May 2015 Number 311



"THE HEIGHTS OF ELEGANCE"

WAHA Presents A Historic Homes & Architecture Tour in West Adams Heights

Saturday, June 6, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

A Former Resident Remembers A Childhood in West Adams Heights

My name is Robin Williams and I lived in a neo-classical mansion at 2218 Harvard Boulevard in West Adams Heights from the age of six months to about seven years. You'll see my old house during WAHA's June tour, the "Heights of Elegance." My great grandfather, David Kik, had come from Germany with his wife Rosa in 1877, and he purchased 60 acres in what is now downtown Los Angeles. Eventually my family owned this wonderful mansion (right) that had been built by a doctor, Dr. Wesley Beckett, who was also involved with USC and Pacific Mutual Life Insurance.



It was the late 1930s and during World War II when I lived there, a time of great difficulty, but my memories are fond.

I would always be up and outside real early, listening to the far away rumbling sound of the street cars headed downtown. I met my neighbors Hattie McDaniel and Mrs. Seeley Mudd. (I didn't know at the time, since I was just a little boy, that her husband was one of L.A.'s great philanthropists.)

My mother would put a little Scottish cap on my head and I would beat all the other tricycles in the neighborhood in races up and down Harvard in front of our mansion. My tricycle had the biggest wheels and the thinnest and hardest tires so it was the fastest tricycle. Nobody ever beat me. I was king of the sidewalk tricycle racers. (continued on page 6)

WAHA Achieves Payment of Legal Fees

In Bishop Case, Developer Will Prepare Environmental Evaluation of Adaptive Reuse Project *by Jean Frost*

In a last minute settlement agreement just days prior to a Superior Court hearing, the developer (1342 West Adams LLC/ StuHo) of the Roger Williams Baptist Church/Bishop Mansion site agreed to reimburse WAHA and its attorneys the legal fees incurred for WAHA's successful pursuit of environmental review of their proposed project. WAHA had been scheduled to appear before the Superior Court Judge Luis A. Lavin on March 19 to argue that the attorney's fees should be awarded based on California's private attorney's general doctrine.

As reported previously, the judge had ruled in WAHA's favor, and the case itself was settled – sending the project back for an environmental evaluation. But there was still the matter of the fees outstanding.

The California Supreme Court, in Serrano v. Unruh, stated that "Citizens of ordinary means are unlikely to file, and competent private practitioners are unlikely to accept, public interest litigation however meritorious without some assurance (continued on page 10)

Remembering Martin Eli Weil: Annual Preservation Brunch and Martin Weil Preservation Award

Sunday, June 21, 11 a.m. to - 1 p.m. at the ONE Archives, 909 West Adams Blvd. (University Park)



Each Springtime, the West Adams Heritage Association presents the Martin Eli Weil Preservation Award to recognize individuals' lifetime achievement in historic preservation. The Award is named for Martin Eli Weil, its first recipient in 2006, and WAHA continues to honor him each year as a worthy recipient is selected. How fortunate we were to be able to honor Martin during his lifetime.

Martin Weil was a leading preservation architect and a founding member and a former president of the Los Angeles Conservancy. He was one of the leaders in the effort to preserve the Los Angeles Central Library downtown. Since 1985 and until his death in 2009, he lived in one of the only Greene & Greene-designed Craftsman homes in South Los Angeles, and the only one still standing in the City of L.A.

Martin passed away in his Greene & Greene designed bungalow in February 2009. Many newer WAHA members did not have the benefit of his charm, erudition and sometimes curmudgeonly take on the perils and foibles of living in a historic neighborhood. Each year as we salute a deserving (continued on page 3)

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La Fayette Square & Wellington Square Annual "Used Stuff" Sale

Saturday, May 16, 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

It's that time again! Lafayette Square and Wellington Square host their all-neighborhood(s) multi-family estate and garage sales. Residents throughout both these pockets put out their former treasures in the hope that YOU will find still-sparkling gems. Gently used items: antiques, furniture, housewares and more!



Doheny Mansion's Legacy by Don Sloper

The Doheny Mansion and Chester Place are important locations in the West Adams District's history. Chester Place is now home to Mount St. Mary's University's Downtown campus, and the opulent Doheny Mansion, a well-known landmark designed by architects Sumner Hunt and Theordore Eisen and built in 1899 by Oliver P. Posey (and purchased soon afterwards by Edward Doheny). The Doheny Mansion is famed as a film site, and will open its doors to public tours several times in 2015, including on Saturday, May 30.

The last member of the three generations of Dohenys who once lived on Chester Place, Patrick Anson Doheny, died last year at the UCLA Ronald Reagan Hospital in Westwood. The main library at the University of Southern California, the Edward L. Doheny Junior Memorial Library was named after his father, popularly called "Ned"

Doheny, a USC alumnus and trustee, who was also the first president of the modern USC alumni association in 1923.

Patrick, the fourth of Ned Doheny's five children, was born June 11, 1923 in New York City and raised in Los Angeles. He was baptized the same year by Rev. George Davidson of St. John's Episcopal Church, 514 West Adams. Unlike most of St. John's baptisms, which took place at the church, Patrick and his siblings were baptized in the family home at 10 Chester Place. His sponsors were Dr. Norman Bridge, a trustee and generous benefactor to the California Institute of Technology and USC, and his wife, Mae Manford Bridge. The Bridges lived at 718 West Adams.

Patrick's father, Ned Doheny, was 8 years old when he moved into 8 Chester Place in 1901 with his parents, oil baron Edward Laurence Doheny Senior, and his wife, Estelle. After Ned's marriage in 1914 to Lucy Smith of South Pasadena, they continued to live at 8 Chester Place until 1916 when they moved next door to 10 Chester Place.

During their time on Chester Place, Ned and Lucy had five children: Lucy (1915-2009), Larry (1917-1999), Bill (1919-2003), Patrick (1923-2014) and Tim (1926-2009). The children played in the formal Victorian garden located between 8 Chester Place and 10 Chester Place and their footprints remain today in a concrete step (pictured below right) on the south side of the Doheny Mansion.

In a 2006 interview, the oldest child, Lucy, recalled how they loved to visit grandpa and grandma in the Doheny Mansion. One of their great pleasures was that their grandparents allowed them to roller skate on the marble floors of the Pompeian Room.

Before Thanksgiving in 1928, Ned, Lucy and their children moved to "Greystone," a 55-room, 46,000-square-foot home located on 12 ½ acres in Beverly Hills, purchased from his parents for \$10. Three months later, Ned was murdered by an employee. The night of the murder, the children were temporarily moved to their maternal grandparents at 649 West Adams, immediately south of their former home at 10 Chester Place.

Docent-led tours of Chester Place start in the interior of 10 Chester Place where Ned and Lucy Doheny raised their family until November 1928, and conclude at 8 Chester Place, the Doheny Mansion. This year's public tours are scheduled for: May 30, July 11, October 3, and November 14, 2015. Tours begin at 10:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. All public tours are \$20. Reservations are essential. Tour revenues help support the maintenance of



or contact Esther Diaz, telephone 213-477-2764; e-mail: ediaz@msmu.edu. ●

these landmark West Adams mansions. To sign up for a tour, visit www.dohenymansion.org/tours.html

President's Message by John Patterson

It's been a busy, busy few years, with so many positive accomplishments for both our community and our organization. The most important thing I would like to convey is my gratitude for the honor I have had serving as President of WAHA for the past 5 years.

When I first joined the Board – I think it was in 2007 – our WAHA membership was dropping precipitously. When I became President in 2010, our annual membership dues revenues were barely above \$9,000. We've seen an incremental improvement over these intervening years, and today our membership revenues have doubled to over \$18,000. Our hardworking Membership Committee gets the credit for that turnaround!

Another of my focuses has been the WAHA community itself. Early on, I came to the opinion that WAHA's social activities seemed somehow less important than they deserved to be, so I supported steps to remedy that. WAHA's favorite event, the Ice Cream Social, resurfaced a few years back; the 4th of July annual picnics have been exciting celebrations; and themed pot lucks, as well as events supporting local businesses like El Cholo and Pizza Rev have become a regular part of our WAHA social calendar. Please be sure to thank the woman behind these efforts – Suzie Henderson – next time you see her!

As I came to understand the role West Adams played in its involvement with the City of Los Angeles, it seemed to me that the WAHA "brand" didn't match its visibility. I made it a goal to change that – and worked at length with Hilary Lentini to improve our print materials that are seen by the "outside" world. Simple black & white tour booklets have evolved into graphically pleasing publications in full color. A couple years back, we also revamped the WAHA website. I'd like to thank Hilary, and the entire team at Lentini Design for all their hard work.

A fourth priority for me was improving communications with our membership, and to that end I began sending out a series of intermittent e-mail announcements to augment our newsletter. E-mails were made possible by making a significant investment in our website and database. It's still not perfect, but it's getting better! I hope to continue serving as Communications Chair, and reallocate time no longer filling duties of President to dedicate to more and better emails, and also building content on our webpage.

Another communication advancement was the re-launch of WAHA's Facebook page. Valiantly initiated several years ago by Suzanne Lloyd-Simmons, perhaps it was ahead of its time, as back then not nearly as many of us had our Facebook pages. So in 2012, we gave it another shot, and our likes are increasing every week. If you haven't yet "liked" WAHA's Facebook page, then get to it! The Lentini team update images regularly, but the real support comes from Lisa Schoening, who volunteers to regularly post and share items of interest to the WAHA community. Thank you, Lisa!

(The President's Message continues on page 13)

Preservation Brunch continued from page 1

winner, we also remember Martin. He was indeed an original. When he spoke before the PLUM (Planning and Land Use) Committee of LA City Council about the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the restoration, rehabilitation and preservation of Historic Properties, his testimony was compelling and not easily dismissed. And he generously gave of his time to fight battles for historic preservation.

As described at his memorial service, Martin was "An expert in historic design, materials and colors, Martin specialized in restoration projects of landmark historic homes and other significant properties in Southern California. Knowledgeable about methods of restoration and very helpful on how to restore structures without damage or use of improper methods, he was an excellent researcher always gathering information about the history of the building before starting a project." Through the many years he lived in West Adams he was never too busy to help with preservation issues and he always gave generously of his time.

Last year's Award recipient was Mitzi March Mogul, the 2013 award was presented to Laura Meyers and the 2012 Award to Alma Carlisle. (Other previous winners were Jean Frost and Jim Childs, David Raposa, and Eric Bronson.) The Award winner is officially announced at a Preservation Brunch sponsored by WAHA's Preservation Committee at a historic location in or near the West Adams area. In years prior WAHA has celebrated this event at the USC Religious Center, Heritage Square, the Rafael Soriano House, Mt. St. Mary's College, and the Brown-Gorsline Residence. Last year we celebrated in the gardens of the Stearns-Dockweiler Residence at 27 St. James Park.

This year's preservation brunch will be at the ONE Archives at the USC Libraries, 909 West Adams Boulevard (corner of Scarff Street and Adams) on Sunday, June 21 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The ONE Archives is the largest repository of lesbian, gay, bisexual,



The ONE Archives is located in a Modernist former residence built as a fraternity

transgender, and queer materials in the world. Founded in 1952, the ONE Archives currently houses over two million archival items, including periodicals, books, film, video and audio recordings, photographs, artworks and personal papers of activists, artists and ordinary citizens.

The ONE Archives are housed in a modernist former fraternity (Delta Pi) designed by Eugene E. Hougham, USC '54, of the firm of Ternstrom & Skinner, and erected 1965-1966. The building was chosen by the Southern California Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1968 as one of the thirty best buildings erected in Southern California in that recent three-year period.

WAHA thanks the ONE Archives for graciously opening its doors to the West Adams community to join us in celebration of historic preservation, and to honor this year's recipient of the Martin Eli Weil Preservation Award.

Stepping Out

AUTHOR RECEPTION:

John Hughes: A Life in Film, by Kirk Honeycutt

Sunday, May 24, 3 to 5 p.m.

The Susan Wilshire Residence, 2501 4th Ave. (West Adams Avenues)

Longtime West Adams resident, WAHA member and writer Kirk Honeycutt's illustrated tribute to the legendary filmmaker John Hughes offers a behind-the-scenes look at his humble beginnings to Hughes' blockbuster success with classics like *Pretty in Pink, Sixteen Candles, Home Alone, Ferris Bueller's Day Off, Planes, Trains and Automobiles,* and *The Breakfast Club.* He never went to film school or studied cinema, and he spent most of his career in the Midwest, far from the Hollywood Hills.

Hughes helped launch the careers of Andrew McCarthy, Molly Ringwald, Anthony Michael Hall,

Macaulay Culkin, and Judd Nelson. He made John Candy a household name. This biography features fresh interviews with Matthew Broderick, Ally Sheedy, Judd Nelson, Steve Martin, and Jon Cryer, and a foreword from *Home Alone* director Chris Columbus.

Honeycutt has been a professional movie reviewer in Los Angeles for more than three decades. He's best known for his work with the *Hollywood Reporter* and the *Daily News* of Los Angeles. He now hosts the Sneak Preview series for UCLA Extension, and teaches several film studies courses at Chapman University's Dodge College of Film and Media Arts.

WAHA is presenting this reception and booksigning, and 10% of the proceeds from the sale of books will be donated back to the organization. Light refreshments and beverages will be served. ●

Poetry in the House: Meet L.A.'s Poet Laureate

Saturday, May 30, 1:30 p.m.

Washington Irving Library, 4117 West Washington Blvd. (Arlington Heights)

The Washington Irving Library Literary Series presents L.A. Poet Laureate Luis J. Rodriguez and acclaimed poet Peter J. Harris, conversing about "Poetry as Healing: From Trauma to Transformation."

Best known for his memoir, *Always Running: La Vida Loca, Gang Days in L.A.*, Rodriguez is also an award-winning poet. Brought up in Watts and East L.A., Rodriguez, a community activist, has been a vocal advocate for the power of words to change lives.

Rodriguez is the city's second poet laureate, succeeding Eloise Klein Healy. During his two-year term, he is expected to compose poems to the city, host at least six readings, hold at least six classes or workshops at public library branches and serve as a cultural ambassador.

Lonely Girl: The Secret Life of Dorothy Dandridge

Opening Night: Saturday, May 30 at 8 p.m.; Play Continues Through July 31 Vintage Hollywood, 4000 West Washington Blvd.

Dorothy Dandridge's life story is the stuff of Hollywood's dreams — and nightmares. The play *Lonely Girl* recounts Dandridge's rags-to-riches-to-rags story, from humble beginnings in Cleveland to her rise to fame as the first African American actress to receive a Best Actress Oscar nomination (for her role in *Carmen Jones*), to her downward spiral into alcoholism and financial troubles.

This one-woman show stars Wanda Ray Willis and is directed by Leroy Richardson. Orchestra by John Stephens, Blue Visions.

For more information, call 323-216-7528 or visit www.vintagehollywoodprivateklub.com.





Mansions and bungalows. Bankers and merchants. Socialites and scoundrels. Discover the people, events, sights, and sounds that have given spirit and life to West Adams.

Order it now at www.westadamsheritage.org



S tepping Out

Bug Out at the Natural History Museum

Saturday and Sunday, May 16-17, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Natural History Museum, (Exposition Park)

It's the Natural History Museum's 29th Annual Bug Fair! And, it is the Year of the Butterfly. This will be a weekend full of exhibitors, vendors, bug chefs, and exciting programs in celebration of our winged friends. You will see everything from exotic insect collections to live pet tarantulas, millipedes, centipedes, scorpions, and other arthropods for sale to bugrelated products, such as honey, silk, wax, bug-inspired artwork.

The Bug Fair and other programming (excluding the Butterfly Pavilion) are included with regular Museum admission, but reservations are required for this event.



While at the Museum, visit the Butterfly Pavilion, which is open April 12 through September 7. More than 30 native North American butterfly species and an array of plants take up residence every summer for our muchanticipated living

habitat, the Butterfly Pavilion. Wander through a unique changing ecosystem, witness free-flying creatures interacting with plant life, and emerge with a better understanding of the environment needed for the survival of these spectacular animals. Separate admission: Adults, \$17, children \$8.

For more information: 213-763-3499 or e-mail educate@nhm.org. ●

City En La Primavera:

Celebration and Silent Auction Benefitting City Language Immersion School, West Adams Saturday, May 16

Wilfandel Club, 3425 West Adams Blvd.

City Language Immersion Charter School, West Adams ("CLIC") is presenting its annual fundraiser celebration and silent auction, "City En La Primavera." CLIC's mission is to provide the families of the West Adams community with an academically competitive dual language immersion education, with an emphasis and focus on community. According to the school's stated mission, "We strive to develop in our students a strong sense of social responsibility, an understanding of 'the common good,' and a commitment to community service."

The event is expected to not only be fun, but also an opportunity for prospective parents with elementary school children to meet CLIC's leaders -- many of the CLIC families are members of WAHA, so you would definitely see some familiar faces in the crowd. Tickets are \$35 apiece. To purchase tickets online, please go to: http://citycharterschools.org/westadams/gala/

For more information, contact either of the event's co-chairs: Stefanie Ewing, 310-895-1031, or Susan Hartling, 310-409-3459.



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Remarkable Sumner Hunt-designed Arts & Crafts in Kinney Heights — Beautifully restored, 4,100-sqft home on 11,200-sq-ft lot – lush landscaping plus pool, extraordinary original detals inc. four art tile (Gruby, Batcheder) fireplaces, beamed ceilings. Move-in ready! Asking \$1,350,000 — David Raposa Coming Soon - Two on a Lot in Mount Angelus— And a 900-sq-ft studio, 10,000+ sq ft lot, asking \$899,000 — Adam Janeiro

IN ESCROW

Trophy Arts & Crafts in Wellington Square — City landmark, Mills Act tax savings — *David Raposa and Ed Moore, seller's agents*

Sugar Hill Transitional— 5 bed, 4 bath. Adam Janeiro, seller's and buyer's agent, 323-401-3952 **Chas. Victor Hall Tract Transitional**— Jane Harrington, buyer's agent

Equestrian property, Burbank — *Jane Harrington, buyer's agent*

Mid-Century Modern Condo on Kings Road, WEHO — Jane Harrington, seller's agent

SOLD

Windsor Hills Colonial — Adam Janeiro, buyer's agent

Fenway Park Tract Craftsman bungalow — 3+2, 1,500 sq. ft with original woodwork, new roof and electrical.— *Adam Janeiro, seller's agent*

Our agents live and work in Historic West Adams

David Raposa Adam Janeiro, Carlton Joseph, Jane Harrington, Ed Moore

Our Offices are in the Victorian Village, 2316 1/2 S. Union Ave., Suite 2, 213-747-1337

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Preservation Matters

A Childhood in "The Heights"

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By the time I was about five years old I had free rein to wander and roam in the neighborhood to my heart's content. My mother and grandmother didn't seem to worry about me much. They let me be free to wander every day! There was no traffic on Harvard during the daylight hours when I was wandering around. I had the entire neighborhood to myself.

All the homes were huge and scary. I loved it there. I was in boyhood heaven.

I remember all kinds of details. First of all was my good friend, Wayne Simpson, who lived with his parents and his brother Joel just below Harvard Boulevard on La Salle. His parents were so warm and so friendly to me. I loved going down the street and spending time in their home.

I had another friend named Mitzy. She was my Pekinese. She was always with me as I roamed the neighborhood. She and I would just sit on a curb somewhere and talk together. Wayne could depend on me to be sitting on the curb watching his house for any sign of movement. If I saw them arriving home, I would jump up and go visit with them.

Wayne and I would always go down to the Bijou cinema on Adams Street and watch the serial westerns that played on Saturday matinees along with the feature film. We were regular customers of the Bijou every Saturday. The drugstore on the corner of La Salle and Adams had the best comic book section. I could hardly wait to buy the newest Superman comic book. With a certain amount of relish I smelled the pages of each new issue and just shook with happiness over my new comic book and the stories of Superman.

Our house was huge. The yard, too. I remember running through the sprinklers on the front lawn on hot summer days with my grandmother watching over me when I was just three years old. We had endless gardens with lawns and bushes and a badminton court.

On either side of the front porch that resembled a neo-classical Greek temple were tall cypress trees. Or maybe they were just some sort of thin pine tree. One day I climbed to the very top of the tree on the left and got myself onto the roof. My uncle, George Bohlig, who was married to my aunt Gladys, found his way up through the attic and out on the roof to retrieve me before I fell to my death from up there.

One day I did fall from about a third the way up that tree, all the way to the ground. The branch broke and I just fell through all the lower branches until I hit the ground. The breath was knocked out of me and I just could not breathe for what seemed like an eternity. My mother got me into the house and onto a couch where I struggled to catch my breath. Wayne was very worried about me and waited outside to hear if I was okay or not.

Wayne was smart enough to never join me in my escapades because he knew I would get him killed. He just watched and worried over me.

To the left of the house was a Mulberry tree in the shape of a Turkish caravan tent. I had more fun with that Mulberry tree. I had all kinds of imaginative games with that tree. It gave me a place to sit and watch the street. Nothing ever happened on



HOME OF WESLEY WILBUR BECKETT.

that street but maybe things were happening in my imagination. I sat inside that tent tree and invented all kinds of things in my imagination.

My grandpa had his office inside the door that led out to the parking area with its covered entrance that is similar to many mansions. Later I learned that it is called a "Porte Cochere." I would go in there and hang around with my grandpa.

My grandpa is the one who found me fast asleep on a driveway entrance down on the corner of La Salle and Harvard, where the two streets meet. I remember climbing up there on the level part of the monumental entrance pillar and just lying down and falling asleep. There were two identical pillars on both sides of the driveway. The mansion is long gone -- the First AME church is on the property today. Christmas 1940!!! I got a pair of cowboy boots and chaps and guns and holsters and a cowboy hat. Off I went to be a cowboy! I went into the huge yards of the mansion next door where Mrs. Mudd lived. I think she might have seen me out there in her yard playing like a cowboy. She let me do anything I wanted in her magical yard of fern grass and little hills and Koi ponds all over the place.

I remember also....the attack on Pearl Harbor, but couldn't make heads or tails what it was all about. All I knew, it was very serious. All the adults changed.



The views from here: the rears of the mansions on Harvard Boulevard offered views of Downtown Los Angeles, and sloping terraced gardens. Pictured above are the Seeley Mudd Residence (left, demolished); the Beckett Residence (center) and the Washburn Residence (right).

Nobody was much fun after that happened! We had to put dark shades on all the windows for the air raids. The sirens would go off and finally a Japanese plane crashed into the street somewhere in Los Angeles. Anyway, that was the rumor! I remember the sirens clearly.

But, then my grandma would read the newspaper to me every morning in the kitchen and I finally "joined" the Navy at the age of six -- at Saks Fifth Avenue, where they took my picture in my new Navy uniform. I was an officer and was in charge of everything in my yard at the Harvard house.

I just kept on playing in the massive jungles in my yard. I had every kind of playground out there. I even had my rabbits in a hutch that I would go feed every morning. There was a very large bluebird that would come to my window and visit with me every morning, too. I gave him the name -- "Charley!" He always came to see me. He never let me down.

When I started school the war was on. The school let us start a Victory Garden and we all found out how to cultivate and dig with a shovel and plant seeds in the ground.

I was always up at the crack of dawn and out into the yard to make the rounds. Our mansion had rooms galore and my grandma had rented out one of the rooms to two very pretty women. I came up with the idea of placing a ladder against the wall so I could climb up and look in their windows and watch them get dressed. I was so excited I almost inhaled a branch of leaves from the magnolia tree, and nearly fell off the ladder. That was enough for me. My life as a voyeur began and ended with that escapade.

The other tenants lived further upstairs in rooms that circled around the stair well. I would explore their rooms while they were at work. In one room I found a gun, a pair of brass knuckles and a black jack in the dresser drawer. I still marvel over the fact that I did not touch that gun. In another room lived the manager of the fancy restaurant called "Tail of the Cock." He taught me how to assemble the balsa wood airplanes that I found in my cereal boxes. His name was Jim Hooker -- I am amazed that I remember names 69 years later. Another tenant was Don Williams, who was a tennis player and a very nice man. All the tenants were treated like members of the family. They were there to celebrate Christmas with us. Somebody would pose as Santa Claus and come knocking at the front door and leave my presents. It was a great touch! I loved Santa Claus whoever he was.

I remember being the ring bearer at my aunt Gerie's wedding to Dick Tunnicliff. They sewed the ring onto a pillow that I carried in the wedding procession at the age of three. Dick went off to fight the war as a bombardier in a Flying Fortress and my uncle George somehow ended up in the U.S. Army infantry and was in a fox hole on Guadalcanal. Both men survived the war and had successful lives. Dick was a President of Security First National Bank and George was a major executive for Gimble's Department Stores.

My grandma would read the war articles in the Los Angeles Times every morning when I arrived from making the rounds in the massive yard around the house. I had no idea what effect those articles had on my subconscious. Later, I would make a whole film about WWII. It all started with grandma and me in the kitchen of 2218 Harvard Boulevard.

The house at 2218 Harvard Boulevard was full of activity in the 1940s and I was there to see it all: the people who came to live there as tenants and all the neighbors, including Hattie McDaniel of movie fame. She was the maid in the movie *Gone With the Wind* and received an Oscar. I met her once in her driveway. I would watch her with her friends as they slowly made their way toward the front door. She was telling stories and they were laughing so hard that some of the men would fall down into the bushes. I just hung on to one of the tall Washingtonias and watched until they went into the house.

The Heights of Elegance Tour: Rindge and Other Grand Mansions Open Their Doors Saturday, June 6, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Last ticket sold at 1 p.m.)



In its heyday, more than a century ago, West Adams Heights was famed as one of L.A.'s wealthiest section, with elegant mansions built high atop a hill, with views to Downtown, the mountains and the sea. Five decades later, West Adams Heights achieved national renown, as the community where racial divides were struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court, in response to lawsuits headlined by well-known actresses Hattie McDaniel and Louise Beavers, among others.

Now, for the first time, the West Adams Heritage Association (WAHA) will open the doors to several of

West Adams Heights' grand mansions, most never before opened to the public, and all serving as reminders of Los Angeles' many layers of history.

West Adams Heights was developed at the turn of the century and was favored by many noted and wealthy men of the time for its picturesque location on a hill, which afforded views of downtown, the ocean, and scenic landscape vistas. Renowned architects were employed to design imposing homes. Tour highlights include the Rindge "Castle,"

pictured right, built by the family that once owned Malibu and designed by Frederick L. Roehrig (known as "the Millionaire's



Architect"), the Charles I.D. Moore Residence, designed by the firm of Hudson & Munsell, architects of the Natural History Museum; the Kenworthy Residence, a Norman French Revival home built in 1935; and the Dr. Wesley W. Beckett Residence, the onceendangered Neo-Classical mansion, designed by architect John C. Austin, whose new owner is undertaking a major restoration.

Tour goers will also visit the home of entertainer Hattie McDaniel, who in 1940 became the first black actress to receive an Academy Award, for her performance in "Gone With the Wind." Along with McDaniel, by the 1940s many important African-American performers (including Louise Beavers, Ethel Waters, and Joel Fluellen) made their home in West Adams Heights, and it came to be known as "Sugar Hill."



A Childhood in "The Heights"

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My mother graduated with a Law Degree from the University of Southern California and I went to the graduation ceremony with my grandma. Gwen became a real estate agent for Jackson Diggs.

Since then I can't find Wayne Simpson anywhere.

For a long time I didn't know what happened to Hattie McDaniel or all the tenants who lived with us in our huge mansion. Later I found out that she got her own TV show called *Beulah* and when she died, she was denied burial at thecemetery now called Hollywood Forever. Her family buried her at Rosedale Cemetery (Now Angelus Rosedale). Her house is still there across the street from our house.

In recent years, my daughter, Blaire Baron, an actress, found herself in a movie in that was filmed in the same house I grew up in, at 2218 Harvard Boulevard. She and I both are thrilled that the house, our former family home, is now being restored.

My Mulberry tree is still there. The neoclassical appearance of the house is still intact. The house is alive and well---in my head. \bullet

Signed, The boy on the tricycle with a Scottish hat.... "The Heights of Elegance" tour will raise funds specifically for WAHA's Preservation Fund; proceeds will be used to advance preservation activities in the West Adams District, including Historic Cultural Monument nominations, Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ) expansions, and cultural heritage educational programs. Your support will be most appreciated; ticket purchase information follows at the end of this article.

The tour takes place in the portion of West Adams Heights that SurveyLA has identified as a National Register (Eligible) Historic District. According to SurveyLA, the "Sugar Hill Historic District" is significant both "as an enclave of grand residences," many designed by significant architects, and also "for its association with the African American community and the movement to abolish deed restrictions that promoted racial segregation across the United States."

In 1938, Norman Houston, president of the Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company, purchased a home at 2211 S. Hobart. He was followd by other wealthy African Americans, including actresses Beavers and McDaniel. In 1945, some residents who were members of the West Adams Heights Improvement Association filed a lawsuit arguing that white homeowners who sold their homes to people of color were violating deed restrictions. A group of African American homeowners headed by Beavers and McDaniel then hired prominent civil rights attorney Loren Miller, who successfully argued their case in court, citing the 14th Amendment. Eventually this and several other related cases merged in an action that went to the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled in 1947 that restrictive deed covenants were unconstitutional.

Soon thereafter, Sugar Hill became home to two important African American institutions: Golden State Mutual Life Insurance built a new headquarters building designed by African American architect Paul Williams at the intersection of Adams and Western, while First AME Church erected a modern sanctuary also designed by Williams on Harvard Boulevard directly across from the Rindge Mansion.

Learn more about the history of Sugar Hill, and tour the interiors of these grand mansions, when you explore The Heights of Elegance on June 6.

This is a self-guided tour, with the properties clustered within easy strolling distance of each other. Please, no high heels.

TICKET SALES/TOUR TIMES

Tickets purchased in advance (by May 25) are \$25 per person for WAHA members, \$30 per person for non-members, and will be held at check-in.

Tickets purchased after May 25 and on the day of the tour are \$35 per person. Tickets wll be available at check-in, 2263

S. Harvard Blvd., Los Angeles, 90018 (cash or checks only). The last ticket will be sold at 1 p.m. Doors will close promptly at 4 p.m., so visitors are encouraged to start as early as possible in order to see and enjoy all the tour properties.

To order tickets in advance, log onto www.WestAdamsHeritage.org or send a check made payable to "WAHA" to:

WAHA "West Adams Heights" Tour 2263 S. Harvard Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90018 Please include an e-mail address or phone number for confirmation.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

What is a WAHA tour without the need for helping hands? We will need docents for all the houses, from 9 a.m. (for docent training) until the end of the tour event, at 4 p.m. Volunteers will, of course, also be able to tour all of the included properties. If you'd like to help out, or need more information, please write tours@ westadamsheritage.org.

More complete tour information is posted at www.WestAdamsHeritage.org.

Rindge Mansion photo on page 8, courtesy the Los Angeles Public Library Security Pacific National Bank Collection



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IN ESCROW : 1815 Virginia Road in La Fayette Sq. — Offered at \$1,329,000
IN ESCROW : 1862 Buckingham Road in La Fayette Sq. — Offered at \$919,000
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Preservation Matters

Bishop Mansion Case Legal Fees

continued from page 1

that compensation that fairly covers the legal services required." WAHA was acting in the public interest to require the City to comply with the law (CEQA). WAHA argued, and the court agreed, that a Categorical Exemption (CE) was not the level of review required by law and that the City sought to improperly avoid the careful analysis of impacts to this historic resource as required by CEQA.



WAHA achieved through the court process a temporary restraining order and preliminary injunction to halt alterations to the Bishop Mansion, successfully fought the developer's motion to dismiss, and reached a stipulated dismissal with all parties that ensures that the redevelopment of the Church complex will undergo environmental review pursuant to CEQA.

It seems a very long time ago — February 13, 2013 to be precise — that WAHA filed an appeal of the City Planning Department's issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the student housing development. WAHA was not opposed to the adaptive re-use of the Bishop Mansion but argued that to allow a categorical exemption (CE) in this case would cause irreparable and irreversible harm to the environment of Historic West Adams and would create a dangerous precedent for review of significant changes to historic properties.



At the WAHA General Membership meeting in April, 2013, WAHA's membership voted overwhelmingly to pursue all legal means to assure proper CEQA clearance for this project. When members of WAHA first saw that the interior of the Bishop Mansion was demolished without permits (**photos on these pages**), WAHA pleaded with the City to analyze the significant environmental effects of the project and consider mitigations. In spite of our numerous efforts in writing and in meetings to urge the City and the developer to undertake an environmental review, WAHA's pleas fell on deaf ears. The City refused to rescind the CE.

On September 10, 2013, by unanimous vote, the WAHA Board voted to retain counsel, aware that the issues in this case may affect not only this historic site but also the manner in which changes to historic properties are reviewed in the future. WAHA filed suit in October, 2013.

Fortunately, while City Planning and City Council refused to rescind the CE and allow a factual and legally sufficient environmental review of the changes to the Roger Williams Baptist Church/Bishop Mansion complex, Judge Lavin agreed with WAHA and found that the proposed Categorical Exemption (CE) for the project was not legally sufficient to meet the requirements of CEQA in protection of our environment.

WAHA has achieved a significant public benefit by bringing this litigation. We obtained a preliminary injunction, which helped limit harm to historic features of the Bishop Mansion. Additionally, through this litigation, WAHA has achieved the significant benefit of environmental review for this Project, which could set a precedent for other projects in our area where there is great pressure to alter existing historic resources to provide additional student housing for the University of Southern California.

Without the strong support of a committed membership at its annual Membership meeting, the Board would have lacked the compelling directive from the Membership to pursue all means required, including legal action. WAHA hoped that by illuminating the facts in this case that the issues would be resolved without litigation. Indeed, this is the first time WAHA, in its 30 years, has been forced to litigate. It did so because of the importance of the resource, the prominent location of the Bishop Mansion, and because lack of appropriate environmental review by the City for this Project is a mistake that could be repeated throughout the West Adams area.

WAHA was extremely fortunate in obtaining counsel, the firm of Chatten-Brown and Carstens, led by Amy Minteer, who accepted the case on substantially contingent terms with an agreed to ceiling on WAHA's costs. The representation of WAHA by this firm was stellar.



WAHA will monitor and comment on the anticipated forthcoming environmental review for the project. Several months ago an environmental assessment form was filed by the developer. That filing contained numerous flaws and the status of its implementation is in question. We have heard that the developer may be considering changes to the proposed project but nothing concrete has been revealed.

WAHA seeks to have the non-permitted demolition of the interior of the Bishop's Mansion entry hall reconstructed and the overall design reviewed in terms of the Secretary of Interior's Standards. Further, CEQA review cannot be segmented: the entire site of five parcels must be considered and not narrowly consider only two parcels.

The original project involved the Church complex' multiple historic structures which apparently are being redeveloped over time; changes that are not compliant with Secretary of Interior Standards, according to at least four qualified historians; a significant change of use that may permanently change the historic nature of at least one of the structures on the property, that is, the Bishop Mansion; the complete gutting and removal of all (or vast majority) of the character-defining interior features in the publicly-accessible portions of a National Register Eligible historic resource.



WAHA, despite its pleas to the City and the developer, found

that private enforcement of the law was necessary and sued the Agency (the City) responsible for carrying out CEQA. The City saw no financial risk as the developer indemnified the City and was responsible for any costs incurred in this litigation. Next time we hope that the law will be followed and a legally sufficient environmental review is achieved. WAHA also hopes that through this review and discussion, an environmentally superior project can be obtained. ●

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00.07	SQ.FT.	SOLD PRICE
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4661 Pickford St	3+2	1914	\$475,000
4609 W. 17th St	4+2	1466	\$530,000
4547 W. 16th Pl	3+2	1798	\$630,000
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2266 W. 21st St	5+3	3615	\$910,000
MISCELLANEOUS			
1446 Malvern Ave	4+2	2534	\$450,000
1650 La Fayette Rd	4+2	2279	\$675,000

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Community Matters

How Big Is Your Water Footprint? You'll Be Surprised

by Peter Hanlon

DROUGHT NATION- Drought is all over the news. California is at the center of the coverage and rightly so, given the severity of the situation here. But take a look around the rest of the country and the Golden State is not alone.

Washington and Oregon, states many associate with constant drizzle, have alarmingly low snowpack and declared drought emergencies across large portions of their land. Parts of the southern Great Plains are seeing failed wheat crops and dust storms, while southern Florida is experiencing a severe drought. No part of the country is immune to drought, and in fact water managers from 40 U.S. states anticipate at least some form of water shortage within the next 10 years.

For many of us, these current and future water crises mean we need to use water as productively as possible and cut back on waste. But to get there we first need to know how much water we use every day, and most of us have no idea.

GRACE Communications Foundation built the new Water Footprint Calculator to help people figure out how much water they use through a series of simple questions about their daily routines. The calculator accounts for not just how much water we use from the tap, but also the water it takes to produce the food we eat, the energy we use and the products we buy. This is called "virtual water," and it is by far the biggest part of our water footprint.

The almond and its surprisingly large water footprint (one gallon - per nut!), has recently become the poster child for virtual water, but this world of hidden water is far bigger than thirsty almond groves.

Consider these surprising numbers on the unseen water in everyday items:

- A single avocado uses 60 gallons of water to grow
- One cell phone takes 240 gallons to manufacture
- It takes 713 gallons to produce one cotton t-shirt
- A hamburger uses 660 gallons of water to make
- One gallon of gasoline takes three-to-six gallons of water to produce

When Governor Brown signed his executive order calling for less lawn watering and other cutbacks to Californians' home water use, it was another example of how we often address water shortages: Namely, cutting back on the water that pours out of our garden hoses, showerheads and faucets.

These are certainly important changes that have an immediate impact on the crisis at hand. But according to the Water Footprint Calculator, the typical American uses about 2,200 gallons of water per day, and virtual water use makes up the vast majority of this water footprint. Addressing our virtual water use is the real opportunity to make our communities more resilient to drought and other extreme weather events, although this requires us to think longer term. While turning off the tap as you brush our teeth will immediately save a gallon or two, skipping one hamburger is not going to put 660 gallons in your local reservoir.

We need to think of the big picture and in creative ways. Choosing pasture-raised instead of industrially produced meat, for example, will support farmers who don't rely largely on feed grains irrigated with limited groundwater or surface water supplies. Investing in energy efficiency or even renewable energy at home will help reduce our need for water-dependent power plants.



Avoiding "fast fashion" clothing brands and instead buying vintage or well-made and long-lasting pieces will reduce how much water is required to grow cotton and manufacture your clothes.

These are just a handful of many individual choices that can help us use less water, and collectively, they all send a signal to those who make what we use and the products we buy that we want a more sustainable future.

Water is indeed everywhere, but it is also needed to do just about anything. The important first step that we can all take right now is to find out how much water we really use. The daily choices we make to waste less water today, whether directly through the tap or virtually through our food, energy and shopping habits, can help us make sure that there's enough for all of us now and in the future.

(Peter Hanlon is the Director of Water and Energy Programs at GRACE Communications Foundation and is a contributor to Huffington Post where this piece was first posted. He can be reached on Twitter: www.twitter.com/pedrohanlon



President's Message continued from page 3

I think the greatest impact I have derived over these past 5 years has not only to have made so many real friends within WAHA, but to also become much more integrated into the community itself. The synergy of this community collaboration was, for me, the landmark Golden State Mutual Insurance Building designed by Paul R. Williams. At that time, the focus was the battle to Save the Murals hanging the lobby the GSM building on the corner of Adams and Western.

WAHA's collaboration with Los Angeles Conservancy led to granting of monument status – the much coveted HCM No. 1000 - to this important building. Through those preservation efforts. I also come to know the folks at Murals Conservancy Los Angeles as well as the wonderful folks at CAAM, The California African American Museum. At the center of all of these efforts are the folks who bought, and are now restoring our West Adams landmark. , and are just about to complete their new headquarters next door. Their company initials have recently been added to the two street-facing facades of the building: **S C L A R C – South Central Los Angeles Regional Center**. Their mission is to provide support services to our community's developmentally disabled.

There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony on our calendar in the very near future, once all the work has been completed. I will look forward to joining you when this occurs, and to participate in many, many more community celebrations with all of you in the years to come. \bullet

MEMBER DISCOUNTS

The following companies offer discounts to WAHA members. Remember to show your WAHA membership card when you make your purchase.

Best Lock and Safe Service

Contact: David Kim 2203 W. Venice Blvd., Los Angeles 323-733-7716 www.BestLockandSafe.com 10% discount on total purchase, including labor and materials. They make keys also, even programmable car keys.

Boulevard Vacuum & Sewing Machine Co.

Contact: Scott or Ron 5086 W. Pico Boulevard, Los Angeles 323-938-2661 www.BlvdVac.com 10% discount on sale of new vacuums, and vacuum service & repair

Cafe Club Fais Do Do

5253 West Adams Blvd., Los Angeles 323-931-4636 www.FaisDoDo.com No cover charge at door, and 20% discount on all meals.

Durousseau Electric

Contact: Teo Durousseau duruso2@aol.com License #386357 2526 W. Jefferson Blvd., Los Angeles 323-734-2424 or 323-734-6149 (cell) 15% discount on electrical services Jonathan Bert Roll Up Window Screens 923 S. Primrose Street, Monrovia 626-359-0513 5% discount on repairs or installations of vintage or new roll-up screens (two or more)

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A CALL TO MEMBERS

If you frequent a local business — retail store, restaurant, service provider, etc. ask them if they would offer a discount to WAHA members. Explain that they'd benefit from the increased exposure to local consumers, and be listed in the WAHA newsletter. Or, call me at 323-733-6869 and I'll contact them. Please note: WAHA does not consistently verify active contractor license status. You are urged to complete your own due diligence for any work you plan to have done on your property.

— Steve Wallis

We support preservation of the West Adams community's architectural heritage and beautification activities, and seek to educate Los Angeles' citizens and others about cultural heritage and restoration techniques.



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WAHA CLASSIFIEDS

Enormous collection of RUSSELL WRIGHT/FIRE KING (100s of pieces) DEPRESSION GLASS, vintage bowls and random wonderful pieces for sale. The Fire King is mostly orange and some jadite. Lots of bowls too. Fair pricing. Marsha, 310-266-5652.

For Rent: Completely restored Victorian/Craftsman home featured on WAHA tour. Furnished or unfurnished; the house is 2,700 sq ft, 4 bedrooms, 2 1/2 baths. Liv., dining, den, new Viking kitchen; two garages w/ remote control, accessed from private alley. Large yard. Would love a preservation-minded tenant. Available after July 1. Please call Sandra, 310-621-1629 for details.

Art Deco Gaffers & Sattler Stove for sale. Classic cream and black Deco. Looking for a good home -- moderately priced, make your best offer. -- call Laura to see photos. 323-868-0854.

Roommate Wanted? Vintage Stove for Sale? Garden Plants in Search of New Home? Place your classified ad here to reach preservation-minded readers. Contact lauramink@aol.com, NO LATER THAN the first of the prior month.

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C alendar 🗸

Upcoming Events MAY

John Hughes: A Life in Film — Author Reception/Book Signing Sunday, May 24, 3-5 p.m., 2501 4th Avenue (see story, page 4)

JUNE

"The Heights of Elegance" — Spring Historic Homes & Architecture Tour in West Adams Heights Saturday, June 6 (More information, right and on page 8)

WAHA's Annual Preservation Brunch at the ONE Archives Sunday, June 21, 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. (see story, page 1)





Saturday, June 6 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Last ticket sold at 1 p.m.

The famous estates of West Adams Heights — including the Rindge Mansion and actress Hattie McDaniel's home — will open to the public for the first time.

> Purchase Advance Tickets \$25 WAHA members \$30 General Admission All tickets \$35 after May 26 Sales online at www.WestAdamsHeritage.org

Or, send checks payable to "WAHA" to: Heights Tour, 2263 S. Harvard Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90018

You may pay at the door (last ticket sold at 1 p.m.) Check-In/Will Call: 2263 S. Harvard Blvd.

WAHA....Creating Our Future by Preserving Our Past

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