

The Southern Californian

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Air Photo Archives, UCLA



THIS PHOTO taken in 1953 by Fairchild Aerial Photography and published in Joseph Campanella's *Cities from the Sky* shows the Harbor Freeway slicing through downtown Los Angeles. Along with the freeway, builders, visionaries and characters arrived. The Eighth Annual History Conference will focus on their activities in Los Angeles in the postwar years from 1940 to 1990.

O'Flaherty Award to be Presented at the Annual History Conference

THE EIGHTH ANNUAL History Conference for K-12 teachers, students, historians, and the general public will be held on Saturday, March 1, at the Autry Museum of Western Heritage.

This year's conference focuses on Los Angeles during the years 1940 to 1990, and continues the theme of the last two years, "History as Biography: L.A. Lives Worth Knowing." The keynote address is by Becky Nicolaides, entitled "It Took All Kinds: Exploring the History of Postwar L.A."

Other presenters include Greg Hise of USC, Elisabeth Orr of Long Beach City College, Regina Freer of Occidental College, and Suzanne Muchnic, biographer of Norton Simon. The conference will include a special feature—a documentary on Toyo Miyatake by Karen Ishizuka of the Japanese American National Museum and Robert Nakamura of UCLA.

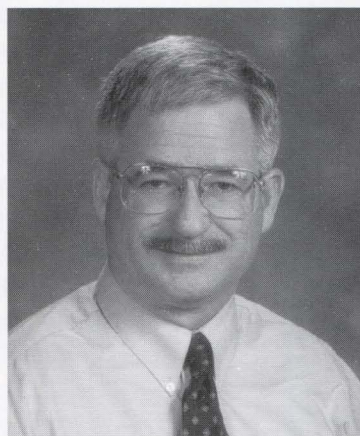
This year, for the first time, the O'Flaherty Distinguished Teaching Award will be given at

the conference to two high school teachers: Norm Heldwein of Crescenta Valley High School and John Ring of La Salle High School in Pasadena. Together, they have more than 60 years of sustained achievement in teaching U.S. history. (More information about the teachers will appear in the next issue of *The Southern Californian*.)

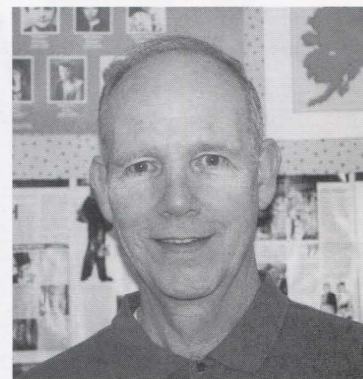
The first seven conferences at the Autry, which set a standard for excellence, were directed by HSSC member Robert W. Blew. This year's event is under the

direction of HSSC member and Los Angeles historian Denise Spooner.

The conference begins at 8:30 a.m. with registration and refreshments and concludes with door prizes and a wine and cheese reception at 4:15 p.m. Each person attending receives a valuable resource packet of materials on Los Angeles history. The cost is \$45 to the general public, \$35 to HSSC and Autry members, and \$25 to teachers.



John Ring, La Salle High School, Pasadena



Norm Heldwein, Crescenta Valley High School, La Crescenta

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



Patricia Young-Colman

PATRICIA YOUNG-COLMAN earned a second master's degree at California State University, Northridge. Her first is from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Last year, she was recognized by the Historical Society of Southern California for her independent research at CSUN on a local homestead family.

Patricia's work and education reflect the development of a profound interest. First she earned a bachelor's degree with a minor in anthropology from UC Santa Barbara in 1997. Then came the master's in American Indian Studies from UCLA.

She was first employed by the National Park Service, Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area in 1998 where she was cultural resource manager for a year. Two years later she enrolled at CSUN where she became a teaching assistant lecturing on federal Indian law and the history of the American West and Southern Plains Wars.

In 2001 Patricia returned to the National Park Service and today serves as staff historian. She also teaches U.S. history at Mt. San Antonio College.

Welcome Patricia Young-Colman.



Michael Woods

MICHAEL WOODS is a graduate student pursuing a master of arts degree in history at California State University, Fullerton. His emphasis is in California history—specifically the land utilization and social history of the state.

This year at CSUF, he serves as an assistant editor of the award-winning *Welebaethan* historical journal of the Theta Pi Chapter of Phi Alpha Theta. Currently he is in the process of having two of his works published: a paper on the Russian Imperial soldiers from 1914-1916 and a book review of Gerald Horne's work *Fire This Time: The Watts Uprising and the 1960s*.

After earning his degree, Michael hopes to continue in the field of American studies or education. He would like to teach at a junior college and prepare documentaries and multi-media materials for educational purposes.

Michael grew up in Orange County and received his bachelor's from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona in 1988. He is married and teaches American history and government at Santa Margarita Catholic High School in South Orange County.



Linda Kim

NATIVE BORN SOUTHERN Californian Linda Kim is a full-time student at California State University, Pomona and was selected by its history department for the HSSC/Whitsett Student Fellowship.

She graduates this fall with a bachelor's degree in liberal studies and will enter the teaching credential program at Cal Poly in the winter of 2003.

Linda, who lives in Fullerton, plans to become an elementary school teacher and later pursue a master's degree in education.

Linda has great faith in what education can do. She feels learning provides a sense of gratification. Teaching with passion, she says, benefits the children as well as the teacher. She adds, "I hope I can play a significant role in a child's life."

She feels as strongly about the study of history. Linda says, "History tells a story. It tells the story of our land, how it has been affected and how it needs to be preserved." She is especially interested in the history of California and Southern California.

Welcome HSSC/Whitsett Student Fellow, Linda Kim.



Stephanie George

STEPHANIE GEORGE says her interest in local history has been piqued by growing up in Villa Park in the house her grandfather built and in which her mother grew up. "I learned an exceptional sense of place and neighborhood," she says.

Stephanie expects to receive her master's degree in history this year. After that she would like to collect and compile oral histories that represent twenty-first century Roman Catholics in Orange County.

"While very little has been written or collected about the institutional church in Orange County," she says, "even less has been recorded about local Catholics themselves."

Stephanie's professional activities and work experience provide a strong foundation for pursuing this research. In 2001 she was a member of a project team that created a database and an online catalog for CSUF's oral history program. Today she is the curator at the Center for Oral and Public History at CSUF.

Eventually, Stephanie would like to direct several oral history projects specific to other religious traditions now represented in Orange County.

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The Wattles Mansion

THE STORY OF THE WATTLES MANSION IS TRULY HOLLYWOOD MATERIAL. IT INVOLVES WEALTH, BEAUTY, CELEBRITY, DECLINE, OBSCURITY, RUIN, AND REHAB.

by Tara Fansler

The author thanks Betty Brill, Julia Wattles' grandniece, and Stephen Sylvester, managing director of the Wattles Mansion, for their help. The publication *Wattles Estate and Gardens Cultural Landscape Report* prepared by Historic Resources Group and EIP Associates, provides a great deal of information on the Wattles Mansion, she adds.

THE WATTLES MANSION was the estate of Gurdon Wallace Wattles, an Omaha banker and railway man who first visited California in the early 1900s. In 1905 he bought 90 acres of land in the Hollywood hills and hired Myron Hunt and Elmer Grey, later architects of the Henry E. Huntington estate in San Marino, to construct a mansion and formal garden. The work was completed in 1909 and the mansion became the Wattles family's winter home, which they used three months a year. Gurdon Wattles named the estate Jualita.

In 1905 Hollywood was a suburb of Los Angeles, a newly forming community based primarily on agriculture. Gurdon Wattles' property was a long narrow strip with canyons on both sides, and it stretched from current day Hollywood Boulevard back up into the hills. Wattles and his mansion became famous for the four unique gardens which he developed on the property during his 27 years of residence.

Because of the shape of the estate Wattles planned the gardens in a line behind the mansion, each meandering up the hillside. The first garden was the Spanish garden designed by Myron Hunt and Elmer Grey. They positioned the house up high enough to look out over the Los Angeles Basin all the way to the Pacific Ocean, and designed the Spanish Garden (then called the formal garden) to perfectly frame the mountains in the background. In 1911 Wattles employed Elmer Grey to design an addition to the garden. The result was the Italian Garden, which rose nine feet above the Spanish Garden and was reached by a set of concrete steps. The American Garden, the largest of the four gardens followed next, and finally at the top of the property Wattles commissioned a Japanese garden complete with shrine, waterfalls, and a Japanese teahouse.

Gurdon Wattles settled permanently at Jualita in 1920 with his second wife and their son Gurdon

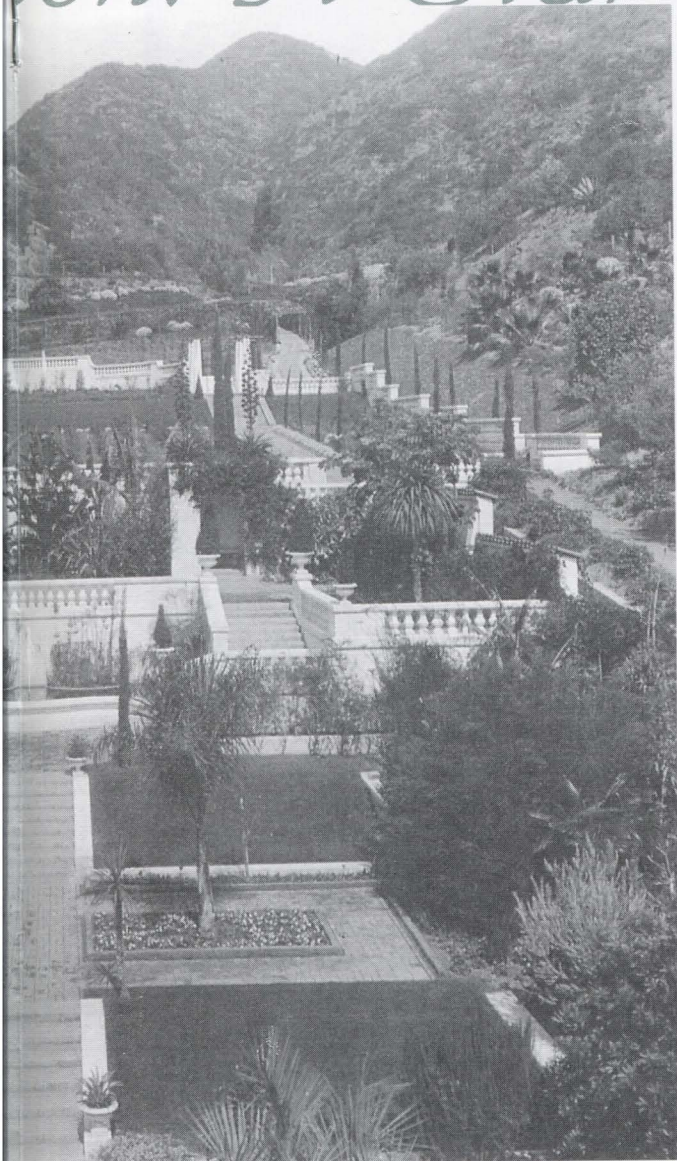


The Spanish Garden, circa 1910, designed by Myron Hunt and Elmer Grey, the

Wattles Jr. Gurdon Wattles Sr. passed away in 1932. Julia Wattles stayed at Jualita, caring for the mansion and grounds after her husband's death, and in 1968 Gurdon Wattles Jr. sold the property to the City of Los Angeles, who planned to transform the garden and mountainous acres into a city park. Julia Wattles was allowed to live on the property for the duration of her life. She died in 1977.

The city separated the estate into two halves. The upper 40 acres, consisting of the Japanese Garden and American Garden were opened to the public as a

ion: A Star Reborn



the first of four gardens built by Gurdon Wattles behind his Hollywood home.

city park. After Julia's death the city housed a park ranger in the mansion, but the grounds were neglected and the building was badly in need of repair. Over the years both portions of the estate were repeatedly vandalized. Because of its mountainous character and secluded setting in the hills the park became a haven for drug dealers, runaways, and transients.

The city faced a choice. Either demolish the mansion and level the gardens to create a large lawn park that would be cheaper to maintain and easier to patrol, or bring in an agency that could help preserve

the historical aspect of the site and maintain the grounds.

Hollywood Heritage stepped in, leasing the lower portion of the property in 1983. Under their care the mansion has been stabilized, its upper floor used for its offices, and major restorations carried out in the kitchen, dining room, entryway and library. The Spanish and Italian gardens, which are included in the lease, are also being beautifully restored.

Rentals for weddings and special events provide funds for the on-going restoration and maintenance effort. Hollywood Heritage welcomes visitors to the site, by appointment, although the downstairs rooms are unfurnished and there are no docent-guided tours.

Happily, a member of the Wattles family is once again involved in the affairs of the property. HSSC member Betty Brill, Gurdon Wattles' grandniece, has been working closely with Hollywood Heritage to care for the property.

The Wattles Mansion holds a unique place in Southern California history. Through its preservation and restoration visitors will be able to experience what Hollywood was like when its biggest tourist attraction was its gardens, and the biggest industry in town was avocados and oranges.

Betty and Dick Brill—an obviously happy couple—descend the steps of the Spanish Garden after their 1947 wedding ready to greet guests at the Wattles Mansion reception. Betty is Julia Wattles' grandniece and remains active in promoting the preservation of the Wattles Mansion and gardens.



PHOTO: Courtesy of Mrs. Richard Brill

The Wattles Mansion is shown by appointment only. For reservations please call, 323.874.4005.

IN MEMORIAM

HSSC
mourns
the
loss
of
two
treasured
members



HARRIET DOERR, who in 1984 at age 73 won the American Book Award for best first novel, died November 24.

A granddaughter of railroad magnate Henry Huntington, Harriet dropped out of Stanford to marry fellow student Albert Doerr. They lived off and on in central Mexico where her husband managed his family's mines.

Harriet returned to Stanford after his death and, in 1977, completed her bachelor's degree in history. She stayed on in the graduate writing program on a Wallace Stegner fellowship and began the stories that became *Stones for Ibarra*.

Her second book, *Consider This Señora*, was published to acclaim in 1993 and became a best seller. *The Tiger in the Grass*, a collection of essays and short stories, was published in 1995.

Critics and scholars said her work stood on its own. Her writing was compared to that of Gabriel Garcia Marquez and Graham Greene.

She won awards from the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco, the Bay Area Book Reviewers Association and PEN Center U.S.A. West. She was made a member of the American Institute of Arts and Letters which gave her an award for the quality of her style.

Taken from the Pasadena Star-News



MARY HELEN DAWSON, long-time HSSC member and a Pasadena native, died on November 23.

She will be remembered for her sense of humor and enthusiasm says her husband of 62 years, bookman Glen Dawson. They met as members of the Sierra Club and were married soon after.

Mary Helen played the violin and for the first two years of its existence, she performed with the Pasadena Civic Orchestra, now Pasadena Philharmonic Orchestra. She was also an original member of the choir for Charles Fuller's Old Fashioned Revival Hour.

In later years, Mary Helen was a founding member of the Miniature Book Society, president of the San Rafael PTA and a deaconess in her church.

MEET Kirsten Marie Clemens

BEGINNING WITH THE 2002 Fall/Winter issue of the *Southern California Quarterly* HSSC partners with California State University, Northridge in an innovative internship program: Kirsten Marie Clemens, a senior majoring in history, will serve as editorial assistant to HSSC's Quarterly editor.

Kirsten will proof galleys relying on her writing skills and



the Chicago Manual of Style.

Kirsten has been on the Dean's list two years in a row and was runner-up for the Oliver W. Evans Writing Prize in 2002. Last year she delivered a paper at the 7th Annual California State University Humanities Graduate Conference entitled, "Dandelion Children."

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This painting of the San Gabriel Mission by German-born horticulturist Ferdinand Deppe was the catalyst for an article published in the *Southern California Quarterly*.

The Remarkable Story of “A Prussian in Mexican California”

IT PAYS TO KNOW people in high places. In this case the beneficiaries are the readers of HSSC's scholarly journal the *Southern California Quarterly*.

Journal Editor Doyce Nunis and British Museum Curator of Anthropology Jonathan King met in Santa Barbara where King was doing research for an American Indian exhibit and where Nunis sits on the board of trustees of the Santa Barbara Mission Archive/Library.

In late 1999 King read an article published in Germany that he copied and sent to Nunis. Nunis has enough command of

the German language to know the material in the article was, he says, “terribly important.”

The article told of Ferdinand Deppe who came to Mexican California in about 1830 and was variously a horticulturist, a collector for museums, a trading agent and an artist.

Most important, Deppe produced the first known oil painting executed in California of the Mission San Gabriel.

The painting hangs in the Santa Barbara Museum Archive/Library where both Nunis and King admired it. In fact King had a copy made for the Califor-

nia Indian exhibit at the British Museum. The Deppe painting was referenced in the German article by Ulf Bankmann, thus sparking the communication with Nunis.

Over the nearly three years it took to have the article translated and refined with more California material, Nunis's knowledge of California history and ethnography and his many scholarly contacts were invaluable.

An example: A hand-stamped envelope sent to Deppe in 1834 remarkably exists and is owned by Minnesota private collector and Nunis' friend, Floyd Risvald. Risvald gave permission to reproduce the envelope in the *Quarterly* article. It's clear that generosity is a hallmark of the people in high places that Nunis knows.

The article, “A Prussian in Mexican California: Ferdinand Deppe, Horticulturist, Collector for European Museums, Trader and Artist” by Ulf Bankmann was translated by Marion Philadelphia and appears in the spring 2002 issue of the *Southern California Quarterly*. In addition to the 1834 envelope, it contains an illustration of a receipt Deppe provided the Royal Zoological Museum in Berlin, a drawing of a lizard, the San Gabriel Mission painting and photographs of several American Indian artifacts.

Welcome to the Newest Doheny

HSSC WISHES TO EXTEND special congratulations to Aidan Ryan Doheny, great, great, great grandson of Edward L. Doheny. Aidan was born January 4, 2002 and baptized at All Saints Episcopal Church in Westwood on August 4, 2002. His parents are Ryan and Lisa Doheny of Los Angeles.

For Love of History Tributes

The HSSC Tribute Program honors
or remembers family and friends.

Thank you to the following
who have made donations to HSSC. Donations help
underwrite Society programs and publications.

IN MEMORY OF

MARY HELEN DAWSON

by

Sally & Martin Ridge

Doyce B. Nunis Jr.

E. Peter Mauk Jr.

Margaret Dickerson

Tom Andrews

RICHARD HUDDLESON

by

Margaret Dickerson

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Meet Board Member John Pohlmann

HSSC BOARD MEMBER John Pohlmann misleadingly describes himself as "hopelessly provincial." He was born in Los Angeles, grew up in Montebello, received his bachelor's and master's degrees from Occidental and his doctorate from UCLA. Since 1964 his teaching life has been spent at southern California colleges including Cal Poly Pomona, Long Beach State and Loyola.

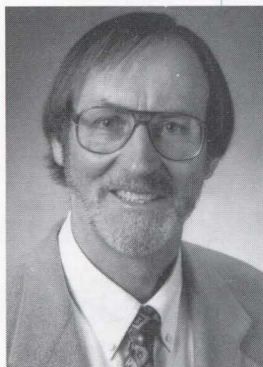
But John and his wife, Lyn, are intrepid travelers. They have traveled all over the United States and parts of Canada in their "Eurovan," a Volkswagon camper. This summer they will motor to Napa Valley and Hood River, Oregon.

John is also, he says, a "compulsive bicycle Yankee." Each year he bikes with an organization through Europe. "They feed and house you," says John, "all you do is the pedalling."

John first was introduced to the historical society when his master's thesis was published in

two parts in the *Southern California Quarterly* in 1964. He developed a great regard for the then and current editor Doyce Nunis and maintains that regard to this day.

There is a playfully creative side to John hidden deep in a time capsule in Griffith Park. When the Pohlmanns' second daughter was born on July 4, 1976, the day of our bicentennial, John designed a birth announcement using the Declaration of Independence for inspiration. The Bicentennial Committee learned about the announcement, obtained a copy and placed it alongside a videotape of "Jaws" and a pet rock.



John Pohlmann

The St. Francis Dam Disaster

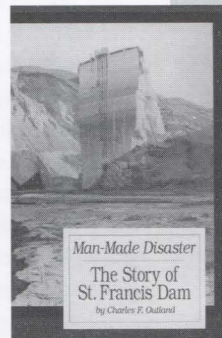
CALIFORNIA HISTORY comes alive during anniversaries. They provide us with an opportunity to recall and re-evaluate an event from the past.

We will have this opportunity in March because it marks the 75th anniversary of the St. Francis Dam disaster that took at least 450 lives. Try to imagine the scene at midnight, March 12, 1928, when the dam broke and a wall of churning liquid mud, ten stories tall at first, came roaring down upon unsuspecting people asleep in their homes along the Santa Clara River Valley.

Vroman's and HSSC have joined forces to co-publish the most important books written about the tragedy.

Man-Made Disaster by Charles Outland is the definitive work on the dam's construction and collapse, a gripping minute-by-minute account. *The St. Francis Dam Disaster Revisited* features the detailed modern geological assessments suggesting natural causes for the collapse.

Both books are available. For information call: (323) 222-0546



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SAVE THESE DATES

Saturday
March 1

History Conference

Autry Museum
LA Lives Worth Knowing:

History as Biography

SPEAKERS:

REGINA FREER

Occidental College

GREG HISE

USC

KAREN ISHIZUKA

Japanese American National Museum

SUZANNE MUCHNIC

LOS ANGELES TIMES

ROBERT NAKAMURA

UCLA

BECKY NICOLAIDES

University of California,
San Diego

ELISABETH ORR

Long Beach City College

Sunday

May 18

Museums of the Arroyo Day

11:00 am - 5:00 pm

Lummis Home

Heritage Square Museum

Southwest Museum

Gamble House

Pasadena Museum of History

FREE

June

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