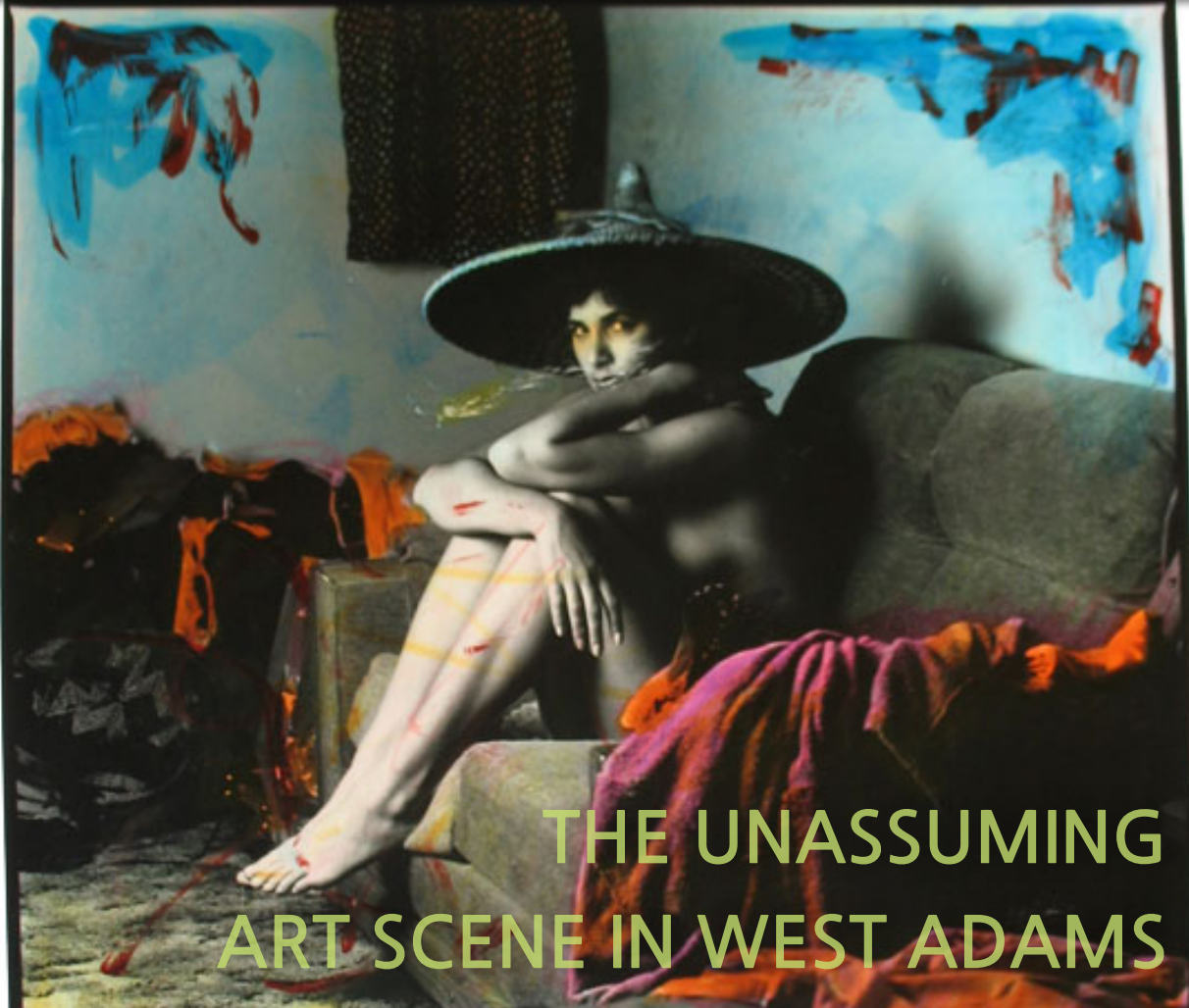


WEST ADAMS

March 2017 | ISSUE NUMBER 329



Board Nominations



Spring Tour Announcement
Harvard Heights



Harvard Heights



www.westadamsheritage.org

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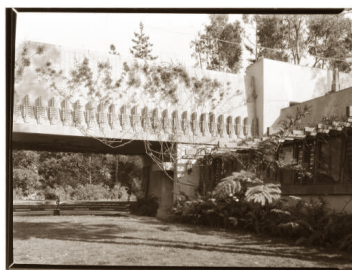
THE UNASSUMING ART SCENE IN WEST ADAMS

Lisa Raymond explores the art scene in West Adams.

Left: Start Los Angeles and Monorex. Right : Underground Museum and UM Bar.

*On the cover: Steve Gladstone, "Hat", from **The End of Pictures**, July–October 2015, Big Pictures Los Angeles*

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COURTYARDS, PATIOS AND WALLED GARDENS

A special reprint of an article by Martin Weil.

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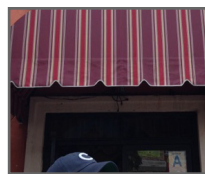
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Spring Tour
Announcement

THE UNASSUMING ART SCENE IN WEST ADAMS

Hidden behind the facades of commercial properties in West Adams there is a burgeoning art scene. In addition to storefronts and buildings that artists have converted into their work studios, we have an art museum and several art galleries and alternative art exhibition spaces. You will also stumble upon Pop-ups, which are temporary exhibition spaces that suddenly appear and disappear in the neighborhood.

If I step out my door in Arlington Heights and go 2 blocks east or west in either direction on Washington Boulevard, I run into at least 12 art exhibition spaces that have regular or occasional open hours, not to mention all the private studios and art spaces that exist in other locations around West Adams north and south of me.

Heading east on Washington Boulevard from Arlington Avenue, I find one building housing three spaces; two art galleries and the private work studio of artist, [Ryan McCann](#), at 2426, 2424, and 2422 W. Washington Boulevard. This building was the former home of Eddie's Laundromat. Though the building has been refurbished, there are still telltale signs that herald back to the building's laundromat days.

[2426 Set](#) is an alt space—short for alternative exhibition space—started by Brendan Shea and Gabriel Fries-Briggs

in 2015. With a background in architecture, they initially used the space as their work studio, producing furniture and pavilions. Brendan and Gabriel chose West Adams because of the affordability and availability of space in the area as well as its central location in the city. What they like most about the area, however, is the mixed land use of commercial and residential property. Brendan and Gabriel were drawn to the old houses of the neighborhood and its proximity to commercial manufacturing, such as kitchen supply, furniture making, re-upholstery and auto shops. They have found it beneficial to meet commercial manufacturers in the neighborhood to talk about problem solving and fabrication.

They eventually transitioned part of their space into an art exhibition area. Along with being a gallery, an office, a library and a workshop, 2426 Set sees itself as a laboratory where they explore art and architecture with an emphasis on [Urbanism](#). “Our current mission,” says Brendan Shea, “is to expand architecture’s audience in Los Angeles by merging production and exhibition.”

Their latest project has taken the shape of book publishing. Their first book is called *How to Level a Foundation*. According to the book’s intro, it “explores



Left: The Homeless Amongst Us from 2426 Hosts a Museum, 2016 Right: Co-founder, Brendan Shea 2426 Set. Photo: Lisa Raymond

how small institutions can have a direct role in changes in the urban landscape in Los Angeles.”

Most recently, 2426 Set collaborated with the [Los Angeles Museum of Geography](#) in presenting the exhibit *The Homeless Amongst Us*. The show was a mixed media exhibit presenting an intimate look at a homeless encampment through interviews with homeless individuals and a photo essay series depicting life on the streets.

[2426 Set](#) puts up shows every three months. For more info go to <http://2426ww.com>

Next door to 2426 Set and in the same building, is [Big Pictures Los Angeles](#), at 2424 W. Washington Boulevard. This gallery was started by artist and curator [Doug Crocco](#) in 2015. The name of the gallery, Big Pictures LA, sounds like a production company, but Doug says he chose this name to poke fun at the hierarchy of high vs low art and how we consume it in a city dominated by the film industry.

The gallery’s mission, according to its website, is to be an open platform project space for art and cultural development. As Doug put it, “Typically, Big Pictures LA puts on four curated shows a year plus a few events throughout the year, like *Artist as Muse*, a series of experimental life drawing

workshop/performance pieces by artist Elena Stonaker, or live experimental audio/visual [music performances](#).” It is also a venue for [Slamdance DIG](#) to showcase digital media, including interactive and gaming in collaboration with the yearly Slamdance Film Festival.

Doug found this space in West Adams while looking for a studio to work out of that could also double as a gallery. He chose West Adams because “it’s affordable, there’s great architecture, and it geographically makes sense.”

Currently, the gallery is in between shows. It is open Saturdays 12-5 pm on active show dates and available for viewing by appointment. To find out more go to <http://bigpictures.la>.

Next, I head west on Washington. As I pass 3rd Avenue, I pass several small galleries/studios in one building, including 3307 and Ochi Projects, which are not open, so I stop at [SHOOT THE LOBSTER LA \(STL LA\)](#), at 3315 W. Washington Boulevard. You can find this hidden morsel of an art space adjacent to the entrance of the Copy Service Express. There is no huge signage from the front, which is consistent with the other alt spaces in the building and many of the galleries in the area as well. The exhibition space is tiny but the artwork is exceptional.



Artist and curator Doug Crocco,
Big Pictures Los Angeles
Photo: Lisa Raymond



Elena Stonaker, *Artist as Muse*, November 1025, BPLA, photo by Anna Elledge.

THE UNASSUMING ART SCENE IN WEST ADAMS (CONTINUED)

I've seen several shows here since living in the area and have found the shows to be well executed and compelling.

STL LA is the west coast arm of the project space, STL NY, which stemmed from the traditional commercial art



*Installation view, In My Condition, Shoot the Lobster, 2016
Courtesy the Artist and Shoot the Lobster, Los Angeles*

gallery, Martos Gallery, in Chelsea, New York City. Both a working studio and a gallery, it rebranded itself in 2016 as Shoot The Lobster, a project based gallery and a venue for pop-up exhibits. It sees itself as an “anti-white cube box” showing work that is “outside the norm,” including installation, video, and performance art.

STL LA is open Saturday and Sunday from 12-5 p.m. during a show run and by appointment. The next show will start around April 1st. For more info go to <http://www.shootthelobster.com>.

After leaving STL LA, I make a quick stop at a pop-up that has opened across the street, then proceed west to [The Underground Museum](#), a storefront-turned-museum at 3508 W. Washington Boulevard. There I meet up with Justen Leroy, the museum's liaison. He explained that originally this space was a live/work studio for renowned painter and installation artist, [Noah Davis](#), and his wife, sculptor [Karon Davis](#).

Justen told me, “This space was first called Inner City Avant Garde. The name changed to The Underground Museum when Noah Davis partnered with Helen Molesworth, the chief curator of MOCA, to bring works from MOCA's archive to the ‘hood’ to fill the need, since no art spaces existed that were having the conversation we are having here now at the time...The overall intent of the space is to create a pipeline to the bigger world of museum life—without being an intimidating institution.”

Known for promoting world class art and cutting-edge African-American art, The Underground Museum emphasizes inclusiveness as part of its mission. According to Justen, its main mission is access. “It is a contemporary art space and a community space where



Non-Fiction exhibit at the Underground Museum



UM Bar and Nonfiction

people can view art as well as educate and uplift the community through community-driven events and wellness programs.” Along with its gallery, store and offices, there is the UM Bar, and in the backyard, The Purple Garden—an amazingly beautiful oasis of nature and art.

Sadly, Mr. Davis passed away in 2015, but he has left behind a tremendous legacy. Along with the museum and a volume of artwork, he left 18 curated MOCA shows all planned out for future exhibits at the UM.

The current exhibit, *Non-Fiction*, is quite good and thought provoking, with works by Kara Walker, Theaster Gates, Robert Gober, David Hammons, Deana Lawson, Kerry James Marshall, Marion Palfi and Henry Taylor. According to the website, “The exhibition explores the black body and its relationship to history.” Justen describes the show as an “ode to victims of racial violence and an (expression of) resistance.” This exhibit ends in March.

I’m looking forward to their next show in April entitled *Artist of Color: Our Take on How to Access Color in Our Community and How to Access Color in Contemporary Art*, with works by Felix Gonzalez Torrez, Dan Flavin, Michael Asher, and Noah Davis.

The Underground Museum is open Wednesday - Sunday, noon- 7 p.m. Admission is free. For more info go to <http://theunderground-museum.org>.

After the Underground Museum, I head north to Venice turning east down the boulevard. I find [START Los Angeles](#) at 2270 Venice Boulevard just east of Western. You can’t miss it as the building’s wall facing Western

Avenue lends itself as a canvas and a wall for hire.

START LA was founded by WAHA members, Steve Wallis and Eileen Ehmann. Having lived in Harvard Heights for 20 years, they could not find two things they craved in the neighborhood: good coffee and art. So when they had the opportunity to purchase this distressed historic commercial property in 2016, they went for it. They divided the building into a complex of three spaces—a pop-up gallery, an alt space, home to [Monorex](#) and its various projects and the future site of [Alibi Coffee Co.](#)

“Much attention has been given to restoring residential buildings in West Adams but less so to commercial spaces,” Steve told me. “This building was built in 1922 in the style of 'streetcar commercial' which was typical for the area, especially around transit lanes. (The streetcar rail line ran down 16th Street which was later renamed Venice Boulevard.) This type of building is very utilitarian with little ornamentation, so many are neglected and unattractive. But some owners and businesses are beginning to realize their plain beauty and are starting to restore their exteriors, much to the benefit of the commercial corridors.”

Interested in preservation, Steve and Eileen were able to save the original transom windows in the two storefront spaces. When they purchased the building, the windows were boarded up on both sides with plywood. They removed the plywood and discovered a set of six transom windows, many with the original glass. They had to retrofit the windows and replace some of the glass before rehanging them. Now these windows add natural light and character to the rooms. When they removed the dropped ceiling in the space they found another ceiling



Western Avenue wall, Start Los Angeles building.
Photo: Lisa Raymond



Monorex alternative exhibition space.

THE UNASSUMING ART SCENE IN WEST ADAMS (CONTINUED)

above it. They took the second ceiling down and discovered that the original building had skylights, which is another restored architectural feature.

Steve and Eileen operate the 1200 sq. ft. pop-up gallery, a permanent exhibition space that is available exclusively for temporary art shows, community gatherings and other events. The pop-up gallery sign, “_____@StartLA,” is designed to be customized to include the new event name.

Toward the back of the complex is Monorex, a creative agency and artists' collective primarily interested in the creation and exhibition of street art. Started by [Terry Guy](#), Monorex is a full-time office and a part-time event space. It is also home to his other projects; [High Rise Murals](#), [Secret Walls](#) and [School Walls](#).

Monorex is famous for creating artwork for the video game, *Grand Theft Auto*, and other big projects with world-renown street artists, like [Buff Monster](#), [Ron English](#), and [Tristan Eaton](#). According to Terry's website, “Over the past decade we have commissioned over one thousand artists from around the globe. We pride ourselves on discovering young unknown talent and offering them a chance to shine in the commercial world.”

Inside Monorex, the gallery is open as an alternative art space for exhibitions, events and as a rental venue. A lot of activity happens here. Terry tells me that tonight the space will host a drink and doodle club. Every month the venue turns into a battleground for a live art competition/show called *Secret Walls*. Terry has been producing what he calls, “Global Illustration Battles,” for about 10 years in 80 cities in countries all over the world. If you like to watch artists create freestyle artwork and you like the thrill of competition then this is the show worth seeing. Live art

battles pit one group of artists against another group to draw or paint with a monochromatic palette within a time constraint. The event includes DJs, drinks and the audience participates in voting for the winners.

Terry puts a percentage of his profits from events like these back into the community. Inspired by the success of *Secret Walls*, he has created *School Walls*, a workshop to teach kids about street art and the various paths to making a career in it. The workshop culminates in a live art competition among the children. Clinton Middle School was the first to participate in this workshop.

Outside the gallery is the parking lot, which is also part of the Monorex venue. The walls surrounding it offer a large canvas for rotating art works from visiting street artists on a weekly basis. This has led Terry to connect local building owners with artists to install public art on the commercial buildings in the neighborhood. “These murals have proven to be wildly successful in abating unsightly graffiti (and the tagging wars they beget),” says Steve Wallis. He continues that the murals “have given Harvard Heights residents an exciting new streetscape to complement their community. Kids and their parents—as well as people from around the city—can be seen almost daily taking pictures of these colorful and exuberant murals, which rotate in content as new artists visit Los Angeles.” Eileen Ehmann concurs and adds, “The art effect enhances the neighborhood's pride in the community. The artwork might not be to everyone's taste, but it is young, playful, and engaging.”

To find out more about Monorex go to <http://comemeetrex.com>. To find out about upcoming shows for *Secret Walls*, follow them on instagram [@secretwalls](#) and to find out more about *START Los Angeles* go to <https://www.instagram.com/startlosangeles/>



Secret Walls

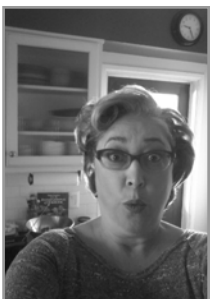


School Walls, a workshop teaching kids about street art.

I have only scratched the surface exploring the galleries and art spaces in the West Adams district, not to mention the many artists' work studios. When talking with the founders of the various galleries mentioned in this article, everyone agreed that the art community's presence here is somewhat invisible to greater Los Angeles, but they expect it to grow. The guys at 2426 Set foresee the area becoming better known as a pocket of creativity in the near future. The owners of START Los Angeles emphasize that after living in the community for 20 years, their investment has both beautified the neighborhood and has facilitated a dialogue with both commercial and residential neighbors in the area.

"We are growing as a point of reference as an arts community," says Justen from The Underground Museum when discussing the future of art galleries in West Adams. "There are galleries popping up without causing gentrification—without exploiting or ruining what's happening here. Small galleries are coming in and surviving. Pop-ups come and go—but what makes the galleries in West Adams successful, it seems to me, is these are hidden gems within the community. Hidden gems are beautiful." He continues, "How you preserve what's happening here makes it feel like your community, and that stays yours. Keep it calm, cool, not too flashy, or someone will bite into it and will want a piece of that, and that changes the area and the community. No longer is the gallery for the community but for people outside of the community, who do not talk or want to interact with the community, and that separates us further. Keep it human focused, balanced, genuine, respecting the community with the interest of reaching out to the community instead of just reaching outside the community. We live here. We want to be invited."

For now it's our little secret.



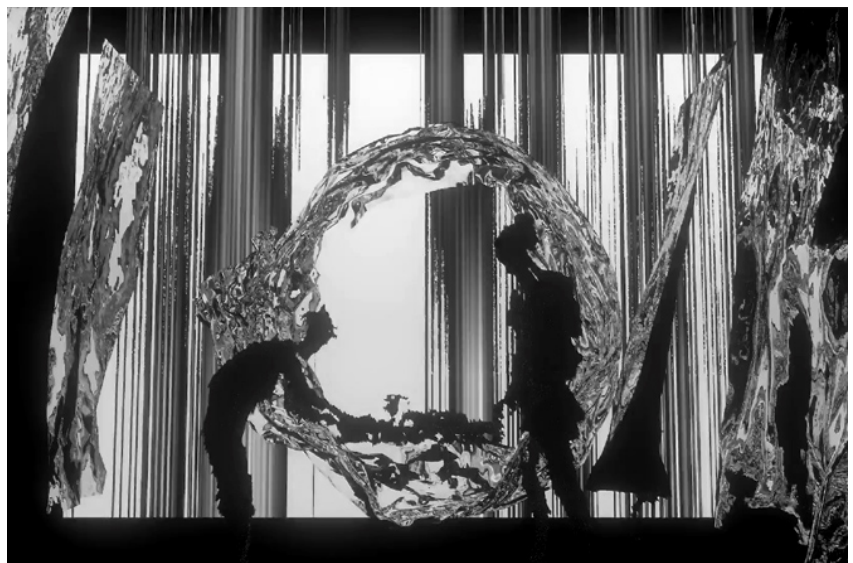
Lisa Raymond is a tremendously talented writer, artist and juggler. As an artist, she works primarily in clay and mixed media. When she is not focused on saving America from being too great, she is a property manager of a local artists building, and has several small project-based businesses including office management, house/pet sitting, and professional organizing. She supports WAHA whenever she can.



Parking Lot Rotating Exhibit, Start LA/Monorex



Gold Eagle, Armamis Gutierrez, Big Pictures LA



Ariadne, live video and music performance, Big Pictures Los Angeles.

SPRING HISTORIC HOMES & ARCHITECTURE TOUR

WAHA's Spring Historic Homes & Architecture Tour is set for Saturday, June 3rd.

Every June WAHA invites visitors to explore unique aspects of the Historic West Adams District, presenting a Spring Tour with either a themed focus (examples of past years' themes include: "religious architecture," "art in historic places," and "landmarks of West Adams"), or a neighborhood "discovery" tour.

This year we have selected a small pocket of Harvard Heights to explore, spotlighting not only a selection of historic homes but also one of its new art venues.

The neighborhood is more than a century old. In 1899 Western Avenue was just a narrow dirt crossroad, Charles Stuart's farm stretched out at Washington and Western, and trains from Downtown barely reached this section of the countryside. But within a few years Harvard Heights experienced wild development. We invite you to learn more about its history, and to visit some of its homes, on the first Saturday in June.

The tour will be self-guided, with doors opening at 10 a.m. and closing at 4 p.m., with visitors touring at their own pace. As always, we will need plenty of docents who will be able to volunteer for one half-day shift (morning or afternoon) and tour during the other half of the day. The tour will raise funds for WAHA's historic preservation advocacy efforts.

We also need some help organizing the tour – meetings start soon. If you would like to be on the Tour Organizing Committee, please e-mail tours@westadamsheritage.org and put "June Tour" in the subject line.



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HARVARD HEIGHTS

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Office on the Tract



JEFFERSON PARK HPOZ

Office of Historic Resources Staff Tours the Jefferson Park HPOZ Area

The Friends of the Jefferson Park HPOZ extended to Office of Historic Resources staff member Lydia Chapman, recently assigned to the HPOZ, an invitation to take an escorted tour of the area. To our surprise, the entire OHR staff asked to be included! On February 2nd two vanloads of staff members, including unit supervisor Naomi Guth, showed up for the start of the tour at HPOZ member John Arnold's house on W. 30th Street. HPOZ board members Arnold and Mike Chapman (who is also active with the Friends group), and Friends members Audrey Arlington and Lyn Gillson accompanied the vans on a narrated tour around representative parts of the HPOZ, pointing out highlights, designated Historic Cultural Monuments, successes and challenges faced by the second largest HPOZ in Los Angeles. Following the van tour, the group set off on foot to explore the northeast quadrant of the HPOZ.



Staff members of City of Los Angeles' Office of Historic Resources at tour of the Jefferson Park HPOZ area on February 2, 2017.



Audrey Arlington is a longtime WAHA member and resident of Jefferson Park.



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The first few years of the 1920s were busy ones for the West Adams branch of the Security Trust and Savings Bank—at least in terms of robberies. What made the little branch bank a magnet for heists isn't clear. Maybe it was the bank's location at West Adams Boulevard and South Halldale Avenue—convenient for patrons and bandits alike.

On Wednesday, January 30, 1924, William M. Anderson parked his car at West Adams and Halldale and walked to a nearby cafe. He nursed a cup of coffee while he contemplated the pros and cons of bank robbery. William concluded that robbery was the best way for him to get his hands on some quick cash; so he wrote a note demanding \$1500 (\$21,055 in current USD) and then walked into the bank. William waited patiently in the lobby for 10 minutes before he was the lone customer. He found the assistant manager at his desk, handed him the note and showed him a gun. The assistant manager wisely complied with William's demand for loot and the crook exited the bank \$1500 richer.

At loose ends following his successful caper, William went to a movie in Glendale, and then he drove back to Los Angeles where he phoned his former sister-in-law, Victorine Fanning. He arranged to meet her in front of a hotel at Pico and Olive at 8 p.m. On his way to meet Victorine he tossed the robbery gun over a fence at the corner of 734 South Olive.

Victorine met William at the appointed time. The first thing he asked her was if she'd heard about the

West Adams bank job. Of course she had, it was big news. William said: "Well, baby, I'm the guy that stuck up the bank." To demonstrate the veracity of his boast he pulled out an impressive wad of Benjamins from his pocket. He tried to press the money on Victorine but she wanted no part of it. William insisted that she take the cash—he said he needed a confidante. Reluctantly, Victorine accepted both the money and the role as William's accomplice.

William made the same mistake that has brought down savvier criminals than he—he brought in a partner. Victorine wasn't cut out to be anyone's moll and by the time she arrived home after dining with William she was a nervous wreck. She became paranoid, convinced that the cops were about to knock on her door and drag her away. What could she do? She was the one with the money, not William. It was then that she made up her mind.

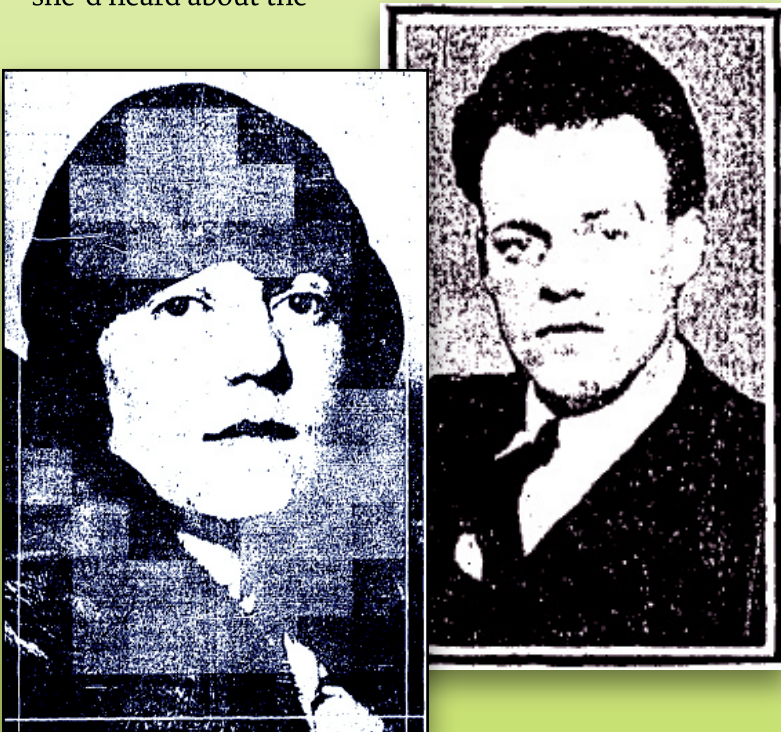
Victorine took some hot ashes, put them in a kettle and burned every last one of the Benjamins in her possession. She confessed everything to her mother and the two of them repeatedly phoned attorney Vincent C. Hickson. Hickson finally picked up the phone at 3 a.m. Accompanied by her attorney, Victorine went to the police with her story.

Victorine's tale was the icing on the cake for the police. They'd had William in custody for several hours and Victorine's statement filled in some critical details—like what happened to the money. How had the cops found William so quickly? Unbeknownst to William he was tailed out of the bank by 17-year-old bicyclist Lewis Duelna. The young man chased the fleeing bandit for more than a mile following the robbery and memorized the license plate number of the car. The car was traced and Duelna identified the bandit in a line-up.

Was Victorine telling the truth when she said she had burned all of the Benjamins? She was the only witness to the incineration of the money. There's a part of me that hopes Victorine outfoxed everyone and saved the cash for a rainy day.

For more tales of robbery, murder, and mayhem in beautiful West Adams hop on the Esotouric crime bus (Esotouric.com) for their Weird West Adams tour.

Joan Renner is an L.A.-based writer, lecturer, and social historian with an expert knowledge of historic Los Angeles crime. For more vintage Los Angeles mayhem, visit her blog, Deranged L.A. Crimes (www.derangedlacrimes.com).



PRESERVATION REPORT

Community Plans Are in the News

On 2/17/2017, the LA Times headlined: Community Plans, long dormant, are suddenly an issue. But this has not been a sudden issue for us. WAHA, community organizations and neighborhood councils have been working diligently to respond to the proposed South and Southeast Community Plans Update and Draft EIR (Environmental Impact Report) with the comments due within a six week period (deadline February 1). The Plans will guide future development in our neighborhoods. What the City has been working on since 2008 –some nine years – we have had a short time to digest and analyze. After reading the major concepts in the draft plans, an unwieldy but necessary exercise was performed to try and understand the details of what is being proposed; one had to look at parcel numbers on the Plan map and review that against what is proposed in the “Change Matrix” document.

There are many positives in the plan updates, for example, the CPIOs -Community Plan Implementation Overlay Districts- which provide guidelines for development for neighborhood conservation in both commercial and residential areas.

But, the devil is in the details.

Of particular concern, is the proposed change for Mount St. Mary’s University (MSMU), which is in the Chester Place National Register District, identified in the “Matrix” as parcels No. 1925 & 1926. Mount St. Mary’s University is the largest landowner within the Historic District. The current land use, (Q) R4-1-o-HPOZ & (Q) R4-1-o, respectively, were assigned the qualifying (Q) conditions to allow MSMU, a religious school, to adaptively reuse the existing single family mansions as classrooms, student residences, and administrative offices and to allow for future development of infill structures without requiring an arduous variance application for any significant changes in an R-1 zone. The underlying zoning is R-1 and should remain so to protect this unique historic resource. Today the MSMU Doheny Campus is a beacon for successful historic preservation through its adaptive reuse which fully complies with the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards.

When the University Park HPOZ was conceived in 1998 its’ boundaries were created by the (then) City Council district’s configurations. At that time Council District 1 (Mike Hernandez) and Council District 8 (Mark



7 Chester Place . Exterior color scheme designed by Studio Francesca Garcia-Marques for Mount Saint Mary’s University. Photo by Francesca Garcia-Marques.



Palm trees at the Doheny. ,Courtesy of USC Libraries Special Collection, Title Insurance Trust, C.C. Pierce Photography Collection

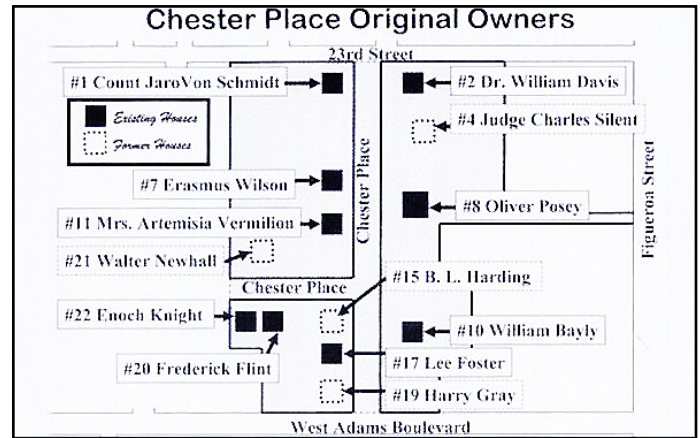
Ridley-Thomas) shared jurisdiction of both Chester Place and MSMU. The dividing line was the centerline of Chester Place, the north-south street, CD-8 having the east side to Figueroa and CD-1 the west side to St. James Park. This HPOZ configuration still exists today in spite of the fact that now all of the land is now part of CD-1. The UP-HPOZ Board only has authority over the west side of campus. MSMU voluntarily seeks the Board’s advice for their historic properties on the east side of campus.

For the Planning Department to have recommended that all of the historic Chester Place District be up-zoned from (Q) R-4 to R-4 illustrates a misunderstanding of the purpose of the specific application of the (Q) conditions and a disregard for the future of this unique historic setting. The underlying zoning was and should be R-1. It was a private development of single-family mansions. When and if MSMU should cease operations (and this is highly unlikely), it must revert back to that R-1 land-use in order to insure that inappropriate development does not put this historic resource at risk.

MSMU has been slowly expanding the footprint of their campus with recent acquisitions of two historic mansions at 649 and 745 West Adams, and the St. Vincent DePaul Church parking lot at 2437 Figueroa (site of the historic Sabichi Residence.) Mount St. Mary's has grown and has done so by embracing its' unique historic setting. This setting will be endangered if the increased up-zoning is approved. The 1925 & 1926 Matrix parcels should be a "NO-CHANGE" designation and not an R-4 up-zoning. There should be a CPIO for the eastern side of Chester Place which has been surveyed by architectural historian Christy McAvoy and contains the eastern portion of the Chester Place National Register District. (This area should also be included in the University Park HPOZ.)

CPIOs-Community Plan Implementation Overlay Districts-offer planning guidelines to see that development adheres to the neighborhood character. Angelus Vista, the Charles Victor Hall Tract, and the University Park Expansion were targeted for CPIO overlays. Unfortunately, not enough South Los Angeles areas were identified. Planning relied too exclusively on SurveyLA and failed to utilize CRA surveys. In some instances SurveyLA missed wide swaths of neighborhoods. The following areas should be included as CPIOs:

1. The Fraternity - Sorority Row District should be included in the designated CPIOs (officially surveyed by CRA)
2. The area between Vermont and Normandie and Jefferson to Exposition needs to be studied for a potential CPIO (survey needed)
3. The Flower Drive California Register District should be included for CPIO designation (officially on the California Register)
4. There should be a mechanism to designate CPIOs on an ongoing procedural basis given the limitations in the current proposed Plans
5. For purposes of CEQA, CPIO areas need to be treated as a specific plan or historic area



Chester Place map. Courtesy of Don Sloper.



Chester Place gates. Photo: Jim Childs

Furthermore it is totally unacceptable that the draft EIR and the South and Southeast Plans assume the demolition of historic buildings. As stated: "It is possible that demolition and/or significant alteration to some of the hundreds of historical resources identified in this EIR will inevitably occur during the twenty year horizon of the Proposed Plans. Therefore, based on the above, Proposed Plan impacts related to historic resources would be significant and unavoidable." This language should be deleted since it skews the environmental review process; conflicts with the established goals of the Plans; and has not been in previous community plans. The language should be deleted (or clarified) so it is not used in the future to justify a project that includes demolition of historic resources. This language sends the wrong message. Historic resources should NOT be vulnerable and the Plans should not anticipate loss of resources without specific project analysis.

Jean Frost is the current Preservation Committee Chair. Contact her at preservation@westadamsheritage.org.



JOIN THE BOARD

WAHA's Board of Directors election is coming up at the General Elections Meeting on April 9th which will be held at John Kurtz's house in Gramercy Park (see April events for address and details).

As always, Board members with fresh, upbeat, enthusiastic ideas are being sought to run for open WAHA Board positions. You need not spend an extraordinary amount of time doing tasks, but you must be committed to WAHA's goals of providing both member and community service, and it's historic preservation mission of advocacy and education. Generally speaking, board members are expected to attend WAHA Board Meetings (currently held 10 or 11 times a year), help with WAHA's fund raising efforts, and share in the responsibility for WAHA events, committees, advocacy and/or social functions. We don't have many requirements: a love of architecture and historic buildings, an enthusiasm for community activities, and a desire to preserve and improve our neighborhoods. Membership in WAHA is obviously a key requirement.

WAHA always needs expertise in fundraising, zoning issues and historic preservation. If you have a new or unique program you'd like to initiate, those ideas are welcome too.

Benefits of being on the Board are varied and many: forming friendships which will last a lifetime, learning about the past as well as the future of the diverse neighborhoods of West Adams, seeing (and meeting!) the professional historic community of Los Angeles up close and in real time, and being a player with a voice in dynamic changes as they occur in the city of Los Angeles.

If you'd like to run for the Board, please submit a brief, about 100 words, candidate's statement introducing yourself and your qualifications. This statement will appear in the April WAHA Newsletter. The submission deadline is March 15th. Please e-mail your statement to news@westadamsheritage.org.

If you are still pondering your involvement past that deadline but decide to run for the Board, WAHA will accept nominations and candidates from the floor of the general meeting as long as the candidates are present and accept the nomination.

If you'd like to learn more about the requirements and benefits of serving on the WAHA Board, please contact WAHA President John G Kurtz at president@westadamsheritage.org



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UPCOMING WAHA EVENTS

Academy Awards Costume Exhibit Tour

March 11, 2017 2:00 p.m.

919 South Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, California, 90015

Join WAHA for our annual trip to the museum at FIDM (Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising) where Rory Cunningham will regale us with stories of his adventures in costuming. We'll meet outside the doors of the museum before the tour and probably find a place for drinks and dinner after the tour.



Annual 4th of July Barbecue

July 4, 2017

We are seeking a location with a good-sized yard. Please email Suzie at events@westadamsheritage.org with suggestions for a suitable location.

Please email Suzie at events@westadamsheritage.org if you are interested in hosting any sort of event at your home or if you have an idea for an event you would like us to plan. We'll do all the work if you just open your home!

Classified Ads

To have your classified ad placed in this newsletter, please send your proposed ad to news@westadamsheritage.org no later than the first of the month prior to the month of publication of the ad.

WHERE'S AJ'S HAT?



La Valentina Grill on 28th and Vermont

Welcome to another edition of WAHA Dudes Do Dinner, but with a twist. A big twist. A tremendous twist. A bigly tremendous twist. Believe me, this twist is so huuuge it would stump M. Night Shamalama-Ding-Dong. And the twist is . . . instead of dinner, we met for breakfast. There, I said it. And we did it. Aren't we great? Believe me, we're the greatest. I know a lot of greatests and we're the greatest of the great. Also, I'm watching too much fake news. Help me. Anyway, it's the WAHA Dudes Do Breakfast, I'm AJ, and I approve this paragraph.

I'll begin by blaming Jeff. It was his December email that suggested we gather in the a.m. I ignored it but the Dudes started replying in the affirmative. To breakfast. On New Year's Day! Did I mention that part? You should know that Jeff and his significant other John don't drink alcohol, so, hey, no crust off their eyes. And yet, a gathering of WAHA Dudes is always a good thing, and with that, I give you our roll call: Me, Adam, Joe, Ed, Hunter, and the aforementioned Jeff and John.

There's a good reason Jeff called this breakfast to order. Huevos Rancheros. John may be the love of his life, but food is his delicious side action. The current twinkle in his eye is the Huevos Rancheros at a delightful restaurant on Vermont named La Valentina Grill.

So, we, the magnificent seven on the first day of 2017, parked our collective carcasses and dug into our well-earned hangover cures. I did the veggie omelet and pancakes, Hunter had bacon and eggs. Seems Hunter and I

are boring. Sexier dishes came sliding by like Chilaquiles, Barbacoa de Res, Cerviche, and Tampiquena. La Valentina does south of the border and they do it well, but as Hunter and I can attest, they also nail the All-American breakfast thing. So next time someone tries to drag you to a trendy 'brunch nook' crammed with texting hipsters, pivot to La Valentina. You'll thank me. Also Jeff. Thank him too.

And from the heavens came . . . coffee. Brought to earth so adult men would know when to pause in between bites. I recommend pairing it with a second cup. And a third. I haven't attended Catholic mass since 8th grade, but I'd return if the communion wafer was soaked in espresso. Can someone put that in the Vatican suggestion box? The Pope's a smart man and a Starbucks drive-thru in every confessional is a winning idea. Don't laugh, it could happen.

Where was I going with this? Oh, yeah. Coffee. The third cup is when our focus sharpened and we fired off questions like: "What exactly are bitters?" "Have you ever done split squats?" "Does the electoral college have a mascot?" The answers were, "Who cares," "Who cares," and "Shut up, AJ." Love these guys.

The coffee also jogged a vague memory I've been wanting to clear up for awhile, so I went for it. "John, wasn't your father some kind of C.I.A. operative in the Mideast back in the 1970s?" Bold? Nah, John just smiled and answered. "No, AJ. But I know where you're going with this line of questioning." "And . . ." I said. After all, I have an article to write. He obliged, "My dad was the Director General of Lockheed Mideast and Africa. And he did spend a lot of time in Beirut. Back then, Lebanon was occupied in the north by Syria, and the south by Israel."

"So he was kind of a spy?" "Again, no. But, let's just say his 'focus' was to pay attention to both sides," replied John. Bingo. His amazing dad was tasked with 'listening to things' that may have changed the course of history. And I thought old man Lentini's bowling trophy was significant.

The Dudes were all-in at this point, and wanted to know if John spent time there. "I did in the late 70s, back when you might hear the sound of mortar fire at 3:00 a.m." And we thought helicopters were annoying. "Give us a story. We NEED a story," said Adam. "Okay, I did once go to a party that may or may not have featured Bala'ha Valley hash, purported to be the best Lebanese hash on the planet. Not that I would know." Of course not. But don't stop.

"Well, the party was fun, but the walking home part, not so much." Let's pause here to point out that he walked home. At night. In Beirut. In the 1970s. Why? "Because the drivers only operated during the day," he said. I'm guessing it had to do with NOT wanting to get shot, but I'm the suspicious type. So, John walks to the party, hangs out, and then on his way home comes across a Syrian Armed Forces checkpoint. For reals, homies. A checkpoint that was NOT there on the way TO the party. Now, I know it sounds like fun hanging with the Syrian army in the middle of the night, but as John said, and I quote, "You just never know what will happen at a checkpoint." Gulp.

It's at this point in the movie when the hero makes a choice that will either save his life, or ignite a global conflict. Here's John's moment, "I just smiled and said, 'Yes, sir,' and held up the American Eagle." "What's that," I ask? "The American Eagle is the seal on my passport. I showed it, and they waved me through. The American passport works every time. You don't leave home without it." John's survival technique was to keep it simple. Smart man. And then he added, "Hell, the guards were probably all high anyway, and just wanted me to leave."

And there it is, another great Dude with another great story. Trust me, the greatest. And with that, happy belated New Year to you, WAHA.

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COURTYARDS, PATIOS AND WALLED GARDENS

The organization of rooms around a central open space is a form of residential architecture traceable to antiquity and numerous cultures in the Mediterranean basin. The use of courts in Moorish architecture deeply affected the architectural heritage of Spain. The patio and patio garden, traditional to Spanish architecture, exists in an intimate relationship between the interior and exterior spaces of a residence. These traditions were carried to the New World and ultimately were brought to Alta California in the late eighteenth century. The patio, which played a major role in Spanish and Mexican architecture, became a part of California's architectural heritage. It has gone in and out of fashion throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century, depending on the various architectural styles of the times.

One of the oldest surviving houses in the Los Angeles basin is organized around a courtyard. This is the Avila Adobe in H Pueblo de Los Angeles State Historic Park in downtown Los Angeles. The house displays a traditional plan with rooms opening out to an open space. A covered verandah around the perimeter of the patio provides protection from hot and inclement weather.

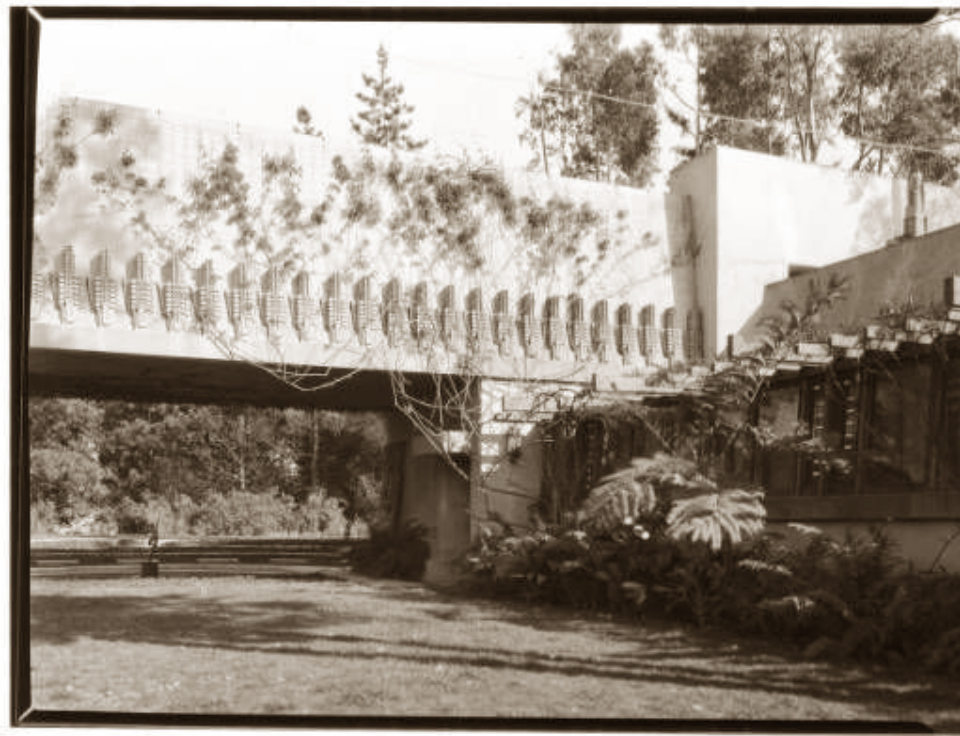
The treatment of the open area consists primarily of packed earth with minimal landscape planting. While some useful plants may have been grown in the patio it was primarily a utilitarian space accommodating household activities such as preparation of food. The Avila Adobe may be the only surviving historic nineteenth century adobe with a patio in Los Angeles. Other surviving nineteenth century adobes in the region are rectangular buildings that do not have wings enclosing a patio.

The arrival of a truly American architecture in California during the mid-nineteenth century and its development throughout the 1890s brought with it the architectural vocabulary of domestic architecture that had evolved in other parts of the United States. American houses usually had a basement or a crawl space built of masonry and supporting wood floor joists. As a result, American houses were lifted off the ground and no direct access was provided to the outside except through a transitional area such as a porch.

In the 1890s there was a growing interest in the surviving mission and adobe residences from the first half of the nineteenth century. Along with the desire to identify and preserve buildings from California's colonial period, a new regional style of architecture based on traditional elements from the early adobes was developing. The Mission Revival style included not only earlier architectural details but also floor plans organized around a patio.

In the early twentieth century architects and builders were again utilizing patios, terraces and pergolas to open the interior of the house to the outside. These houses were designed to acknowledge the mild climate and minimal rainfall unique to Southern California.

The Lanterman House is an excellent example of an Arts and Crafts style



Hollyhock House.

Photo: courtesy of University of Southern California Libraries and California Historical Society. Digitally reproduced by the USC Digital Library; From the California Historical Society Collection at the University of Southern California

house organized around a patio. The “U” shaped house was designed so most of the major rooms opened out to a concrete paved patio. The patio was linked to a paved pergola which encircled the house. Early photographs show the patio had a small fountain with a statue in the center.

A number of houses designed by the notable architectural firm of Greene & Greene were organized around patios and terraces. One of their earliest uses of a courtyard was the Hollister House, designed in 1904 for a site on Cahuenga Boulevard in Hollywood. It was a “U” shaped house organized around a court featuring a “basin” as the central feature. The 1907 Freeman Ford House was designed to encircle a patio which serves as the forecourt for the residence. Greene & Greene also designed numerous residences incorporating terraces accessible from the main rooms of the house. The raised terrace at the Gamble house is one of the most sophisticated designs. The terrace rises out of the lawn in an organic manner; a sharp contrast to the rectilinear character of the house. The terrace, drawing inspiration from Japanese designs, incorporates a naturalistic fish pond.

The “California Style,” dominant between the two

world wars, utilized many Spanish architectural details, including the patio. Single family houses and courtyard apartments were organized around patios, courts and patio gardens. Unlike the early nineteenth century courtyards which were used as workplaces, these 1920s exterior spaces were designed as outdoor garden rooms. One of the most common forms of the patio motif was the use of low walls to create a patio garden or forecourt at the entrance to a residence. This design concept was particularly popular for smaller one story houses, and often provided the only organized outdoor space associated with the residence. The entrance court or patio garden was often paved with concrete scored to look like paving stones or tinted pink to simulate terra cotta tiles. Wrought iron or wooded gates often provided an additional embellishment to the composition.

Larger single family houses that included a courtyard in the design were often “U” shaped with the patio open to the back yard. Houses that were “L” shaped often used high garden walls to create an enclosed patio garden. True patios were usually found only in the courtyard apartment where the building was large enough to wrap around a central space. A number of architectural features were borrowed from Spanish architecture to provide greater atmosphere to the patio or patio garden. This included arcades with arched openings or heavy wood posts supporting a tile roof or second floor. The arcades were often paved with tile or brick. Exterior staircases frequently were embellished with glazed tiles. Garden walls were covered with stucco and often featured arched doorways with studded wood doors or wrought iron gates. The focal point of a more elaborate patio or patio garden was a raised circular or octagonal fountain constructed of concrete or concrete veneered with glazed tile based on Moorish or Saracen designs. Malibu tile or Batchelder tile was manufactured in Los Angeles and can be found on many of the fountains. The use of broken tile to create a “crazy quilt” motif can be seen on fountains throughout the region.

The Hollyhock House designed by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1921 (sic) is the most spectacular example



Courtyards are frequently associated with Spanish-style structures.

Photo: Suzanne Cooper

COURTYARDS, PATIOS AND WALLED GARDENS (CONTINUED)



Musicians on the patio of the Avila House. circa 1900–1909.

Photo: courtesy of University of Southern California Libraries and California Historical Society. Digitally reproduced by the USC Digital Library; From the California Historical Society Collection at the University of Southern California

of modern domestic architecture using a courtyard as the central feature of the design. This central court incorporates many of the features associated with “California Style” houses. The court could be reached from many of the main rooms. It has an open arcade on one side and an open pergola on the other. An outdoor staircase connects the court with the roof. The features unique to this house are the amphitheater and the naturalistic pool with a stream bed where water from the pool flowed into the house to feed a pool in front of the fireplace.

The house Will Rogers built for his family in Pacific Palisades in 1928 was not designed in the “California Style” fashionable in the 1920s. The design for the two-story ranch house drew its inspiration from the vernacular ranch houses and rustic architecture associated with the West. The important feature of the house was the patio situated between the two wings of the house. It had flagstone paving, a wood pergola and featured a large mobile bar-b-que. The house and the patio may well be one of the first examples of the California ranch style house which became the most important style of domestic architecture after World War II. The patio, with its flagstone paving and built-in bar-b-que, became one of the major features of the good life in America in the 1950s.

During the 1930s modernist architects in Southern California, such as Gregory Ain, Richard Neutra, and Rudolph Schindler, built contemporary houses utilizing terraces and decks which provide outdoor living spaces. The traditional form of the patio as well as the name virtually disappeared from the vocabulary of these modern houses.

After World War II the word “patio” was reinvigorated with the appearance of the California ranch house; however, it usually applies to a rectangular paved area off the living room or dining room. Today the word “patio” has a different connotation than in the nineteenth or early twentieth century when the patio was surrounded by the building.

The construction of the Getty Museum in Malibu in 1972 brings the story of patios in California full circle. The museum was modeled after the Villa of Papyri, an elaborate residence constructed in the Roman city of Pompeii (Herculaneum) and buried in 79 A.D. by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. The complex of enclosed gardens, atriums and courts bring to life the antecedents of the California patio and patio gardens.

Note: The following buildings with patios, courtyard gardens and terraces mentioned in this article are open to the public. Following are websites for contacting each of the sites.

Avila Adobe, El Pueblo State Historic Park, Los Angeles
<http://www.elpueblo.lacity.org>

Lanterman House, La Canada Flintridge
<http://lantermanfoundation.org>

Gamble House, Pasadena <http://gamblehouse.org/>

Hollyhock House, Barnsdall Park, Los Angeles
<http://barnsdall.org/hollyhock-house>

Will Rogers House, Will Rogers State Park, Pacific Palisades <http://www.parks.ca.gov>

Getty Villa, Malibu
<http://www.getty.edu/visit/villa>



Martin Weil was a highly regarded preservation architect who lived in West Adams. This article is reprinted.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



It is with great regret that the Board of Directors accepts John Patterson's resignation from the Board. I want to take this opportunity to extend WAHA's deep thanks for his dedicated involvement.

Most people probably know John since he was the face of WAHA for so long and was everywhere doing most everything. For those of you who don't, let me give you a brief overview. My records show that John has been on the Board of Directors for 8 years and was President (believe me, not an easy task!) for 5 of those years. He infused new life into the Holiday Tour, which continues to be our main source of operating funds. He was the Chair of Communications as the newsletter went digital which was a tremendous undertaking. As Communications Chair the website also came under his purview and the website is better than ever which can be traced to his involvement.

WAHA is in much better shape now and so much of that can be traced to him. We all owe him a big Thank You for his efforts in support of WAHA.

Although John Patterson has promised to continue to stay active in the organization his participation with the Board will be minimal. With the upcoming WAHA Board elections, I have to wonder who will step up to replace him on the Board and spend time helping run the organization in the next year. WAHA elections are right around the corner in April. You all should consider taking part in the organization and bringing your talents and insights to bear on the way WAHA runs. Give me a call if you want to talk about doing just that.

John Kurtz can be reached at
president@westadamsheritage.org.

Future of Preservation

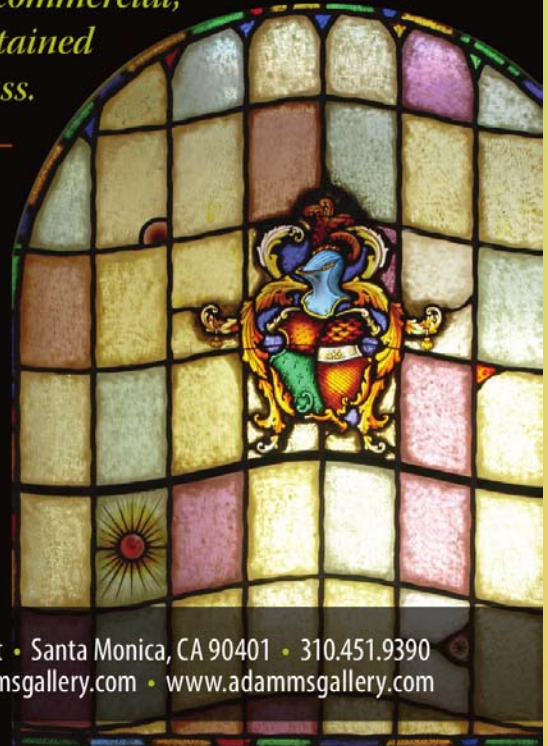
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SeElcy Caldwell	323-292-8566
Jim Childs	213-747-2526
Lore Hilburg	323-934-4443
Janel Glover	
Laura Meyers	323-737-6146
John Patterson	213-216-0887
Roland Souza	323-804-6070
Jeff Theer	323-964-9999
Candy Wynne	323-735-3749

Advisor

Harold Greenberg Legal Advisor	323-732-9536
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New Members

Helen Lee & Todd Jones

Benefactor Circle

Lore Hilburg and Reggie Jones

Patron Circle

Craig Bartelt & Nick Mercado
Ellen Farwell
John Kurtz
Hilary & A.J. Lentini
Hunter Ochs & Kim Michener
Ivy Pochoda & Justin Nowell
Maryanne Sawoski
Ed Trosper & David Raposa

Preservation Circle

Harry Anderson & Terry Bible
Audrey Arlington
Albert Aubin
Jeffrey & Patricia Baum
Regina Berry
Paula & Paul Brynen
Odel Childress & Donald Weggeman
Clare & Michael Chu
Rory Cunningham & David Pacheco
Art Curtis & Shelley Adler
Suzanne Dickson &
Steven Stautzenbach
Andrea Dunlop & Max Miceli
Nazelie Elmassian
Sarah and Charles Evans
Craig Fajnor
Elizabeth Fenner & Brian Robinson
Jean Frost & Jim Childs
Sharon Hartmann
Donald & Suzanne Henderson
Sophie Jefferies
Amanda & Tomas Jegeus
Patricia Judice
Patricia Karasick &
Christopher McKinnon
Kevin Keller & Marc Choueiti
Paul King & Paul Nielsen
Adrienne & Blake Kuhre
Sarah & Steve Lange

Heritage Circle

Edy & George Alva
John H. Arnold & Curt Bouton
Barbara Bestor & Tom Stern
David Bottjer & Sarah Bottjer
Jean Cade
Robert Cresswell
Lisa Ellzey & Jeff (Ulrik) Theer
Friends of Hazy Moon Zen Center
Blake McCormick
Jim & Janice Robinson
David Saffer
Elvie Tuttle

Los Angeles Conservancy,
Linda Dishman
Cassandra Malry & Thom Washington
Joseph McManus &
Lara Elin Soderstrom
JoAnn Meepos & Steven Edwards
Marina Moevs & Steven Peckman
Michael Nigosian
Sharon Oxborough
John Patterson & Jeff Valdez
Gail D. Peterson
Mary Power & Librada Hernandez
Judy Reidel & Al Hamburger
Becky Rhodes
Walter Rivers, Jr.
Donna & Mark Robertson, Sr.
Amy Ronnebeck & Alan Hall
Debbie & Stan Sanders
Rebecca Sekulich
Mary Shaifer & Chris Murphy
Chris Taylor & Ansley Bell
Willie Thomas
Stephen Vincent & Jessica McCullagh
Jeffrey Weiss & David Bailey
Lindsay Wiggins
Ned Wilson & Carrie Yutzy
Candy Wynne
Ashley Wysong & Robert Lobato

TRANSITIONING FROM PAPER TO DIGITAL

As you know, one of our major goals this calendar year is to transition the WAHA Newsletter from the printed document you've received in the mail to one you are able to read online. By now, most if not all of you have had a chance to review the digital version of the newsletter. This digital format is now the primary newsletter version and will be the source material for the printed version AND it includes FULL-COLOR photographs and many bonus features that the printed version will not have. The bonus content in the digital version includes:

- *The ability to link directly to other online content such as photographs, articles and websites for more content, including the WAHA website.*
- *Click and enlarge FULL COLOR photographs for easy viewing or to see additional photographic content.*
- *Download the newsletter to any device and take it with you wherever you go.*
- *Allows printing of multiple copies of specific articles or the whole newsletter if you desire in FULL COLOR.*
- *An interactive document that will allow members to participate and share information, events and resources.*

This new digital format is much less expensive to produce and deliver to WAHA to members, both from a financial and manpower perspective. Every print copy of the newsletter costs roughly \$1.70 to produce and about \$1.50 to mail. Sending the newsletter in digital format saves the

organization between \$1,000 to \$1,500 each month or approximately \$13,000 per year. In terms of the total budget for the organization, printing the newsletter consumes approximately 70% or more of most members' annual dues.

In addition to the financial cost, a considerable amount of volunteer labor and time are required to prepare, label, seal, stamp and mail each newsletter to members. The financial and man-hour savings by not printing the newsletter can be reinvested in preservation efforts, additional web site improvements, tours or events.

The Communications Committee is now consistently producing and sending the newsletter electronically to every member with an email address. If for some reason you're not receiving the electronic format (Do we have your current correct email address?) or if you'd like to only receive the digital edition and opt out of receiving the paper edition, please contact me at news@westadamsheritage.org. As a reminder, you will receive the electronic format through a download email.

Thanks

Reggie Jones



WAHA (and Friends) Calendar

Academy Awards Costume Exhibit Tour

March 11, 2017 2:00 p.m.

919 South Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, California, 90015

Join WAHA for our annual trip to the museum at FIDM (Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising) where Rory Cunningham will regale us with stories of his adventures in costuming.

WAHA Election Meeting

April 9, 2017 4:00-6:00 p.m.

2102 West 24th Street

Join us at the home of our president, John Kurtz, for wine, cheese and elections.

WAHA Board Retreat

May 20, 2017

Annual 4th of July Barbecue

July 4, 2017

We are seeking a location with a good-sized yard. Please email Suzie at events@westadamsheritage with suggestions for a suitable location.

Ice Cream Social

August 20, 2017 2:00-5:00 p.m.

1606 S. Point View Street, Los Angeles

Paul and Paula Brynen's lovely garden.