 11, the world's largest music company and concert promoter, Live Nation, announced an agreement for a 20-year lease of the 1940 Streamline Moderne

by corrugated steel). The steel grid behind the original blade sign is still substantially there under the 1961 covering and it too will be restored.

No plans were announced for the 1961 plastic blade sign, but it has achieved historic status because of its longevity. This is also the sign seen

by anyone attending any of the multitude of rock 'n roll concerts there. The sign could be reused elsewhere on the site as possibly a sign to announce parking access or some other practical, as well as aesthetic, use.

The site itself, of which the Palladium covers less than half, has been purchased by Newport Capital Advisors for \$68 million. The developer is, of course, looking at a mixed-use development for the overall site. This will be detailed later this summer, and Hollywood Heritage will, as usual, be reviewing plans for their impacts on the Palladium (as will, obviously, Live Nation) and surrounding historic buildings (Earl Carroll, CBS, etc.).

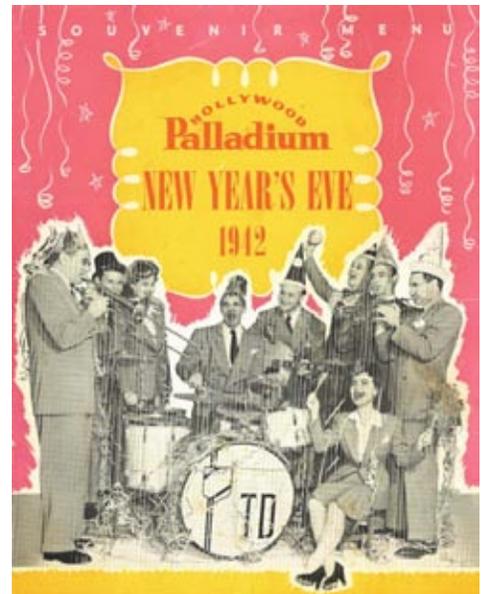
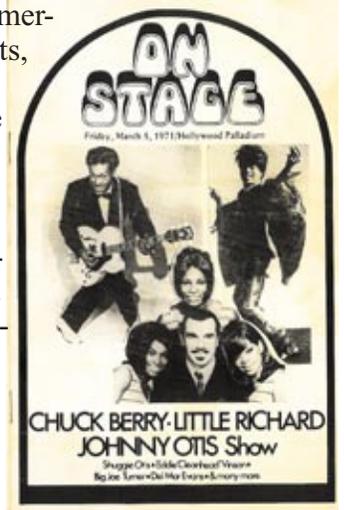
Other areas of interest include doubling the restrooms, full handicap accessibility, restoring historic interior lighting fixtures, and improving the catering facilities. Special events were always a key to the success of the Palladium, including several years of the Grammy and Emmy Awards. Banquets for every U.S. President from Truman through

Nixon, numerous benefits, television and movie shoots, trade shows, ethnic festivals, and music concerts have filled the Palladium for over 66 years.

All this will continue in a better-equipped facility.

The one area of modification is the stage and its environs. The historic stage (and dance floor) will remain as is, with temporary staging added when needed. Back stage space will be doubled, and new loading areas will help with production staging. The big change visually is in the ceiling in front of the stage. The lighting grid is planned to extend beyond the existing stage by removing the stucco ceiling for what appears to be about 30 feet. The plaster rings on the ceiling will

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CBS/KNX Studios— Columbia Square, Sunset Boulevard

With KNX-AM radio and its sister station KFWB-AM having left Hollywood last year, both had been in Hollywood since going on the air in the 1920s, only KCBS-TV and KCAL-TV remained at the landmark complex. But that will end this year as both leave to go to Studio City. Hollywood will have no radio stations and only KTLA as a television station.

Giving credit where it is due, the city did give CBS several variances to allow the expansion of their Studio City lot so that KCBS and KCAL could leave Hollywood. The city made no effort to keep them at their current landmark site, the only facility that KCBS television station has had. Now if they had only planned a bar or nightclub, the city would have supported keeping them in Hollywood. But that is a different story, somewhat.

The property, a block that faces onto Sunset Boulevard, has about a third of it covered by the landmark 1938 studio. The problem for a new owner is dealing with the specific use of the facility—production studios. There is about 100,000 square feet of office space, primarily in the office tower on the southwest corner. Production space and studios make up the remainder. A restaurant, Brittingham's was originally located in the two story building at the south-

east corner, then a Bank of America, and finally offices. The two thirds of the lot behind is parking with the exception of a small office structure (purchased from a separate owner). Across the street to the west is the Hollywood Palladium.

After having toured the existing studio in January, Marc Wanamaker and Robert W. Nudelman from Hollywood Heritage found, surprisingly, quite a lot of the original studio still exists, albeit somewhat modified or covered up in places. Using Marc's photos and postcards and brochures from the Hollywood Heritage Museum archive, it was possible to reconstruct the original appearance. The owners' representatives were quite enthusiastic as we located historic resources and clarified restoration issues.

This included Studio A, the main theater, with balcony, that seated over 500 people, and the original facade of the Brittingham's as well as the original appearance of the 1938 Sunset Boulevard entry and driveway. The studio complex was designed by famed architect Robert Derrah, who did the landmark Coca-Cola bottling plant downtown. The project was closely supervised by the legendary William S. Paley, founder of CBS, and his attention to detail is showcased throughout the complex.



also pushed for bringing back the restaurant and reopening the original entry, which would help restore the building's façade to its original appearance. The owners are interested in pursuing this and several other suggestions we made.

Studio A will be restored as a theater for an, as of now, unknown tenant (we have had several inquiries on it already). As for the two studios on Gower, the southernmost would be retained for an undetermined use, as of now. The other though would be demolished for the site of a new office building. Both studios were built in 1941 and have had a substantial history of radio and television show broadcasts from them (both are still in use today).

One option is to keep the studio and incorporate it as the lobby for the new office building. This would work as, in this case, the exterior is a blank wall and the interior is the area of importance. The plans currently show its demolition, but Hollywood Heritage is strongly supporting its inclusion as the lobby, preserving the interior and creating a unique and better lobby space. The plan is doable; it only needs to be agreed to.

With the historic structures looking to be relatively secure, the next issue is the parking lot behind. The new project is a mixed-use development, which is fine. What is not fine is the size and scale of it. The west side will be the site of a 125 room boutique hotel, 5-6 stories tall, the same as the existing office build-



The new owners/developers, Apollo/Molasky, plan to restore the complex, with the exception of one of the large studios on the east side facing Gower Street. Hollywood Heritage

ing, but set back. On the east side of Gower will be the aforementioned office building, 300,000 square feet at a height of 14-stories. At the north end, along Selma Avenue, will be a lot of condominiums, 400 of them, in a tower 40-stories tall.

The hotel is manageable. The office building would be the largest in Hollywood. The House of Blues building, 2 blocks west of here, is 275,000 square feet and 22-stories tall. At 14-stories this will be one solid mass of a building. Office space is needed, but this is too much for this site and this location.

A much greater concern is the condo situation. With the largest number of housing units for any building in Hollywood at 400 and as the tallest building outside of downtown Los Angeles at 40-stories, it is totally inappropriate. Almost twice the height of Hollywood's tallest buildings (the aforementioned House of Blues and the 23 story Sunset-Vine Tower, now going through condo conversion inside and as a signpost on the exterior), it would forever change the appearance and building limits in Hollywood.

Hollywood is not downtown or Century City visually or in its infrastructure. The massive density of this project would visually overpower the historic KNX Studio buildings and the rest of Hollywood for that matter. It also sets precedents for building height and more will be encouraged by the city (Councilman Garcetti is a major booster of such high-rise development in Hollywood).

The other issue is one of common sense, or the lack thereof. Except for Sunset Boulevard, the streets surrounding this block are too narrow to handle the traffic that would be generated by such a project. Gower is already gridlocked most of the day. Sunset is a similar traffic mess down to the 101 freeway. Maybe the condos should be removed as housing in the area is being way overbuilt. Including this project, almost 3000 new units are being built or

planned within a three block radius, with no plans for an increase in infrastructure.

The traffic reduction myth that these people will all take the bus or subway is not a sane justification to build this. No report or study even exists saying how this would work out. Yet an overwhelming number of projects are being pushed through based on a theory with no evidence (Manhattan is not a reasonable comparison). The only study, done by the MTA (SCRTD at that time) when planning the subway, stated that the subway would make traffic worse. This was due to plans to increase development around the stations, resulting in additional auto traffic above what the subway would remove. In addition, the proposed plans to raise bus/subway fares by over 40% by 2009 will result in a reduced ridership and more people switching to cars, as every previous price increase has done.

In other words, all of this development will remake the look of Hollywood and increase pressure to demolish historic properties as they become a barrier to the new high-rise order. The continuing gridlock will create massive traffic jams over larger areas affecting more regional traffic patterns and add to air pollution and wasted fuel. No study says otherwise and after years of operating the subway in Hollywood, no evidence is forthcoming as to its ability to alleviate a traffic problem that continues to worsen without the new development.

Hollywood Heritage applauds, and will continue to assist the plans to renovate/restore/adaptively reuse this 1938 landmark. We cannot endorse the development of a mixed-use mega complex with structures larger and taller than any in Hollywood due to the size, massing, and resulting impacts on an area that includes many historic structures. It is a bad precedent for new development and must be considerably reduced in size.

Yamashiro & the Magic Castle

Two of Hollywood's most prominent landmarks went on the market in April. The Glover family has owned the property and most of the businesses on the two parcels for almost 60 years.

Yamashiro Restaurant was opened by them in the 1912 Bernheimer house in 1959 after extensive restoration of the abandoned and derelict property. A 40 unit apartment complex and pool was added just below the house in the late 1950s. This hilltop parcel is about seven acres in size.

Along Franklin avenue is the almost 3.3 acres site housing the Magic Castle, a private club of, not surprisingly, magicians and the Magic Castle Hotel. The Castle is the former Rollin B. Lane mansion built in 1909. The Magic Castle opened here in 1961 and now includes a library and archive of magic and vaudeville related items, one of the world's finest such collections. They are a tenant on the property and do not own the mansion.

As with Yamashiro, the Lane mansion was in a state of disrepair before the current tenants worked their magic on it. Containing three theaters, dining rooms, offices, and beverage areas, much of the original house was trashed by 1960. Restoration of existing interior and exterior elements and sympathetic renovations and expansions (including under the parking lot) maintain the integrity of this Los Angeles city landmark.

Hollywood Heritage has had several meetings with the operators of the Magic Castle, lead by its co-founder, the legendary Milt Larson. We have also talked with representatives of the Glover family concerning the property and the hopeful continued operation of the Yamashiro Restaurant, where restoration work continues to upgrade this world famous building (not a city landmark though—yet).

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stay in place. The ventilation registers are the original circular ones and should also remain. There may be ways to modify the cutting of the stucco, but that will need to be evaluated during the historic review process.

For now the future of the Palladium looks good. Hollywood Heritage briefly met and talked to the principals involved with the project, Live Nation CEO, North America Music, Bruce Eskow, and vice president of operations Steve MacFadyen and they stressed their willingness to work with Hollywood Heritage on restoration issues. Two of the principal promoter/bookers for Live Nation here are Brian Murphy, chairman, So-Cal Music, and Mike Garcia, Senior vice president-west.

Brian ran Avalon Attractions from the late 1970s to the early 1990s and was Los Angeles' most prominent and respected promoter. Mike was with the Greek Theater and helped oversee the recent renovations and restorations there. From personal experience dealing with both, they are two of the best in the business in quality bookings and as people to work with.

This capped a 2-year process outlined in previous newsletters, for the Palladium. Councilman Garcetti stuck to his position stated in Feb. 2005, to protect the Palladium as Hollywood Heritage had asked (we had argued against previous attempts to demolish the structure). Now, we hope, he can continue his leadership in planning the development around the Palladium to minimize impacts to it and the surrounding community, already under intense development pressures. If the development guidelines existed today, as promised in 1986 and 2003, the public would know ahead of time and not have to wait and hope it is not another project on the scale proposed for CBS, just across the street.



Tommy Dorsey and Dorothy Lamour cut the ribbon opening night of the Palladium on Oct. 29, 1940 Hollywood Heritage Museum archives

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

In grateful recognition of their generous support, we sincerely thank the following renewing members who have made contributions at the \$100 level and above as of February 2007. Category titles are names of historic Hollywood Studios.

MAJESTIC (\$2500+

Offenhauser Properties

KEYSTONE (\$1000+)

Alliance Company

Sharon & Ray Courts

Marian Gibbons

James McMath

Thaddeus Smith – *Music Box Theater*

BISON (\$500+)

Ed Collins – *Buena Vista Theatres*

Heather Henson – *HB Henson Fund*

David & Carin Anne Strohmaier

KALEM (\$250+)

Keith & Tracy Anderson

Anne & Aaron Epstein

Marjorie L. Fasman

Alice & Leonard Maltin

Brian Nissel – *Nirvana Apartments*

Kevin & Don Norte

Bill Roschen & Christi Van Cleve

Ashley & Jocelyn Schauer

Valerie Yaros

TRIANGLE (\$100+)

Leith Adams

Bob Blue

Brutus Productions

Bruce Carroll

Crobar Hollywood

Ken Denton

Dan De Palma

Linda & Crosby Doe

Diana & Morris Everett

Kim Fletcher

Cheryl & Dan Foliart

Neill Foster

O. N. Foster

David Gajda & Jose Malagon

Betty & Gunter Herman

Amy Higgins

Janet Hoffmann

Allison Denman Holland

Don Hunt

Christine & Tim O'Brien

Outpost Homeowners Association

Simone & Adriana Patti

Jeffrey Rouze

Ann Savage

Jon Schafer

Maria Fant Schellhardt

Joan & Alan Simon

Bruce Torrence

Erica Westheimer

Mary Zickefoose

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Kristin Adame

Anne Berkovitz

Steven J. Bingen

Sharon & Dennis Blunk

Sean Bresnahan

Jim Brownfield

Bonnie Burrow

Neil Clemans

Janice Conaway

N. Alex Craig

Crobar Hollywood

Vicki Damante

Cliff Dektar

Laura Dodson

Patricia Ekdom

Lucy Esparza-Casarez

Diana & Morris Everett

Barry & Nadine Fox

Michael Francis

Eric Furan

Tony Goetz & Pat Shannon

Laurie Goldman

Rebecca Goodman

Susan Hall

Richard Harper

Karen Higgins

Mark Howell

Jack Hurley

Diane Kanner & Ron Weinstein
 Loralyn Kaufman
 Francis Keenin
 Clifford Kenny
 David Kurtz
 Dyana Levinson
 Katherine Long
 Kevin MacLean
 Linda Marazoni
 Mark Martin
 Jean Clyde Mason
 Bob May
 George Misthos
 Louise Monaco
 Dave Moreno
 Goldy Norton
 Christine & Tim O'Brien
 Katherine Orrison
 Bud Overn
 Charles & Cheryl Partello
 Irving Pinsky
 Jane Piraino
 Richard Ralko
 Lily Raven
 Michael I. Rotcher
 Ranjit Sandhu
 Gladie Sargeant
 Sharon & Loren Shipley
 Ross Shuman
 Stephanie Silver
 Stephen Smith
 Donna & Rick Snyder
 Elizabeth Stevenson
 Guy Strickland
 Stan Taffel
 R. Terry Taft
 Cyndi Tracy
 Erica Westheimer
 Stephen A. Wichrowski, Jr.
 Paul Wurtzel
 Kenton Youngstrom
 Julie Zafiratos

Richard D'Amanda
 Gregg Davidson
 Harry Demas
 Dino Everett
 Marjorie L. Fasman
 Kim Fletcher
 Timothy Christopher Ware – *Getty Foundation*
 Ted Gooding
 Frank Gutierrez
 Todd Holland & Scotch Ellis Loring
 Jean Kelly
 Dana & David Kegaries
 Randy Klopfleisch
 Joseph Lacek
 Michael E. McCloud
 Edward Maguire
 Lisa Mitchell
 Daniel T. Munoz
 Helen and Richard Nederhauser
 Mr. and Mrs. Chapin Nolen
 Ted Otis
 Simone & Adriana Patti
 Bill Reichenbach
 Jeffrey Rouze
 Erik Sanjurjo
 Joan & Alan H. Simon
 Sue Slutzky
 Ray Smith
 Steve Sylvester
 Norman Triplett
 Rob Vautherine
 Eric H. Warren

We Extend Immense Thanks To Sally Dumaux's Memorial Contributors – She Is Greatly Missed:

Jane Bartholomew
 Dorothy Bradley – *Niles Essanay Silent Film Museum, Inc.*
 Kevin Brownlow
 Bruce Calvert
 Timothy Dunleavy
 Susan Hall
 Donna Hill
 Lillian Michelson – *Dreamworks SKG Research Library*
 Jenny Paxson & Larry Smith
 Arlene Witt
 Valerie Yaros

Dragons *Continued from page 4*

to accommodate our time needed to work out plans to move the items. When the costs and time required kept getting worse for Hollywood Heritage, he offered a very reasonable cost to expedite the move almost a month after the original discovery. Charlie Armstrong and others at Paramount worked quickly to get the needed approvals to save the signs for Hollywood Heritage. Debbie Reynolds, Todd Fisher and his family, helped as described to provide space and transportation at a critical time. Kim Kogen helped to coordinate the neon dragon removal and plans for restoration. All this while MONA had lost its museum space and were moving everything in their collection into storage.

Next comes the restoration work. The rough estimate to restore the neon sign is \$10,000 with all new wiring included. Our year-end preservation fund helped to cover the cost of moving the signs to the museums, which was about \$2,000. If anyone is interested in helping to cover funding of this important project, please contact Hollywood Heritage as the restoration is more than we can tackle at this time.

But the east side marquee has been saved from certain death by shredding. This is the marquee that introduced such programs as *Windjammer*, *Some Like It Hot*, *West Side Story*, *Seven Days in May*, *Mary Poppins*, *Goldfinger*, *The Jungle Book*, *Hello Dolly!*, *The Exorcist*, *Star Wars*, *Superman* (1978), *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Titanic*, and many more. It also was probably the world's most photographed sign during the 43 years it was in place. Yet it came within hours of being pulverized until the leadership of Hollywood Heritage orchestrated a Christmas Miracle (it is a miracle we even heard about it) to save these famed icons of Hollywood's heritage.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

We extend hearty appreciation to our 2006 Preservation Action Fund year-end contributors. Special thanks go to:

Jane Bartholomew (in memory of Sally Dumaux)
 Sally Beaudette
 Frank & Cathy Bator
 Debra & Norris Bishton
 Dick & Betty Brill
Brutus Productions, Inc.
 Peter & Miriam Colantuoni

Former Hollywood Heritage President Erik Stogo Succumbs at Age 55

by Robert S. Birchard

Mack Dennard has informed Hollywood Heritage that former president and board member Erik Stogo recently passed away at the age of 55.

I first came to know Erik in the early days of the Silent Society screenings at the Barn. Erik was a passionate silent film fan, who also was a very discriminating collector.

As an attorney, Erik had an organized mind and a sense of discipline. Initially he limited his collection of movie memorabilia to what he could fit into four good sized zippered portfolio cases, and he first began to sell parts of his collection when he filled those four volumes. If he wanted a new piece, he would sell an old piece to make room for the new item. He had no desire for his collection to take over his life.

Collectors have made such well-meaning resolutions over and over again, and it should not come as a surprise that Erik eventually succumbed to the “madness,” as his collection outgrew his four binders and he became more actively involved as a dealer in movie memorabilia.

Erik was equally passionate about Hollywood Heritage and he served on the board in the 1990s at a crucial time in the organization’s history when Hollywood Heritage seemed to be under attack from without and within. Erik fought, unsuccessfully, to keep the Barn from being closed by then president J. Ronald Reed and he helped in the fight to keep Reed from unilaterally cutting the board from twenty to

six members and packing it with his hand-picked cronies. For his efforts, Erik was kicked off the board.

Reed closed the Barn. There were rumors that efforts were being made to sell the building without the knowledge of the HHI board, and then after the Barn had been closed for several weeks there was a fire at the historic structure, and Reed seemed to be in no hurry start the necessary repairs to reopen it. After Reed attempted to fix a Hollywood Heritage election by appointing himself as a nominating committee of one and selectively sending out ballots only to his supporters, I

electd Erik as president. Erik had a lot to deal with, including external audits of HHI and the rebuilding of the Barn. The organization also suffered from dwindling membership because little or no effort had been made to recruit or retain members in the previous two years. The rebuilding of a vibrant and strong Hollywood Heritage began with the tenure of Erik Stogo as president of the organization.

Erik also worked with me as a member of the Cinecon Classic Film Festival organizing committee and as an officer of the Society for Cinephiles/Cinecon, and I found him to be a trusted friend and advisor.

Not to say that Erik was a saint. He could be tough, difficult and even unyielding at times. His battles for Hollywood Heritage were hard-fought during tough times when the organization seemed to be being attacked from all sides. Erik managed to pull through all of these issues, but sometimes he took the battles a little too personally. As sometimes happens with this the resulting pluses and minuses to himself and the people around him took their toll.

To be fair, throughout all the time I knew him Erik had severe diabetes. His health was fragile and he was often in pain.

For all of the ups and downs and the unmended fences, Erik had a good soul. And even though it has been many years since we had spoken, it was a shock to hear of his passing. He will be missed by those of us who loved him through it all. And there is a little smile along with the tears as I know Erik will be giving them hell in Heaven.

For all of the ups and downs and the unmended fences, Erik had a good soul. And even though it has been many years since we had spoken, it was a shock to hear of his passing.

led a movement of some of HHI’s founders, past presidents and then current board members, including Marion Gibbons, Fran Offenhauser, Christy McAvoy, Richard Adkins, Glenn Brown and others, in a proxy fight to nullify Reed’s efforts. We prevailed and the running of the organization was vested in an interim management committee charged with organizing new elections.

When the new elections were held some six months later, Erik was re-elected to the board and the new board

Preservation *Continued from page 27*

Different options and plans are being discussed to save the historic structures and businesses while dealing with the financial reality of the situation. The largest area of development is the Magic Castle's parking lot on Franklin, one of the most congested traffic corridors in Los Angeles. Something will develop but it cannot endanger these almost 100 year-old landmarks. The parties we've talked to understand this and it will be a long discussion with everyone, especially the surrounding neighborhood concerning traffic, before a final plan is hammered out with the new owner(s).

Signs *Continued from page 8*

hammer it at the hearing (see our web site for the staff report). The main elements of the staff's opposition were that the size was too large, it was of a design specifically not allowed in the sign ordinances, and that any approval would be an amendment to the ordinance, which the commission did not have the legal authority to do. CIM called it an "exception" to the ordinance which it clearly was not (but the exception the commission could grant).

Concerning the financial burden argument being made by the sign's 20 proponents, including Mayor Villarraigosa's office and Councilman Garcetti's office, the staff responded by reading the findings of the U.S. Supreme Court which clearly stated that economic hardship could not be used for a variance here. This is because the economic hardship was known at the time of purchase and was not an act of the government to an existing condition. Otherwise, the Supreme Court stated, everyone could claim an economic hardship for any variances, although that is close to what is going on in Hollywood today.

Even with the U.S. Supreme Court backing their decision, the commission pushed and pushed the staff to rethink their position, including the

statement that the commission had no authority to even vote on this. After about an hour of public testimony (only Hollywood Heritage defended the staff's position) and further discussion against staff for another half hour, the staff caved in and agreed to rewrite the opinion so as to allow the sign to go through.

Having attended hundreds of such meetings since 1979, I had never seen one like this. The blatantly obvious position of the law as clearly stated in the staff report was not challenged except to try calling this an "exception" and not an amendment. With the city attorney's representative sitting there, the commission voted to overturn the staff report and approve the new billboards. The political pressure applied by the city and CIM to ram this through despite all findings pointing to its illegality was a perfect example of how the law in Hollywood is all too often determined by political contributions.

Hollywood Heritage thanks the Planning Department staff led by Charles Rausch, that tried to protect the Hollywood community. As they noted, this will be a major precedent for other superblight signs to be used to cover even more of the community. Already between LaBrea Avenue and McCadden Street, about 5 blocks along Hollywood Boulevard, with the Chinese Theater in the center of it, 15 superblight signs exist, 17 billboards, and more have been approved (this includes only those buildings fronting on the boulevard).

On the positive side, a couple of blocks from this site, a billboard was removed. A large, approximately 25' x 60' billboard sat above the parking lot of the Hollywood United Methodist Church at Highland and Franklin avenues. A dozen other billboards are within a block of this locale, and the church said enough. Stating that they wanted to remove the blight of the billboard and help the visual condition of the neighborhood, they got rid of the billboard.

This was a first for Hollywood and finally an acknowledgement of the problem. Hollywood Heritage and the community thank Hollywood United Methodist Church for this gift.

Wattles 100 *Continued from page 9*

As always, Hollywood Heritage Inc. encourages, but never mandates, attendees to come in vintage clothing. So for those good sports that will or that want to, here is a partial list of local vendors that may help you in achieving the look you are after. Always call first to get current hours and directions.

Aardvark's

1253 E. Colorado Blvd
Pasadena, CA 626/583-9109

American Vintage

6529 Hollywood Boulevard
(323) 461-0068

Flounce Vintage

1555 Echo Park Avenue
Los Angeles
213/481-1975

Golyester

136 South La Brea Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 323/931-1339

Hollywood Hatters

6915 Melrose Ave
Hollywood, CA 323/525-1912

Iguana Vintage Clothing

6320 Hollywood Boulevard
(323) 462-1010

Julian's

8366 W. 3rd Street
Los Angeles, CA 323/655-3011

Pomona Fox Tour

The Pomona Fox Corporation and Arteco Partners are hosting a "hard-hat" tour of the Pomona Fox Theater, 131 East 3rd Street in downtown Pomona on May 12 from 4:00–8:00 pm. This will be the last chance to see the National Landmark historic 1931 Art Deco theater prior to its planned renovation.

In addition to the tour there will be historic photos on display as well as a "sneak peak" of the planned renovation.



Mark Your Calendar

All Evenings @ the Barn start at 7:30

Wed., May 9: Chris Nichols signing his new book, *The Leisure Architecture of Wayne McAllister* with a slide and video presentation by Chris and Marc Wanamaker. *Evenings @ the Barn*

Thurs., May 24: Organist extraordinaire Bob Mitchell. Screening Mary Pickford's *Little Annie Rooney* (1925) *Evenings @ the Barn*

Sun., June 3: Wattles Birthday Party: 100 years young!

Thurs., June 7: A program on costume designer Bill Travilla with an overview of Studio costume departments and Travilla's work, especially with Marilyn Monroe. *Evenings @ the Barn*

Thurs., June 14: Author Jim Heimann with a program on "An evening with the stars." *Evenings @ the Barn*

PRESERVING OUR HOLLYWOOD HERITAGE FOR OVER 25 YEARS

- Wattles Mansion and Gardens • Hollywood Heritage Museum/Lasky-DeMille Barn •
- Silent Society: Motion Picture History and Preservation • Architectural Preservation, Advocacy, and Education •



YES! I would like to become a member of Hollywood Heritage, Inc.

\$2,500 Majestic \$1,000 Keystone \$500 Bison \$250 Kalem
 \$100 Triangle** \$50 Household \$35 Individual
 \$20 Senior (65+)/Student (Full Time)

**Join at the \$100 Triangle level or above, and receive a 24"x36" collectable reproduction poster, *A Map of Hollywood from the Best Surveys of the Time* (c. 1928).

Membership Benefits Include:

- Free admission to the Hollywood Heritage Museum for two adults and two children.
- Ten percent discount at the Museum Store.
- Advance notification of special member programs.
- Discounts on Silent Society film programs at the Hollywood Heritage Museum, UCLA, and the Paramount Ranch.
- Quarterly **Hollywood Heritage Newsletter**.

Membership Application

Fill in and send, or you can join online via PayPal from our web site: www.hollywoodheritage.org

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

I wish to pay by:

Check

Please make checks payable to **Hollywood Heritage, Inc.**

Charge my: Visa MasterCard

Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Signature: _____

Clip and mail to: Hollywood Heritage, Inc., P.O. Box 2586, Hollywood, CA 90078