

T·H·E  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY OF  
SOUTHERN  
CALIFORNIA

# The Southern Californian

The Historical Society of Southern California Fall 2012 Volume 24 Number 3

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## THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIAN

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NEWSLETTER LAYOUT

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The headquarters of the  
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Lummis Home (El Alisal)  
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[www.socalhistory.org](http://www.socalhistory.org)



PHOTO: Charles F. Lummis, 1905

Twelve million flowers to the acre

## Haunted by Hundreds of Amiable Ghosts

We have always expected the Lummis Home to be haunted by the spirit of Charles Lummis. He chose every stone, placed it in alignment, mixed every batch of concrete, hoisted every rafter, shaped every window and made every door. His remains are sealed in the wall along with the ashes of his young son, Amado. Of course he would stick around.

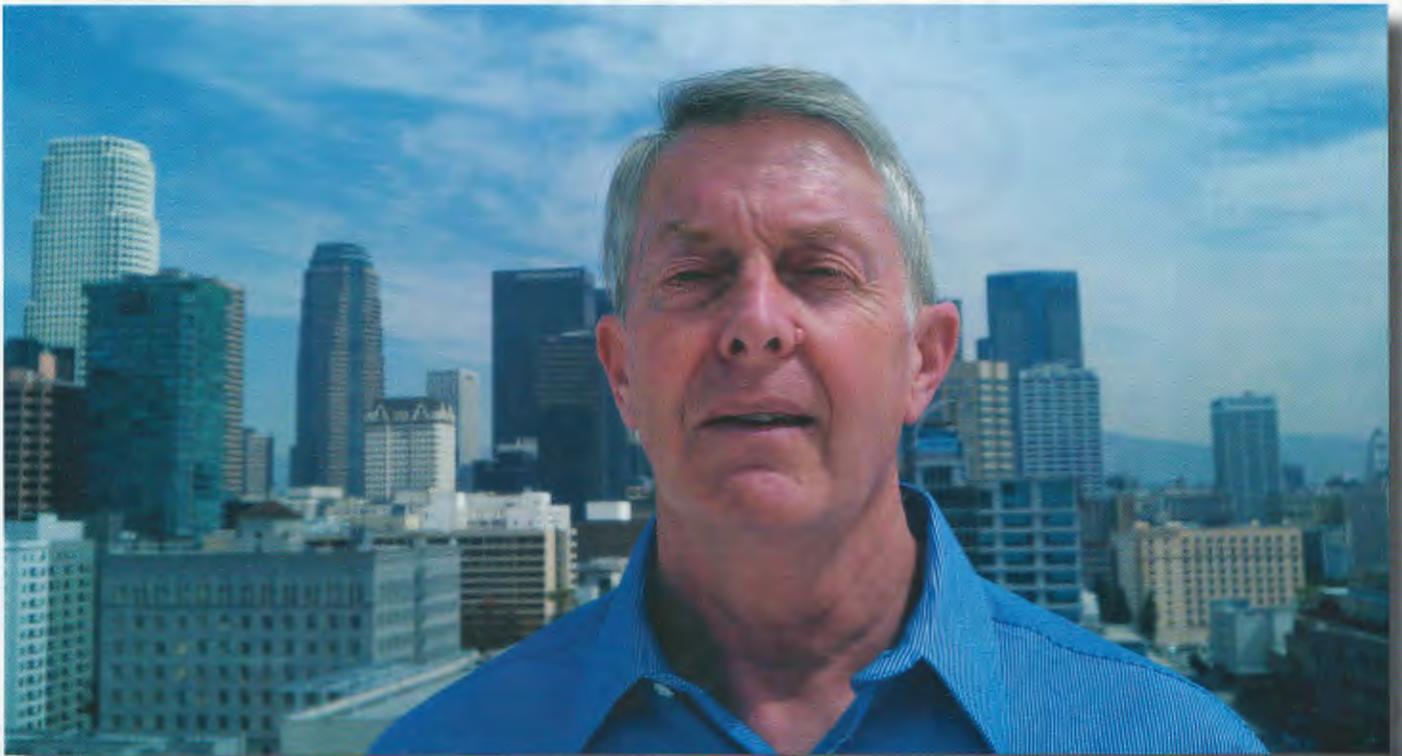
But I rather suspect there are hundreds of other spirits that join us when we gather in the Museo and the Comedor. We would only have to open the great guest book and say their names to call them again for a real old California good time.

There would be John Muir, Joaquin Miller, Thomas Moran, Mary Garden, John Phillip Sousa, Frederick Remington, Eugene M. Rhodes, Clarence Darrow and Madame Helena Modjeska. And if we

were to consult Janice Raney and Dennis Harbach of the Autry National Center we would simply have to bar the door. They have identified about 3,000 signatures in the guest book in the course of their project to digitize and index the entire compilation using the original book that now belongs to the Braun Library.

They are very generously reporting their findings as they go forward. See them on the LA Autry Blog at [www.libraries.theautry.org](http://www.libraries.theautry.org). We recommend starting with the post, "So Lummis Pretty Much Knew Everybody, Didn't He?"

You are also invited to attend our monthly Afternoon at El Alisal on Sunday, October 28, at 4:30p.m. Expect to meet your favorite guests, they'll be waiting.



## New Member of Board: Greg Fischer

Greg Fischer was born in Santa Monica, California in 1952. Raised in the Westwood section of Los Angeles, he attended St. Paul the Apostle Grammar School and Daniel Murphy High School (1970). He went on to Loyola University of Los Angeles (now LMU) graduating in 1974 with a BA in Political Science.

From 2001 until 2011, Greg spent with the City of Los Angeles working as Planning and Transportation deputy for the Downtown district of Councilwoman Jan Perry, Council District 9. During this time, he also sat as a Mayoral appointee (Mayor James Hahn and Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa) on the Metro Downtown-Westside Governance Council (2004-2007). This is the largest of the five councils that Metro operates. As a deputy for the Council office, he was involved with the following projects: LA Live, the Grand Avenue project, the Walt Disney Concert Hall, California High-Speed Rail, the Metro Downtown Regional Connector as well as numerous other projects.

During this time, Downtown has come back to being the City center due to the many efforts of the Councilwoman. One of her biggest achievements, and one on which Greg Fischer worked for years, was the Adaptive Reuse project which brought many of the older office buildings back to life as residential lofts with first floor retail. This not only recycled these structures with a new purpose, but also infused life into once great architecture. The Adaptive Reuse project revitalized some of the fabric in the center of Downtown (Main Street, Spring Street, Broadway) as the office market moved west toward Figueroa Street.

Greg has been active in civic affairs for years including serving as president and board member of the Holmby-Westwood Property Owners Association, member of the parish council for St. Paul the Apostle Church and a member of the Westwood Village Chamber of Commerce, during a period of about 10 years when he worked in Westwood Village running a business. A member of Downtown Cathedral Associates, he also formed a group of Downtown residents to work on the Police Administration Building perimeter as there was no current funding to maintain the exterior of the site (this situation has been corrected). He holds a seat on the Los Angeles Regional History Planning Group which meets at the Huntington Library. He is a member of the advisory board of Immaculate Conception Grammar School in the Westlake district, the Design Review Board of the Savoy Homeowners Association, and the Spring Street Park advisory board for the construction of the new park in the Historic Core.

He has a great interest in the story of the development of Los Angeles. He has lectured to homeowners groups, schools and civic groups on why Los Angeles exists and how it came to dominate Southern California. His informal style of speaking about Los Angeles brings context to the story of Los Angeles and makes sense of a place which remains a mystery to most people. In addition, he regularly contributes history pieces to the Downtown News.

## New Community Membership

The Board of Directors voted last week to establish a new membership level in response to the wishes of members and visitors to our headquarters at the Lummis Home.

Effective immediately we will accept one-year "Community Members" at \$45.

Membership at this new level will include invitations to all HSSC events, 10% discount on event admission and at the bookshop, plus our newsletter, *The Southern Californian*, but not access to our flagship publication, the Southern California Quarterly. Neither the classic print version nor the online version of the Quarterly will be provided at the Community Member level.



## Audubon Society Visits Lummis Home



Audubon Society stop by Lummis Home for a fun filled afternoon



Evita Chavez sitting with some children

## Congratulations to HSSC Staff Member

On September 8, 2012, staff member Julian van Zandweghe participated in an athletic event unique to California, swimming from Alcatraz Island to San Francisco. At 7:30 that morning, nearly a thousand swimmers entered the (unusually warm) 62 degree water just off the shore of Alcatraz and swam through the strong currents and choppy water back to San Francisco, taking anywhere from 30 to 90 minutes to swim the mile and a half back to shore. Julian completed the swim in 74 minutes, an impressive time for his first open water race.





## Adopt A Spot

Taran Schindler (left) and Elizabeth Johnson (right) by the small comedor door soon ~~to be~~ restored through their generous donation

More of our visitors are expressing interest in helping with the preservation of the Lummis Home on a small but immediately visible scale. With at least \$1,000 to contribute, you can focus on one of the deteriorated areas, work with our talented restoration architects, and watch their craftsmanship bring back the original strength and appearance. This is a way to be a philanthropist where you can literally watch your dollars at work.

For example, in our last issue of *The Southern Californian* we reported the preservation gift of Elizabeth H. Johnson. She chose to save the small garden door in the Comedor. Now we are able to report that the door has been strengthened and restored and re-hung in the frame. The marks of Lummis' hand tools have been retained although the door was so rotted it required a new core. All the modern joinery has been completely concealed. The old latch plate and skeleton key lock have been cleaned and reinstalled. We thank United Environmental Architects for donating their time and for a job well done.

We are concentrating right now on the rain gutter and downspout project, hoping to make progress before the rains begin. This is an addition to the house. Lummis originally trusted the deep gravel soil to protect from what he would have called "rising damp." He had placed the original concrete floor directly on the gravel with no vapor barrier. Rain from the roof

coursed down the walls as it does to this day. In the 47 years that HSSC has used the house as headquarters, every winter has been characterized by damp walls and wet floors.

We completed gutters on the exposed northeast side of the house in 2011, electing to use copper as most suitable for a landmark structure. Our preservation architects, Tada Ryvola and Michael Sandstrom, conducted tests and developed a process to treat the shining copper chemically to produce a weathered bronze surface. No one notices the gutters and downspouts, which is as it should be.

### Work To Be Done

- **Project 1: Gutters around Kitchen**  
Labor & Materials: \$2,600
- **Project 2: Gutters around Bedrooms**  
Labor & Materials: \$3,240
- **Project 3: Gutters south side 2nd floor & South Side Museo**  
Labor & Materials: \$3,500
- **Project 4: Masonry Repair for Mission Bell**  
Labor & Materials: \$2,500



## Restoration Snapshots

1. United Environmental Architect, Tada Ryvola, assembling door
2. Exploded view of restored door
3. Door restoration was done with the type of old hand tools used by Lummiis

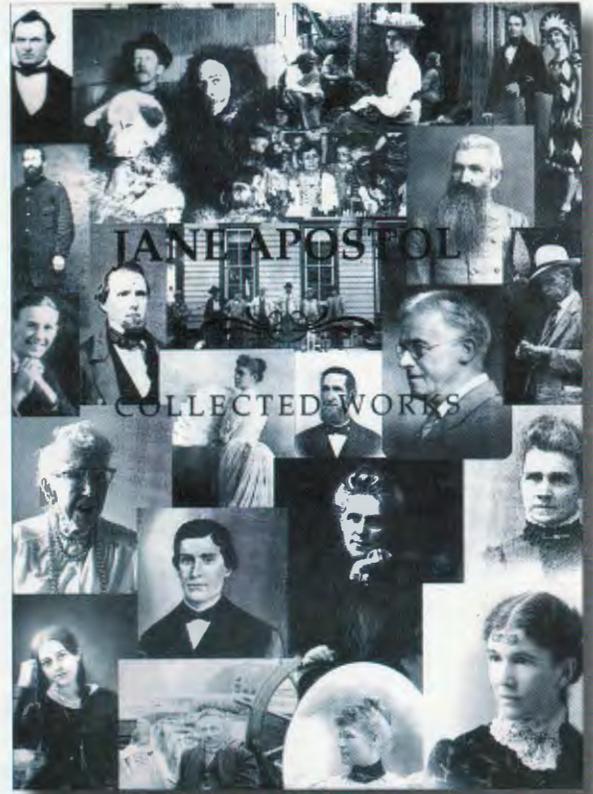


## Jane Apostol Collected Works

Jane's first book was *South Pasadena: A Centennial History 1888-1988* in 1987. It was the first book-length history of the city and remains unrivaled for its level of research and ability to engage a broad readership. She went on to publish 14 more titles including HSSC publications *Painting With Light: A Centennial History of the Judson Studio*, *Museums Along the Arroyo*, and *El Alisal: Where History Lingers*. She also published 33 research articles between 1974 and 2008 in various publications such as *The Pacific Historian*, *The Book Club of California*, as well as our very own *Southern California Quarterly*.

All of Jane's articles are reproduced in a very special compilation published as a 90th Birthday surprise for her by her husband, Tom Apostol, a famous mathematician in his own right. *Jane Apostol: Collected Works* is obviously a labor of love. It has beautifully reproduced photos, a striking cover adorned with many photos of historical figures, and a luxurious binding with a ribbon book mark, but its chief value is the diligent research and wonderful writing it contains. The book boasts five impressive essays, including a very touching memorial tribute to Ward Ritchie delivered at the South Pasadena Library, a few nimble poems, and even a couple of spirited limericks.

Although the tome weighs in at more than 10 lbs, it's not "heavy reading" at all because all of the pieces are short and lively, including the one-page biography of Jane that Tom has written. The unique book is not available in any store, but Tom has donated three copies to the South Pasadena Public Library, and one of them can be checked out. The call number used for locating the book on the nonfiction shelves is "979 Apostol." Many of her books are available at the Lummis Home bookstore, including *El Alisal* which is currently on sale for \$10 to honor her birthday.



## In Memoriam: Michael Mathes

Adapted from *CMSA Loses a Great Friend and Outstanding Mission Historian* by CMSA President David Bolton

Long-time CMSA member and highly-respected scholar Dr. Michael (Miguel) W. Mathes passed away recently leaving behind a long list of Mission history accomplishments after many decades dedicated to a field that he enjoyed so much.

As a youth, he would spend countless family weekends and holidays traveling throughout Baja California. On both sides of the border, the Missions of California grabbed Miguel's attention early in life and they would always hold a special place in his heart. Later, Dr. Mathes became a respected university professor, a talented author, esteemed colleague, outstanding story teller, and a one-of-a-kind 'tour guide'. His tours of historic sites, especially his beloved Missions in both Baja and Alta California, were always well attended, and fondly remembered by all.

Miguel's efforts, philanthropy and focus on history have had a lasting impact in both the U.S. and Mexico. He was a founding member and presenter at Culiacan's renowned El Colegio de Sinaloa Annual January Seminar focusing on the history of the Jesuits in the Americas. He fought for the successful establishment of an INAH (Mexico's National Institute of Anthropology and History) office in Baja California to help preserve the peninsula's Missions and other historic sites. Miguel donated his large book collection to the university in Guadalajara, Mexico leading to the creation of La Biblioteca de Miguel Mathes.

Many have learned from his work, many have sought him out as a valuable resource, and many have enjoyed him both as a friend and great colleague. Undoubtedly, many now miss him dearly.

Descanse en paz.

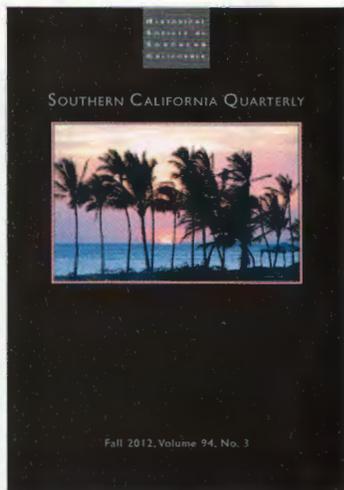


Miguel Mathes lecturing at El Colegio de Jalisco

# SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY

FALL 2012 (vol. 93, no. 3)

## A Preview



NO "PERFECT GARDEN": AMERICAN CONSTRUCTIONS OF HAWAIIAN LANDSCAPES AND THE MAKING OF A CLIMATIC BORDERLAND  
BY LAWRENCE KESSLER

ALEXANDER DEL MAR: FREE TRADE AND THE CHINESE QUESTION  
BY KASHIA ARNOLD

PIPER V. BIG PINE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF INYO COUNTY: INDIGENOUS SCHOOLING AND RESISTANCE IN THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY  
BY NICOLE BLALOCK-MOORE

THE HISTORIAN'S EYE

### CONTRIBUTORS

**Lawrence Kessler** is a doctoral candidate in the Department of History at Temple University. He is currently researching and writing his dissertation, an environmental history of sugarcane cultivation in nineteenth- and twentieth-century Hawai'i.

**Kashia Arnold** is currently a Master's candidate in History at California State University, Northridge. Her field of interest is U.S. History in the American West, and her current research explores the development of economic relations between the US West and China during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. She was awarded the CSU Dumke Fellowship in 2011 to further her research on Alexander Del Mar.

**Nicole Blalock-Moore** is a mixed-heritage scholar at the University of California, Davis, studying indigenous experiences of access and interaction with curriculum and resources in educational settings. She is currently completing dual degree programs, a master's in the Department of Native American Studies and a doctorate in the School of Education.

### BOOK REVIEWS

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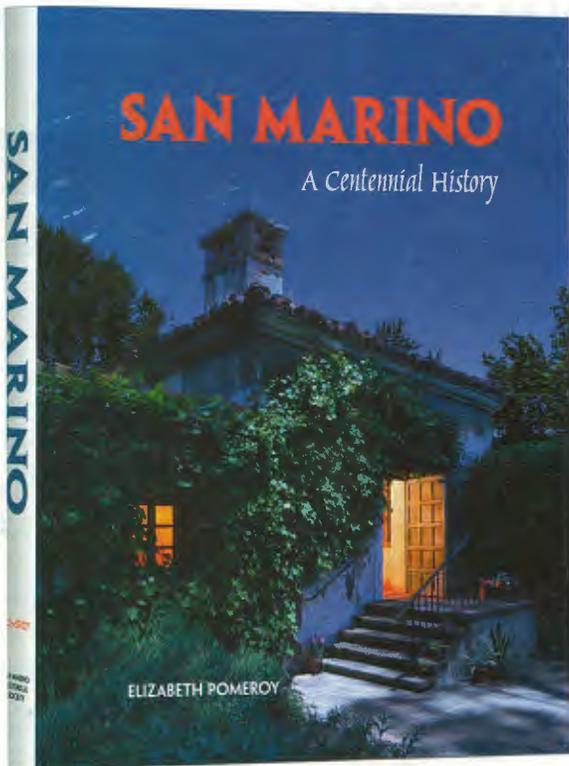
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San Marino: A Centennial History  
by Elizabeth Pomeroy  
\$55.00

*San Marino: A Centennial History* traces the history of the first century of the city through words and images. This deluxe hardcover book incorporates original research and includes full color photos, maps and text.

The reader will follow the transition from the area's rich agricultural ranches to the establishment of San Marino as a city. Inclusion of the early families that shaped the culture will help to illuminate the city's development. Learn how many of the city's cherished traditions have evolved from these earlier times.

## Remember

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## Save The Date

### October 21, 2012

Afternoons at El Alisal  
4:30pm - 7:30pm, Members Only

### November 4, 2012

Dunning Lecture

### November 17-18, 2012

Arroyo Arts Collective Discovery Tour  
10:00am - 5:00pm, Open to the Public

### December 02, 2012

Holiday Open House  
12:00pm - 4:00pm, Members Only