



The Southern Californian

The Historical Society of Southern California Spring 2007 Volume 19 Number 1

THE LUMMIS HOME has been the headquarters of the Historical Society of Southern Californian since 1965. The house was built by Charles Fletcher Lummis over a 12 year period from 1898 to 1910. He built the house with his own physical labor and, on occasion, with the help of friends.

Lummis believed both the mind and the body needed exercise. So, it wasn't unusual to see Lummis stripped to the waist, his head protected by a bandana, mixing concrete and laying boulders one day and on the next tending to his duties as city editor of the Los Angeles Times. He also continued writing. Perhaps the best known of Lummis's books is *A Tramp Across the Country*, a compilation of the articles he wrote for the Times in 1885 when he walked from Ohio to California.

The Historical Society will continue to keep the house and water-wise garden open to the public and for special tours while using part of the house for its offices.



Upcoming Events

MOTA Day

ON MAY 20, 2007, THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY will join the Southwest Museum, Heritage Square, the Pasadena Historical Museum and the Gamble House for the 18th annual event that celebrates the museums of the Arroyo. The Los Angeles Police Historic Museum will join the group for the first time this year. Each location will provide free activities and buses between the museums will be available all day. For more information about this free event check these websites: socalhistory.org or museumsouthearroyo.com.

Lummis Day

PLANS ARE IN THE WORKS FOR THE SECOND Lummis Day event scheduled for June 3. The day features the musical, visual, culinary and literary artists of Northeast Los Angeles. At 11 am, poetry reading will begin at the Lummis Home. Afterward, participants will walk to Sycamore Park for the rest of the day's activities. Last year Charles Lummis's descendants joined in the celebration.

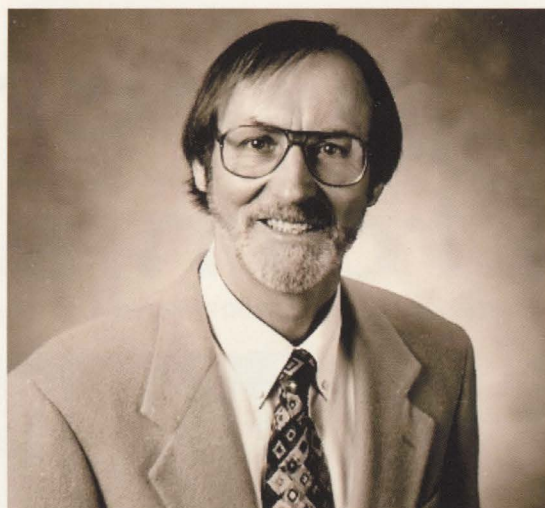
Dunning Lecture

THE GEORGE A.V. DUNNING LECTURE WILL BE presented at Occidental College on November 4. This year's program features prominent historian William Deverell who will speak on an aspect of Los Angeles history. In his latest book—*Whitewashed Adobe*—Deverell explores how the region's Hispanic heritage was exploited and distorted by the Anglo majority culture. Come and learn more about LA's fascinating history and rub shoulders with historians. Mark your calendar and save the date for this free event.

Holiday Open House

THE HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE IS STILL THE WAY to start the holiday season. The Historical Society kicks off the season with food, music and good cheer. Members and guests are invited to this free celebration. The festivities take place on December 2 at the Lummis Home. In the garden, look for California holly heavy with red berries and the vibrant golden-flowered Mexican marigold. The house will be festooned with garlands and berries from the waterwise garden.

HSSC's
day to
day
operations
are
running
smoothly



John O. Pohlmann

JOHN POHLMANN had already served on the board of directors of the Historical Society of Southern California for four years when he was elected president of the board in November last year. With the Society facing a search for a new executive director, John is ready for the challenge.

He says, "Two of HSSC's most important programs are in good hands. Merry Ovnick continues as editor of the *Quarterly* working out of offices at CSUN and Tom Andrews at Azusa Pacific is enlarging the K-12 'Keeping History Alive' program in cooperation with HSSC. And the day-to-day operations of the historical society are in the capable hands of Robert Montoya," he adds.

John served on the Occidental Board of Governors until recently and together with his wife Lyn helps with fund-raising for the Long Beach Symphony Orchestra.

John received his bachelor and master's degrees in history from Occidental College. His MA thesis, a biography on Alphonzo Bell, was published in two parts in the *Southern California Quarterly*.

At UCLA, John wrote his dissertation "California's Mission Myth" under the supervision of the highly regarded historian, John Walton Caughey. The dissertation was an attempt to balance conflicting views of the missions as well as to account for the missions' long-lasting popular appeal.

John has taught at Cal Poly Pomona since 1979, and before that at a number of other colleges and universities throughout southern California.



Robert D. Montoya

EVEN WHILE A STUDENT at UCLA pursuing his bachelor of arts degree, Robert Montoya was involved with the kind of detailed work it takes to preserve history. As an assistant in the department of special collections, Robert gathered information on slides and photos to prepare them for archiving. He also compiled a database in preparation for placing the material on the web and aided in an exhibition of the photos at the Fowler Museum of Cultural History at UCLA.

Robert came to the historical society in October 2003, straight from UCLA. Former executive director Tom Andrews noticed Robert's interest in history when he was employed as a docent at the Lummis Home. Impressed, Tom asked Robert to join the staff to manage membership, marketing and academic programs including the HSSC/Haynes grant awards. Robert also redesigned our website and is the webmaster, keeping the site current. Besides writing the script, Robert served as production assistant for the DVD filmed at the Lummis Home by Wilkman Productions for a class of local fifth grade students.

Last year Robert was named assistant director of HSSC and performed the duties that today will help him run the day-to-day activities of the organization which include grant writing and supervising employees and volunteers. Most importantly, Robert will manage and report all financial matters to the board while he handles the accounts payable and receivable.

Currently Robert is working on his master's of fine art in creative writing at Antioch University, Los Angeles.

Tom Andrews an Update

HSSC's
former
executive
director may
have retired
from HSSC
but he isn't
marking time
in a rocking
chair.

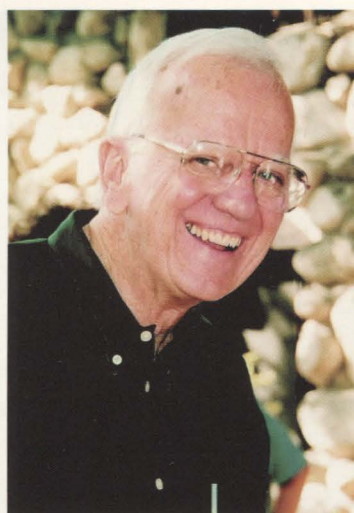


PHOTO: Lee Choo, CSUN



Merry Ovnick Quarterly Editor

HSSC (AND ITS MISSION) remains very dear to Tom Andrews' heart. It represents, he believes, a critically important agency for maintaining the scholarship of history and the promotion of history in Los Angeles and southern California.

Looking ahead to this summer he hopes to launch an enlarged HSSC "Keeping History Alive" program of direct grants to K-12 history teachers in Los Angeles County with a partnership with Azusa Pacific University. He will work closely with Michelle Herczog of the Los Angeles County Office of Education, The Ahmanson Foundation, and others.

The past year has been very busy for Tom at APU. As Research Historian in APU's Special Collections he has been able to identify and add some \$40,000 worth of books to the overall collection.

From late last summer to early fall, he worked directly with Denise Spooner at HSSC, Gary Nash at the National Center for History in the Schools, UCLA, the Wells Fargo Foundation, and the administration at APU to secure funding to produce a new teaching unit on the California Missions for our state's fourth grade teachers. As a result of this collaborative effort and successful funding, 15,000 copies of this teaching unit were distributed free to all public school fourth grade teachers in the state.

In the fall semester he led a seminar on the California Gold Rush and his six students produced the first draft of a teaching unit on the Gold Rush for fourth and fifth grade teachers. This spring semester he is teaching a class of California History to 42 students with part of the focus of the course on the World War II Japanese American Internment.

WHEN DOYCE NUNIS RETIRED as editor of the *Southern California Quarterly* a little more than two years ago, Merry Ovnick was unanimously chosen his successor. No wonder. Her credentials are impeccable. Merry has a PhD in history from UCLA and for two years had been the book review editor for the scholarly quarterly. At the time of her appointment, Merry was teaching history at California State University, Northridge where today she is a tenured professor. She continues as editor, working at an office provided by CSUN and drawing on her wealth of resources in the historical community.

Her first relationship with HSSC began when her 1994 book, *Los Angeles: The End of the Rainbow*, received the Society's Donald H. Pfleuger Award for distinguished research and writing. The book looks at the economic and social history of Los Angeles and how it is expressed in its architecture.

At CSUN, Merry has introduced an interdisciplinary course, "Los Angeles: Past, Present and Future," with outside speakers, field trips and small discussion groups. Merry says, "The speakers bring a particular point of view to a subject and often they differ on the same issue. The contradictions bring the real world into the classroom."

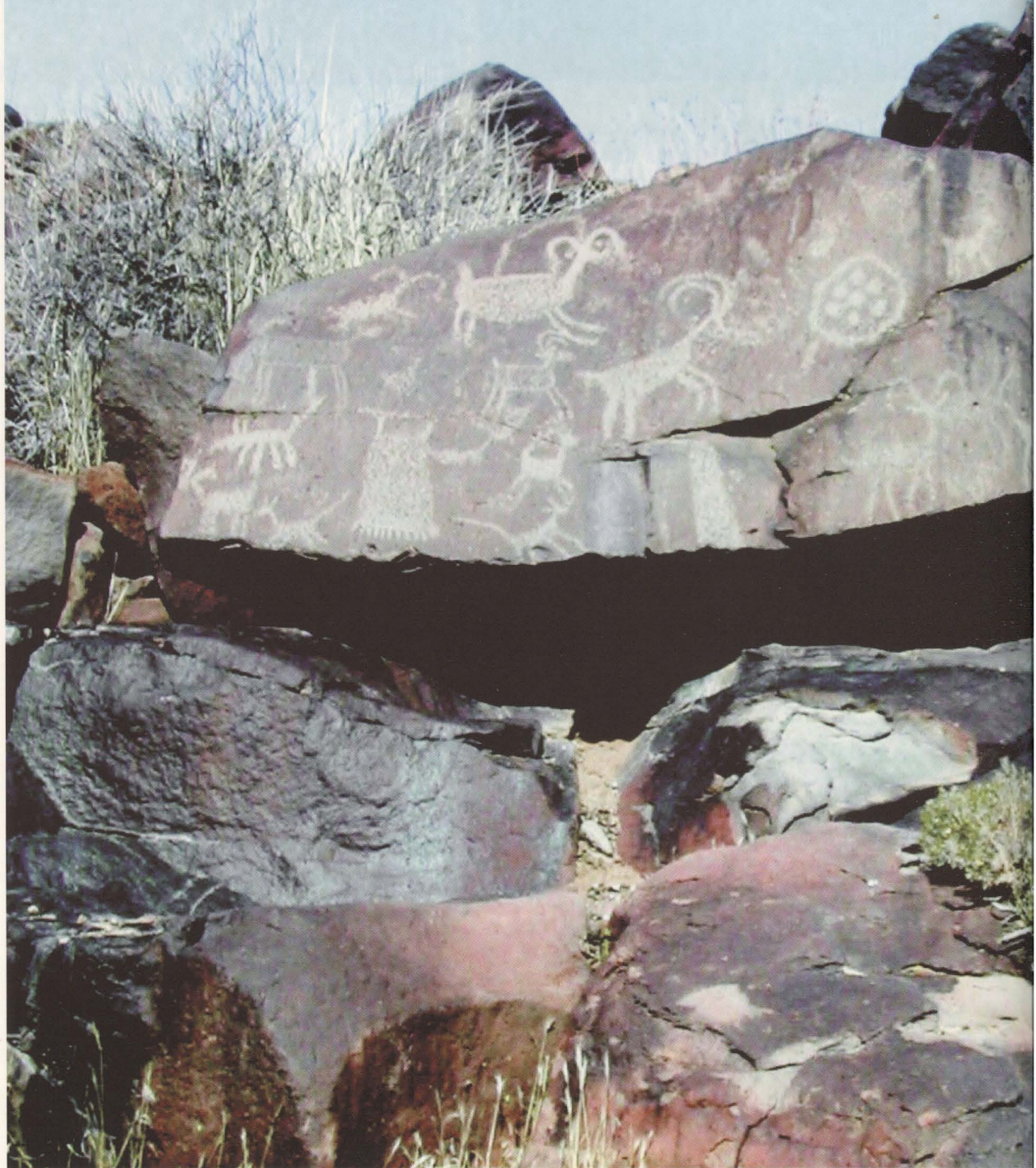
WHEN THE CAMPUS at CSUN was disrupted by the Northridge earthquake, Merry made use of her contacts by developing an internship program. Students use their research skills while getting a feel for working in the field. In turn, the institutions benefit from the students' hard work. The participating institutions include: The Autry and Southwest Museums, Petersen Automotive Museum, Malibu Creek State Park, Reagan Presidential Library, Survivors of the Shoah Foundation, the Mayor's Office of Economic Development and others.

Two of
HSSC's
programs
are in
capable
hands

Petroglyphs o

ABOUT AN HOUR AND A HALF FROM LOS ANGELES lies the largest concentration of rock art in the W accessible, the drawings scraped into the patina of volcanic basaltic rock are a recognized national treasure. Register of Historic Places.

More than 6,000 drawings representing bighorn sheep, snakes, fighting warriors, and holy men are preserv in the Coso Mountain range on the grounds of the China Lake Naval Air Weapons Station near the town of

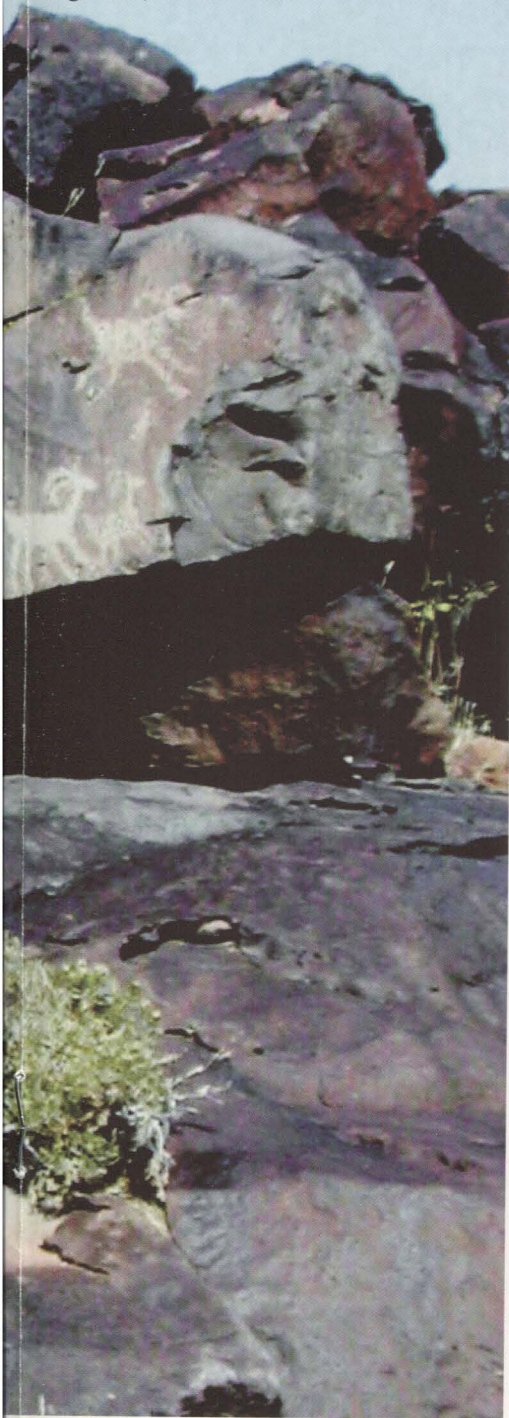


of the Cosos

by Carole Dougherty

Western Hemisphere. Protected yet
and are listed on the National

erved in the Little Petroglyph Canyon
of Ridgecrest, California.



Each spring and fall, the Navy opens the canyon to visitors. The easiest way to see the petroglyphs is to make arrangements with the Maturango Museum in Ridgecrest. The museum coordinates the visit and supplies volunteer guides. After a security check at the military base gate, a caravan of cars with a maximum of 20 people travels 45 miles into the base rising to an elevation of 5,000 feet. On the way, a forest of Joshua trees, a glimpse of wild horses, the natural untouched vegetation and changing terrain from valley to mesa top prepare you for the beauty of the canyon ahead.

Petroglyphs are scattered all along the one and a half mile trek through the dry water course. The bed of the course is sandy and rocky and, at times, steep. Appropriate footwear is a must.

Among the rare depictions are two warriors aiming arrows at each other; a bloated dead sheep, head down, with its feet attached to a pole; and an especially large rendering of a mountain lion. Near the middle of the canyon is a line of warriors crossing the faces of several rocks.

Although dating methods have improved and more is known about the age of the petroglyphs there is still mystery about their meaning. The petroglyphs seem to have been produced over time—the oldest may be more than 16,000 years old and the most recent about 1,800 years old—by different groups of ancient Native Americans, some from as far away as Idaho and Oregon.

The petroglyphs were probably engraved by shamans (holy men) to record visions encountered in a religious trance. The trance was induced by fasting or tobacco ingestion and may have been prompted by the need for the intercession of spirits. In fact, bighorn sheep, whose images are scattered all over the canyon, are associated with rain and were considered animal spirit-helpers. The sheep images, in particular, may represent prayers for rain.

Questions abound. But the beauty of the petroglyphs speak for themselves.

For a free private tour: Contact the public affairs office of Naval Air Weapons Station: (760) 939-1683

For a tour coordinated by the Maturango Museum, call 760-375-6900. For more details go to www.maturango.org

Check out the Mojave Desert

Red Rock Canyon State Park

Twenty-five miles northeast of Mojave on Highway 14, spectacular cliffs were formed in Red Rock Canyon when a harder lava flow layer was eroded by wind and rain. Cliffs on either side of the highway seemingly ripple with fluted folds of white, pink, red and brown. The park is open all year round. Turn off at the marker for Ricardo Road and drive the loop through the campgrounds. Park and take a closer look. Exhibits at the Visitor Center are open spring through fall and on weekends all year round.

Rand Mining District

The district includes Randsburg, Red Mountain and Johannesburg. All are an easy drive from Ridgecrest—22 miles south off Highway 395

Randsburg is a living ghosttown. Be sure to stop at the Randsburg General Store which dates back to 1896. A sundae at the marble-counter soda fountain could be very welcome on a hot day.

Red Mountain was a notorious silver mining camp in the 1920s. To get there, drive up the main street of Randsburg, continuing southeast toward Red Mountain.

In **Johannesburg**, you'll find mine ruins and an old railway station site. To get here from Red Mountain, turn north on Highway 395.

Trona Pinnacles

The landscape here consists of more than 500 tufa (calcium carbonate) pinnacles rising from the bed of the Searles Dry Lake basin. Some spires as high as 140 feet were formed underwater 10,000 to 100,000 years ago when Searles Lake was part of a system stretching from Mono Lake to Death Valley.

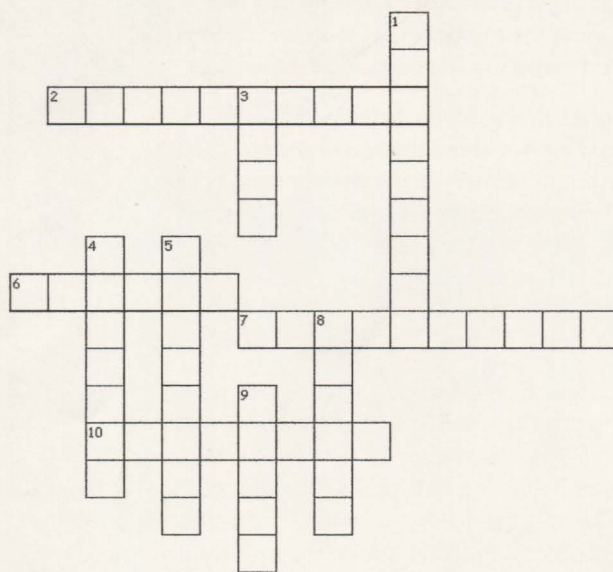
Approximately 20 miles east of Ridgecrest, the access to the site is from a BLM dirt road that leaves State Highway 178 about 7.7 miles east of the intersection of Highway 178 and Trona-Red Mountain Road. The 5-mile long dirt road is usually accessible to 2-wheel vehicles, however, the road maybe closed during the winter months after a heavy rain. In the summer, without a 4-wheel drive, stay out of the sand washes.

Planet of the Apes and StarTrek V were filmed here.

A National Natural Landmark

The Maturango Museum in Ridgecrest arranges tours of the canyon where you can see thousands of petroglyphs scratched onto rocks covered with desert varnish—a thin dark coating that forms on the surface of desert rocks over time.

Rock Art Puzzle



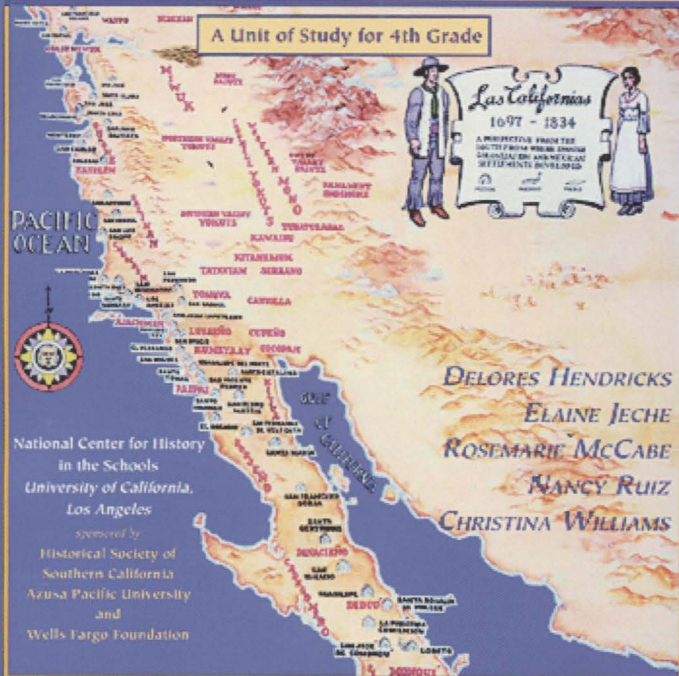
2. The nearest town in California to the rock art
6. Holy man
7. Another word for rock art
10. The native people who drew rock art

1. The name of the museum giving tours to the rock art canyon
3. The name of the mountain range with the largest amount of rock art in North America
4. A coating on the rocks is called desert ____
5. Rock art of figures with arrows
8. A dreamlike state
9. Some of the drawings show big-horn ____



A shaman figure

New Perspectives on The California Missions



HSSC sponsored publication of "New Perspectives on the California Missions" designed as an aide for fourth grade teachers. Fifteen thousand copies have been provided to all the fourth grade students in the state free of charge. The booklet was published by the National Center for History in the Schools at UCLA. Azusa Pacific University and the Wells Fargo Foundation were partners in the production and distribution of this important teaching tool.



Duane McCutcheon, a member of the American Society of Home Inspectors, points to bracing in the 1887 Heim House on Carroll Avenue in Los Angeles.

Historic House Inspectors

IF YOU ARE CONSIDERING BUYING a historic house or own one, you should know about a group of house inspectors who specialize in historic houses.

The American Society of Home Inspectors and the California Real Estate Inspection Association have a list of inspectors who understand the historic character of old houses. These inspectors can help an owner or buyer to preserve the unique quality of the house and still address safety issues.

For more information visit www.ashi.org/find. Under "By Additional Services Offered," select "Historic Homes." Or visit creia.findlocation.com. Under "Specialty Condition Assessments," select "Historic Home Inspections."

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The Lummis Home is open
to the public
Fri-Sun 12-4

Group Tours
Fridays by appointment

Answers to puzzle on page 6
ACROSS: 2. Ridgecrest 6. shaman 7. petroglyph 10. Shoshone
DOWN: 1. Maturation 3. Coso 4. varnish 5. warriors 8. trance
9. sheep

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