

The Southern Californian

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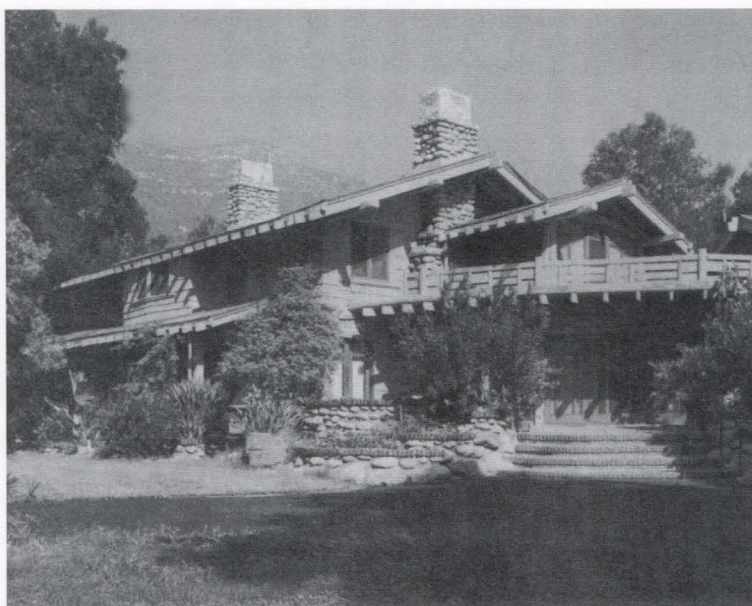


Photo by Marvin Rand in Greene & Greene by Randall MacKinnon

The 1909 Pratt House designed by the Greene brothers sits on a 50-acre site and is now flanked by a small vineyard developed by its current owner, Bill Moses.

Look for a Trip to Ojai

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY of Southern California is sponsoring "My Ojai . . . and Welcome to It!," a historical and architectural tour of eastern Ventura County on Saturday, October 12, 2002. We are fortunate to have Michael Dougherty, past president of HSSC and an authority on the architecture of Greene & Greene and Frank Lloyd Wright as our guide for the day.

First on the itinerary is a visit to the 1,800 acre Rancho Camulos, established by Ygnacio del Valle in 1853 near Castaic. By 1880 the parcel had grown into a thriving, self-contained ranch capable of supporting nearly 200 residents. The first oranges grown and shipped commercially from Ventura County were from the Ranch and in addition to many other annual crops, Camulos became famous for its production of wines and brandies.

Charles Lummis, active preservationist and close friend

of the del Valles, once appealed to the State of California to purchase the site as a historic park. Camulos is also known as the setting for Helen Hunt Jackson's novel, *Ramona*.

After a leisurely lunch in the beautiful gardens of the renowned Ranch House Restaurant in Ojai our group will continue on to the Charles M. Pratt House, "Casa Barranca," built by Charles and Henry Greene in 1909. Participants will have a first-hand opportunity to examine the fusion of simple and sophisticated detail for which the Greene brothers were so well known in this fine example of the "ultimate bungalow."

Prices for the outing are \$75.00 for members and \$85.00 for non-members. Departure is from the north end of the Los Angeles Zoo parking lot at 8:30 am with a return scheduled for 5:30 pm.

For further information, please call (323) 222-0546.

by Michele Clark

Meet Board Member Gloria Miranda

NOT ONLY IS Gloria Miranda a connection to national history organizations for HSSC—she serves on the executive board of the Organization of American Historians—but Gloria feels she represents an under-represented population of educators and students. Gloria, the first community college historian on the OAH board, says, "Community colleges have largely been neglected in the field of history. I hope to serve as HSSC's link to community colleges and provide an important outreach."

After graduating from Cal State Dominguez Hills in 1972, Gloria received a prestigious Ford Foundation grant enabling her to continue her education



Gloria Miranda

without interruption. Five years later, she received her PhD in history from USC studying under Doyce Nunis.

Today she is academic dean of behavioral and social sciences at El Camino College where she supervises eight departments—including their scheduling, budgets and programs.

She also oversees the honors transfer program and the accelerated teacher education program which allows students to receive teaching credentials within four years at either CSU Dominguez Hills or Long Beach.

Meet four of the 2002 HSSC Whitsett Student Fellows

THE HSSC/WHITSETT Student Fellow program is a new outreach for the Historical Society of Southern California.

The Society has joined resources with the W.P. Whitsett Foundation to provide membership in the Society to outstanding history students.

History departments of several local colleges and universities select the students to be honored. The students are invited to work with Tom Andrews, HSSC executive director, to promote history in the public arena.

Along with membership in the historical society, the 2002 HSSC/Whitsett Student Fellows also receive:

- ☒ The fall 2001 issue of the *Southern California Quarterly*
- ☒ A copy of the 1999 George Dunning Lecture on Los Angeles by Doyce Nunis
- ☒ A copy of the 2000 George Dunning Lecture on Los Angeles by Michael Engh, S.J.
- ☒ Three pamphlets on Los Angeles biography by Abraham Hoffman
- ☒ A copy of the monograph "Southern California Through the Lens of Charles Francis Saunders" by Jane Apostol
- ☒ A copy of the monograph "Rancho Los Cerritos" by Iris H.W. Engstrand



Kim Hernandez

KIM HERNANDEZ is a re-entry student at Cal State University, Northridge having put her academic career on hold while she followed her husband's military and civilian careers and raised three daughters.

It was her husband's European tour of duty that sparked her interest in history and the humanities. On returning to college she chose history as her major. She has since added two minors: humanities and California studies. Her areas of interest are Los Angeles, California and the Southwest with a primary focus on the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Currently she is employed at Heritage Square Museum where her first job was to research a 1900 Los Angeles urban kitchen garden for an exhibit. Last October she presented her findings at a regional conference for the Association of Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums.

Kim says, "I especially enjoy research and writing, and seeing findings put into practice in museum interpretation." Kim, who lives in Santa Clarita, adds she would like to teach at the university level.

HSSC welcomes Kim Hernandez as HSSC/Whitsett Student Fellow.



Susan Meier

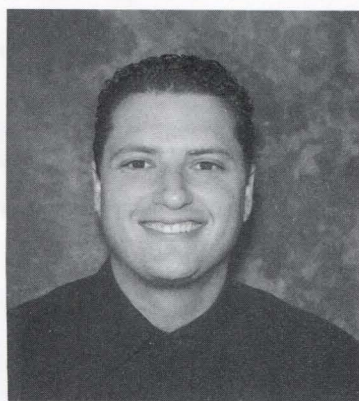
ANOTHER CALIFORNIA native, Susan Meier, is working on her master's degree at Cal State Fullerton. She grew up in Redlands where she lives today with her husband—her high school sweetheart.

Pursuing a history degree is, Susan says, "a second career for me." Susan was an operating room nurse for four years and then briefly worked in the public health department for San Bernardino County. Even though a registered nurse, Susan realized she enjoyed teaching.

Eventually she received a teaching credential and taught junior high school social studies in Fontana. The discipline aspect of teaching was less compelling than the subject matter, so Susan decided to enroll in graduate school.

Earlier while an undergraduate at Cal State San Bernardino, Susan took classes in US history where her professor intertwined southern California history into the larger history of the United States. Susan became fascinated by the rich history of the Inland Empire. Today, she is exploring San Bernardino County's role in World War II.

We welcome Susan Meier to HSSC.



Zachary W. Menzer

GRANADA HILLS RESIDENT Zachary W. Menzer will receive his master's degree in history from California State University, Northridge this fall.

While an undergraduate at the University of Arizona, Zachary majored in history with a special emphasis on the west and the U.S.-Mexico borderlands.

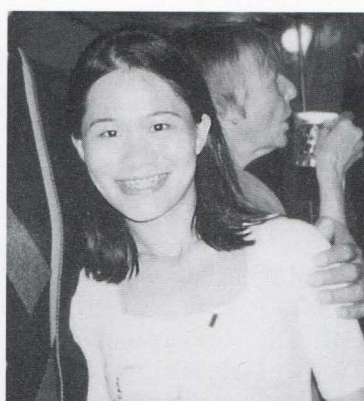
He maintains this interest today, expanding it at CSUN to include American history in general and Latin American history.

Zachary's goal is to be an "effective college instructor."

His employment record reflects preparation for working with young people of all ages: He has directed woodworking activities for a summer camp in Chatsworth. He has been a teacher assistant in language arts and social studies and taught small groups of students at Chatsworth's Sierra Canyon Middle School. He has been an extended day care supervisor at Sierra Canyon School and he has run a supplemental instruction course for U.S. history at CSUN.

During these periods of employment, Zachary has maintained a high grade point average.

Congratulations, Zachary Menzer, and welcome.



Trangdai Tranguyen

TRANGDAI TRANGUYEN has packed a lot of study and service into a young life. Her resumé, although only two pages long, reads like the accomplishments of a much older scholar.

In the last two years she has given presentations at eight conferences, among them, the Western Conference of the Association for Asian Studies, California; Howard University's International Conference in Washington, D.C.; and most recently, the Southwest Oral History Association Conference in Los Angeles.

Still, this Cal State Fullerton student who lives in Stanton plans to add to her scholastic workload. Now working toward a master's degree in history, she intends to pursue her doctorate in social/cultural anthropology. Her interests include studies, research, and field work on topics related to Asian Americans—especially emerging immigrant Southeast Asian subgroups. Gender issues, cultural understanding, racial harmony, identity negotiation are only some of her explored themes.

Trangdai, charmingly and with confidence, says, "My training in history will shed light into the field of anthropology in unparalleled ways."

We say welcome to HSSC.

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The Bembridge House in Long

A GRAND VICTORIAN mansion with pristine interiors and original family furnishings is currently evolving into a public house museum under the leadership of Long Beach Heritage. The house is so intact and original as to convey, in an immediate and compelling way, what life was like in a southern California town one hundred years ago.

The unusual state of preservation is due to the fact that for eight decades it was owned by one family who were conservative and frugal and changed nothing.

It was built in 1906 as the retirement home of Stephen and Josephine Green, who had previously lived near Westlake Park in Los Angeles, but originally hailed from the Midwest. Credit for the architectural beauty of the house goes to Mrs. Green who was an artist and the daughter of an architect. However, the actual architect and builder for the house are unknown. Mr. Green was a prosperous banker and one of the founders of the City National Bank of Long Beach.

It is a full three stories, with ample proportions and lavish decoration. A sweeping wrap-

around porch with paired ionic columns is decorated with plaster floral swags and frieze. The complex forms and massing, including a corner tower, along with the combination of siding and decorative shingles, are typical of the high Queen Anne style. The dormers on the tower illuminate a small interior room in the attic, which was the playroom for the Rankin children, who grew up in the house as the next owners after the Greens.

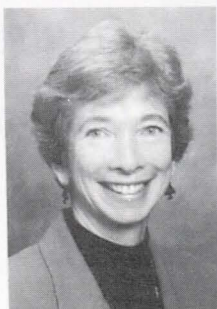
The story of the Rankin family exemplifies the origins and growth of Long Beach. Mrs. Rankin's mother had come to Long Beach in the first days of its development as a beach resort, running a boarding house on Ocean Avenue (now Boulevard). South of Ocean was the majestic sandy beach that gave the city its name and early fame. In the first decade of the 20th century, Long Beach developed the Pike amusement park along the beach as an entertainment zone and resort area. The Pike was the City's most important economic base then, and continued to be important until the 1950s.

Dorothy Bembridge (1910-1999), the last owner of the house, as a young child accompanied her parents to stay with her maternal grandmother on the beach opposite the elegant Virginia Hotel. Her father fell in love with the Green's house, and was able to purchase it in 1918. The family moved in with their belongings from their former home in Nebraska. The pioneering families of Long Beach came from the Midwest, and the city

was even nicknamed "Iowa By The Sea." Mrs. Rankin and later Dorothy were both pianists, and the corner tower was perfect for the grand piano.

Dorothy Bembridge lived almost her whole life in the Victorian, a house filled with family history and memorabilia. Crossing the threshold, one enters another world. In the

RUTHANN LEHRER has been historic preservation officer

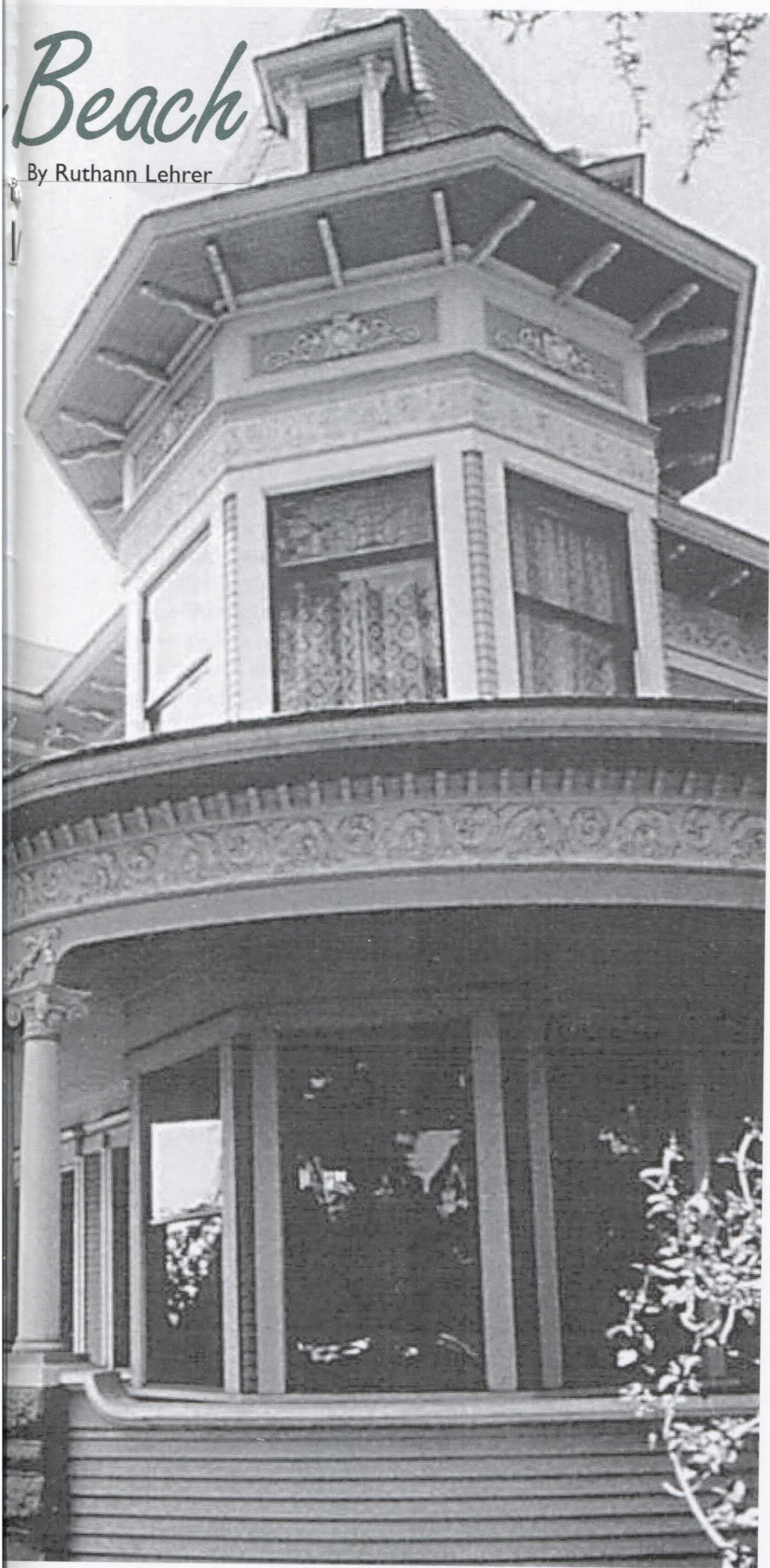


for the city of Long Beach for the past 13 years. Before that she was the first executive director of the Los Angeles Conservancy from 1981 until 1987 and later served on the board. She has also served as president and trustee of the California Preservation Foundation and currently is on the board of the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions.



Beach

By Ruthann Lehrer



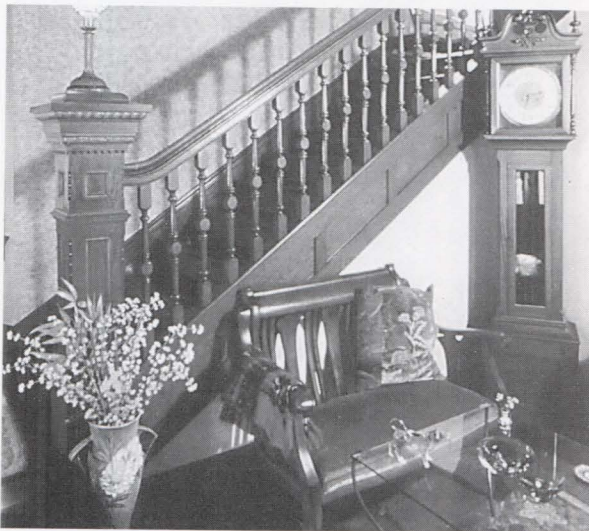
grand hallway is an ornate staircase, the first landing containing a full-length mirror framed with wood columns, pediment and stained glass. Decorative stained and leaded glass, beautiful woodwork, and original gas/electric chandeliers are found throughout. The house has four interior bathrooms, the height of luxury; and also a sink built into each bedroom. The magnificent fireplace has pictorial tile with Italianate shepherdesses.

Long Beach Heritage was fortunate to receive a planning grant from the Getty Grant Preserve L.A. Program, to develop a conservation master plan for the house, and also the two-story carriage house and aviary on the site. Much work remains to be done to evaluate and catalogue the collections, from furnishings to boxes of family letters and documents. Soon the house will be open to the public, and will serve as an educational resource for the neighborhood and the City.

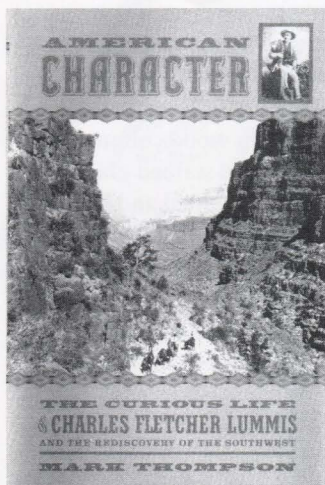
Currently the house is open to groups by appointment: call Long Beach Heritage at (562) 493-7019. It is located at 953 Park Circle, opposite Drake Park.

Left: The exterior of the house features a sweeping porch, ionic columns and a tower. Below: The ornate staircase in the grand hallway.

Photos: Courtesy of Long Beach Heritage



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between
books
and
HSSC
members



Lummis Biography Honored by Western Writers of America

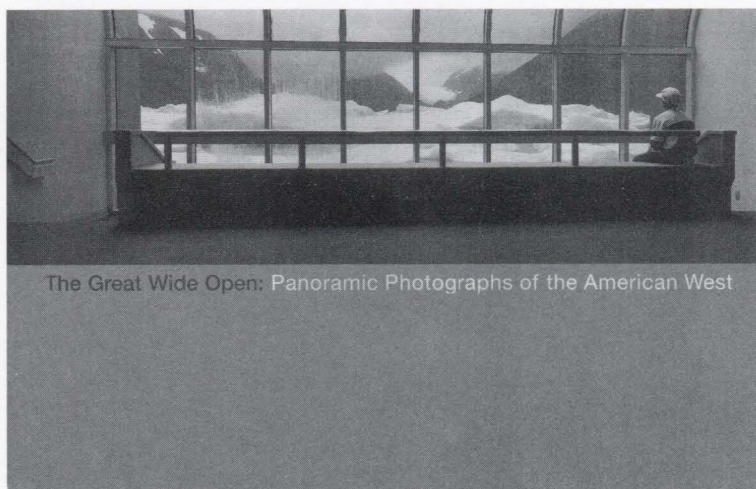
A BOOK BY HSSC MEMBER **Mark Thompson**, *American Character: The Curious Life of Charles Fletcher Lummis*, was honored by Western Writers of America as winner of the 2002 Spur Award in biography.

The book covers Lummis's long, colorful life from his early career as a cub reporter in frontier Los Angeles to his final days as the master of El Alisal. The focus of the book is on Lummis's lifelong crusade to win civil rights for American Indians, beginning with his days as a resident of the pueblo of Isleta near Albuquerque, N.M. in the late 1880s.

The Spur Awards, handed out annually since 1953, are among the oldest and most prestigious in American literature. Winners of Spur Awards in previous years include Larry McMurtry for *Lonesome Dove*, Michael Blake for *Dances With Wolves* and Tony Hillerman for *Skin Walker*.

American Character was honored during a banquet on June 29 at the WWA's annual convention in Wichita, Kansas.

The book is available at the El Alisal Book Shop. Call (323) 222-0546 for information.



The Great Wide Open: Panoramic Photographs of the American West

Jennifer Watts Shares Award

CONGRATULATIONS TO HSSC member **Jennifer Watts** and co-author Claudia Bohn-Spector who received the 2002 Leab Award from the American Library Association for their exhibition catalog *The Great Wide Open: Panoramic Photographs of the American West*.

Great Wide Open received the award for its "impressive historical and formal analysis of a medium and genre in a geographical context" and for its beautiful design. It is the first Huntington catalog to receive this prestigious award.

A graduate of Wellesley

College, Jennifer, now curator of photographs at Huntington Library, was a docent at the Lummis Home from 1988 to 1990 while she was a student at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena.

HSSC Executive Director Tom Andrews says, "I like to think it all started here. When Jennie was a docent at El Alisal she engaged visitors in dialogue."

In the foreword to *Great Wide Open* David Zeidberg, R. Stanton Director of the Huntington Library, says, "The authors have imagined a visual conversation between photographers, creating a 'virtual dialogue.'"

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A Memorial for Keith Lummis

by Suzanne Lummis

Keith Lummis, the youngest son of Charles Fletcher Lummis, died on April 22, 2002 at his home in San Francisco. He and his wife, Hazel, often stopped at the Lummis Home when they visited family in Los Angeles. To the end, though he missed Hazel terribly after her death earlier and though he was confined to a wheelchair, Keith retained his charm, keen mind and sense of humor. The following, by his daughter poet Suzanne Lummis, briefly describes a memorial service at the Lummis Home on August 10.

ON AUGUST 10 THE SWEET and sublime harp music of Pepe Pena filled the Lummis Home at a gathering to remember my father, Keith, whose life spanned the year of 1904 to April of this new millennium. If the spirit of his father was in attendance Charles must have been tickled to find all his grandchildren, and some great grandchildren, all together under his roof for the first time: Charlotte, Doug, Jim Lummis and me, Pat Walker and her husband Lou, two-year-old Kai son of Doug and Yukino, and Jamie and Bonnie, daughters of Jim and Marley.

Tom Andrews and Margaret Dickerson from the Historical Society of Southern California were present to lend their affectionate support.

Family and friends related memories of Keith, recalling his humor, bravery, and love of adventure. The tales also gave testimony to his extraordinary range of skills both practical and

creative, which served him well as an outstanding investigator and agent for the U.S. Treasury and Secret Service, manager of the Clair Tappaan Ski Lodge and biographer (*Charles F. Lummis: The Man and His West*).

And along the way we remembered my mother, Hazel, who also had literary and artistic gifts. She worked closely with Keith on the award-winning biography.

Bert Atkinson showed a piece of video he took in the course of his research for a historical documentary. It captures my father reading the verse Charles Lummis recited at many of his famous salons, or "noises": Toast to the Absent — "Wide is the world but love more wide. Here shall they sit with us, side by side..."

Visitors to the House might notice that a tree of white blossoms now stands in front of the tower, in memory of Keith and Hazel Lummis.



Photo: Suzanne Huddleson

This photo was taken in 1995 at the Lummis Home on one of Hazel and Keith's last visits.

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Annual subscription to *The Southern Californian*
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Free Museums of the Arroyo Day and December Holiday Open House

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All of the benefits above plus...
One special publication

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All of the above plus...
Two special publications

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All of the above plus...
A Docent-led tour of the Lummis Home and Garden

\$1,000 President's Circle

All of the above plus...
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For further information call HSSC at (323) 222-0546

For Love of History Tributes

The HSSC Tribute Program honors
or remembers family and friends.

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underwrite Society programs and publications.

IN MEMORY OF

EDWARD HARNAGEL

by

Mr. & Mrs. William W. Escherich

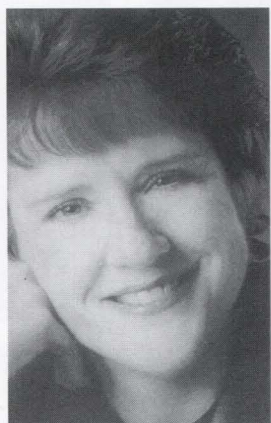
Meet New Member Cecilia Rasmussen

HSSC MEMBERS PROBABLY know Cecilia Rasmussen by way of her hugely successful weekly column in the Los Angeles *Times*, "Then and Now."

So it may come as a surprise to learn that this Sierra Madre resident began her working life as an international banker. After a divorce and with two small children to raise, Cecilia decided that her many trips overseas were too demanding and she gave up her business career. Today she is remarried, has three children and a solid reputation as a writer and researcher with the *LA Times*.

Cecilia started at the *Times* as Bill Boyarsky's secretary in 1984. Boyarsky was then the *Times* city/county bureau chief who wrote a popular political column. Eventually Cecilia began doing research for Boyarsky and a little writing.

Cecilia credits him and other *Times* writers like Patt Morrison,



Tim Rutten, and Burt Folkart for sharpening her writing skills. She says about writing well, "All it takes is one good teacher."

In 1992 Cecilia began writing and producing the graphics for a feature called "Curbside L.A." This feature, too, was popular and, in 1996, became a book. A collection of articles from "Then and Now" was published in book form in 1998 with a forward by Kevin Starr. Starr says that Cecilia has achieved "a gallery of pointilist-realist portraits and images of people, places and events."

HSSC members will be delighted to learn that when Cecilia gets calls asking where to find information about Los Angeles she replies, "The first place to start is the *Southern California Quarterly*."

Cecilia uses other sources she has developed over time. Among them are her good friends HSSC members and historians Gloria Ricci Lothrop and Doyce Nunis.

HSSC says a hearty welcome to Cecilia Rasmussen.

Cecilia Rasmussen's two books, *Curbside L.A.* and *L.A. Unconventional*, are available in El Alisal Book Shop. For more information, call (323) 222-0546.

SAVE THESE DATES

Saturday
October 12
Ojai Tour
with Michael Dougherty

Sunday
November 3
**George A.V. Dunning
Lecture**
with Gloria Lothrop
Biltmore Hotel
Los Angeles

Saturday
November 16
**Sketching with
Joseph Stoddard**
Eaton Canyon
Pasadena

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