



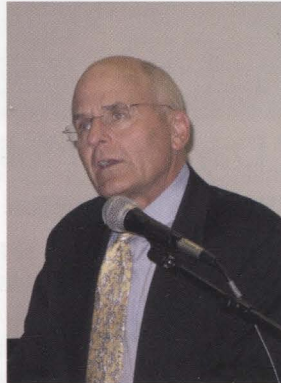
The Southern Californian

The Historical Society of Southern California

Fall/Winter 2007 Volume 19 Number 3/4



Board members Eric A. Nelson and Patricia Adler Ingram and speaker William Deverell outside Johnson Hall at Occidental College



John Gray, president of the Autry National Center, introduced William Deverell. In his remarks, Mr. Gray said, "We live with the results and consequences of our history, and to understand our past is to inform and improve our future."

George A.V. Dunning

served on the Board of Directors from 1985 to 2000.

He was elected president in 1987.

Mr. Dunning has been a major HSSC benefactor including endowing this annual lecture on the history of Los Angeles.

Eighth Annual Dunning Lecture Is A Success

Professor Deverell's thesis prompts spirited questions from the audience

OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE was the scene of the eighth annual George A.V. Dunning Lecture. Noted USC historian Bill Deverell's well-attended address on Sunday, November 4, was entitled "And the End of the War Came: Southern California and the Aftermath of the Civil War." Among us in the audience were Occidental President Susan Prager, Bill Burke, administrative director of the Haynes Foundation, and John Gray, head of the Autry National Center, who introduced speaker Deverell.

Deverell's focus was by no means entirely local. For example, he credited the war with stimulating the movement for a national park system to help heal both physical and psychological wounds of veterans. Individuals with such wide ranging interests as John Muir, W.E.B. DuBois, the Olmsted family of park planners, Charles Lummis and countless health-seekers suffering from tuberculosis or neurasthenia were all

attracted to southern California for its "redemptive hopefulness." Deverell's significant reinterpretation of this era emphasizes that by no means all newcomers were transplanted Midwesterners. Besides numerous Civil War veterans—veterans' hospitals were open only to Union vets—John Brown's son Owen moved here and died in Pasadena in the late 1880s as the last survivor of the infamous raid on Harpers Ferry. While the overall thrust of his talk was positive, Deverell made it clear that southern California's "redemptive hopefulness" did not always extend to racial or ethnic minorities. He also raised the disturbing question of just when the Civil War—or any war, for that matter—can be considered to be officially "over."

Following his lecture, Deverell led an especially lively question-and-answer session which prompted some of us to wish we could sign up as students in one of his classes.

Photos: Michele Clark



Admission Day at El Molino Viejo Draws More Than Ever

By John Pohlmann

*This
jointly
sponsored
annual
event has
become a
"must"
for
California
history
fans*

OUR ADMISSION DAY EVENT at El Molino Viejo enjoyed a full house plus—160 paid even though 140 was our max target and we had to refuse a number who wanted to attend but tried to register too late. The staff at El Molino Viejo was justifiably just as delighted as those of us from HSSC. Perfect weather, delicious Mexican food (on real plates!), and lovely Spanish guitar music in the background combined for maximum ambience.

The Wilkmans, as anticipated, were terrific—exuberant, informative, entertaining—especially for those of us over 39, which included almost all in attendance. Jon and Nancy each had a mike, and they traded off discussing multiple photo slides from their *Picturing Los Angeles* book projected simultaneously on the screen. El Molino Viejo has a new sound system, which was perfect for the occasion. Starting in the 19th century, the Wilkmans proceeded in rapid-fire style decade by decade down to the present. Much of the info was a refresher course for many of us, but there were delightful new tidbits as well. The most startling, for me anyway, was that the local Mexican community successfully hid a Japanese American wife of a Mexican American during WW II. The locals knew, but the government never found out! Also of interest was a 1930s photo of three local Korean girls in bathing suits. Much of the Wilkmans' presentation reflected one-dimensional local boosterism, but they also noted police brutality, disregard for civil liberties, union busting, smog, and other unpleasanties glossed over by the myth-makers.

At the very end the Wilkmans showed a couple of old moving pictures. They began with the first film shot in LA, circa 1898 by the Edison Co., which included high society riding atop horse-drawn Tally Ho coaches (emulating upper crust Brits!) from the Valley Hunt Club showing off on Spring Street for the camera. Even more fun was a Chamber of Commerce booster type promo circa 1949 touting LA for its smoothly flowing traffic on its state-of-the-art freeway system and touting the skyscraping City Hall as the tallest building. Also interesting was the condescending treatment of Mexican culture as depicted on Olvera Street.

To summarize, the cliché "a good time was had by all" fits perfectly. We look forward to continued collaboration on a most worthy event.

Photo: Michele Clark

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The Neuerburg Award

for Best Book in Early California History, given annually by HSSC since 2000, is based upon the intellectual and financial legacy of Norman Neuerburg. Norm, as he was known to his many friends, contributed enormously to the art history of the California missions and to their restoration and preservation. Norm also served as the architectural historian for the creation of the original Getty Museum in Malibu. Upon his death Norm left a bequest to the society to fund an annual prize in Early California History and the award recognizes important works that are frequently overlooked by other organizations.



Peter Uhrowczik

2005 Neuerburg Award to Peter Uhrowczik for *The Burning of Monterey: The 1818 Attack on California by the Privateer Bouchard* (Cyril Books, 2001)

UHROWCZIK (pronounced Urosick in English) has radically changed the way we must think about the invasion of the Spanish province of Alta California by Hipólito Bouchard in 1818. Bouchard has been dismissed by most American scholars as a pirate bent upon pillaging. Uhrowczik, however, shows us a privateer in the service of Argentina who came to California seeking to capture Spanish vessels and their cargo to help finance the war of independence waged by the Rio de la Plata against Spain. Drawing upon first-person accounts of all the major participants found in archives in North and South America as well as in published primary sources, Uhrowczik freshly relates the story in a fast-paced narrative showing Bouchard's bravery and determination, the bravery, foolishness and luck of the Californios, and the self-serving, laughable report of California governor Pablo Vicente de Solá to the viceroy in Mexico claiming a non-existent military victory. Actually the privateer had found no rich prizes and little of value in the poor province of

Neuerburg Awards continued on page 7



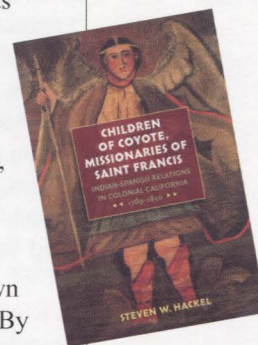
Steven Hackel

2006 Neuerburg Award to Steven Hackel for *Children of Coyote, Missionaries of St. Francis: Indian-Spanish Relations in Colonial California, 1769-1850* (University of North Carolina Press, 2005)

THIS IS A PATH-BREAKING study of Indian-Spanish relations in the mission named for Carlos Borromeo and known colloquially as Carmel Mission. Hackel has used the mission registers—the books of baptisms, marriages, burials, confirmations, and annual Easter Duty when the faithful receive the sacraments of Penance and Eucharist—to reconstruct mission life and religious/social activity over the institution's life-span from its founding to its incorporation within the American Union. Combining these data sets concerning Indians with the Spanish-language documents created by priests, soldiers, settlers and government officials, Hackel has succeeded in writing a history that simultaneously views the mission from the top down and from the bottom up. By use of the data on Indians Hackel has done something no one else has been able to do to this degree of thoroughness in early California history, he has reconstituted families over time so that he can follow people throughout the colonial and early national era. "Family

By James A. Sandoz

Meet
two
Neuerburg
recipients



Neuerburg Awards continued on page 7

The making of a documentary: **Chicano Rock**

MOST PEOPLE THINK THEY KNOW THE HISTORY of rock 'n' roll. It's essentially the product of a musical dialogue between black and white America, with the Brits thrown in along the way. But there's much more to tell, such as the long-ignored contributions of Mexican Americans. Now a new documentary, "Chicano Rock!: The Sounds of East Los Angeles," will set the record straight.

Emmy Award-winning producer, director and writer Jon Wilkman grew up in Los Angeles in the 1940s and '50s. In the documentary, he focuses on the music of East Los Angeles, the largest Latino community in America, exploring the long, rich and little-known rock 'n' roll tradition there—a tradition which began in the 1940s and continues today.

This article discusses a new documentary by Jon and Nancy Wilkman, "Chicano Rock! The Sounds of East Los Angeles" which explores the impact of Chicano music on music nationwide

"MOST PEOPLE HAVE HEARD OF RITCHIE VALENS and Los Lobos," Wilkman said, "but the roots of Chicano rock date to the 1940s, when the late Lalo Guerrero, recipient of the 1996 President's Medal of the Arts, began to add a Mexican twist to a mingling of swing and boogie-woogie. And to the time during the postwar zoot suit era, when Lalo's friend, Don Tosti, recorded the first Chicano million-seller, 'Pachuco Boogie,' featuring a rap in a kind of Spanish slang called *caló*."

Mexican Americans also played a part in the under appreciated rhythm and blues scene in Los Angeles during the 1950s. But the 1960s marked an amazing explosion of Chicano music, creating a style of rock that became known as the Eastside Sound.

FROM BOYLE HEIGHTS TO THE SAN GABRIEL VALLEY, Mexican American rockers seemed to be everywhere in L.A., inspired by rhythm and blues, early rock, and Motown. By 1965 when the Beatles launched their second American tour, they chose the Chicano band Cannibal and the Headhunters, famous for its hit "Land of a Thousand Dances," to open for them.

Like most of the world, Chicanos were influenced by the Beatles, but fans in East L.A. had their own superstars, too. The Thee Midnites, whose hit "Whittier Boulevard" became a Chicano anthem of the period, falls into that category. "They weren't the Beatles," said one fan in the film, "but they were our Beatles." "Eastside classics are as popular today as they were 50 years ago," noted Wilkman. "Oldies are never old for Chicanos."

DURING THE 1970S, A POLITICALLY ACTIVATED Chicano community found a passionate and forceful voice with bands such as El Chicano, Tierra, and Los Lobos. During that period, young Chicanos rediscovered their Mexican roots and added those influences to American rock. "As the film will show, that tradition continues with East L.A. bands such as Quetzal and Grammy Award-winning Ozomatli," Wilkman said.

"THE CENTRAL THEME OF THE FILM is the role of music in creating a Chicano identity," Wilkman added. Traditionally, Chicanos were not totally accepted in the United States or in



LOS LO



Clockwise from top: Cannibal and the Headhunters, U.S. tour

ck! The Sounds of East Los Angeles



Mexico. Music gave Chicanos a defining voice. In the end, this is not only the story of Chicano rock 'n' roll, it is a firsthand record of more than 50 years in the life of the Chicano community of East Los Angeles."

"American popular music has often been seen as a story of black and white," said UCLA professor of ethnomusicology Steve Loza during an interview in the film, "but Chicano music shows that it's brown, too. Chicanos were ahead of their time," he added. "More than music, Chicano rock is a process, a unique cross-pollination and blending that is a story from the past, but also an indication of what's to come in American culture."

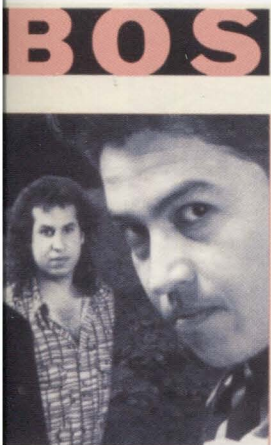
WILKMAN ESPECIALLY HOPES that "Chicano Rock!" will appeal to those in the younger generation and open their eyes to history and the contributions of earlier musicians and the role they played in making rock what it is today. Many of today's musicians are standing on the shoulders of Los Lobos and Santana, who stood on the shoulders of Lalo Guerrero, Ritchie Valens, Cannibal and the Headhunters and many others, black, white and brown. We want kids—Latino, African American, Anglo and Asian—to know that Chicanos contributed to this rock tradition and that they're still at it."

A documentary filmmaker for more than 40 years Wilkman said "Chicano Rock!" is a special project. "I recently got a call from one of the musicians from the '60s," Wilkman recalled, "and he told me that he cried when he watched our work-in-progress DVD. The fact that this story is so important and it has been ignored for so long weighs on me. I want to get it right."

Jon Wilkman founded Wilkman Productions in 1971 to produce television and educational programs after spending seven years at CBS including work with Walter Cronkite on the award-winning series "Twentieth Century" and "21st Century." Wilkman has received two Emmys—television's most prestigious award—for his work on two public television series produced with KCET. He and his wife and collaborator, Nancy, are now in the final stages of production on the documentary "Chicano Rock! The Music of East Los Angeles."

The documentary was funded by the California Council for the Humanities under the California Documentary Project for which HSSC is the fiscal agent. The documentary also received major funding from Latino Public Broadcasting, an arm of the National Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Look for
Chicano Rock!
to be broadcast
on KCET
in 2008

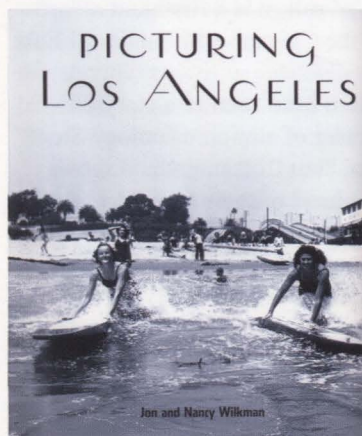


wise from top: Thee Midnites; Ritchie Valens; Lalo Guerrero, in the 1940s; bal and the Headhunters, who opened for the Beatles during their second tour in 1965; and Los Lobos

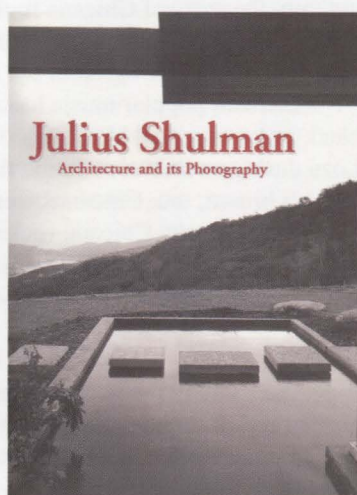
Check Out El Alisal Book Shop

HERE'S A SAMPLING of what you will find in the El Alisal Book Shop. In addition to histories, the book shop carries books on gardening. Remember, all current members receive a 10 percent discount.

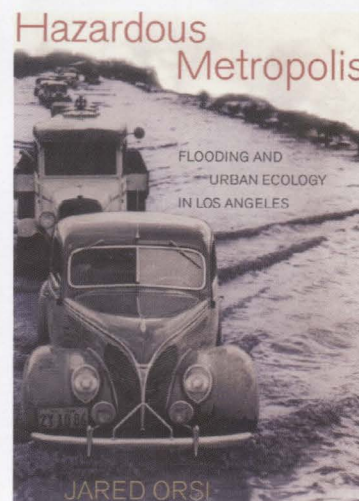
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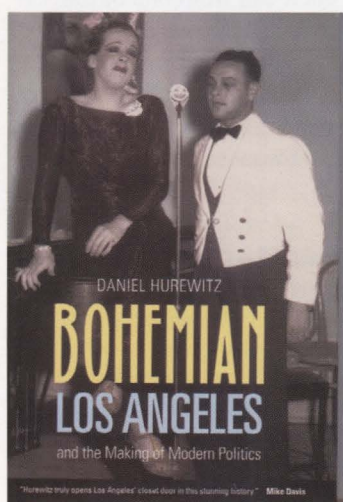
Picturing Los Angeles an illustrated introduction to Los Angeles by Nancy and Jon Wilkman. Gibbs Smith, Publisher, 2006) Proof of its appeal is the enthusiastic response of the audience at El Molino Viejo on California Admission Day when the Wilkmans presented a slide presentation with photos from the book. (See story on page 2.) Singled out as suggested reading in the latest issue of *Westways*, it's a can't miss gift choice.
\$39.95 plus tax



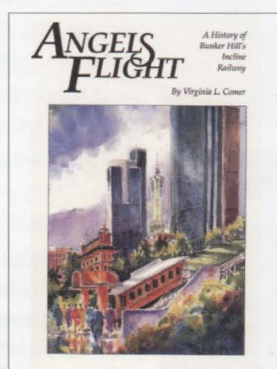
Julius Shulman: Architecture and its Photography with a preface by Frank O. Gehry and edited by Peter Gössel. (Taschen) El Alisal has two signed copies of this collector's prize. Beautifully designed and filled with exquisite reproductions of Shulman's stunning photos of an emerging iconic architecture.
\$157.99 plus tax



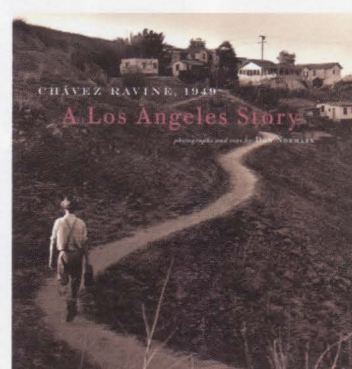
Hazardous Metropolis: Flooding and Urban Ecology in Los Angeles by Jared Orsi (University of California Press, 2004) The book explores a fascinating and little-known chapter in the city's history—the spectacular floods that occurred throughout the twentieth century—despite technologically engineered solutions.
\$39.95 plus tax



Bohemian Los Angeles and the Making of Modern Politics by Daniel Hurewitz (University of California Press, 2007) The book brings to life a vibrant milieu of artists, leftists, and gay men and women whose story played out over the first half of the twentieth century and continues to shape the entire American landscape.
\$29.95 plus tax



Angels Flight: A History of Bunker Hill's Incline Railway by Virginia L. Comer (Historical Society of Southern California, 1996) The success and decline of Angels Flight is inextricably connected to the rise and decline of Bunker Hill and the Downtown business district. The whole story is told here from the 1880s to the rededication of the incline in 1996.
\$17.50 plus tax

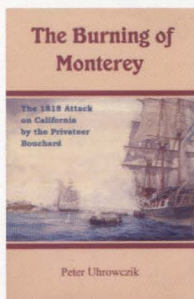


Chavez Ravine, 1949: A Los Angeles Story by Don Normark (Chronicle Books 1999) Normark, a photographer, lived in the ramshackle Chavez Ravine neighborhood for a year capturing images of a life that was bowed down by poverty but was lived joyfully. Normark tracked the residents down 50 years after the area was acquired for Dodger Stadium. The book chronicles the reactions to the early photos.
\$19.95 plus tax

Neuerburg Award continued from page 3

Peter Uhrowczik

California and so sailed away. Poverty had provided a blessing. From the standpoint of financing Argentine independence, Bouchard's California expedition had been a waste of time and material. Ironically, California remained a part of Spain for less than four years and even the Spanish nobleman Solá recognized Mexican independence and sovereignty. Uhrowczik has given us a comprehensive, thoroughly



researched revision of our understanding of Bouchard and his adventure along with its significance for California's early history and Latin America's struggle for independence.

Steven Hackel

reconstitution," Hackel observes, "involves linking individuals' burial records to their baptism records, children's baptism to their parents' marriage records, and parents' marriage records back to their own baptism and burial records. In essence, it is the creation of life histories for families. In the years between 1770 and 1850, the Franciscans recorded the deaths of more than 2,300 San Carlos Indians. Of these, more than 95 percent have been matched to their corresponding baptismal records." *Children of Coyote, Missionaries of St. Francis* is a magisterial, deeply nuanced portrait of Indian societies undergoing transformation in a colonial setting and a powerful study of instances of family survival under the most arduous of circumstances. It belongs on that short shelf of indispensable books on the California missions.



Meet Vanessa Acosta

ALTHOUGH VANESSA ACOSTA may be a new face at El Alisal to many, she actually is a returning alumna. Vanessa came to the Lummis Garden in 1993 and stayed for 12 years working in the garden as a volunteer. Today she greets visitors and handles book shop and garden sales among other things. A resident of Highland Park, she continues to work on the Southwest Museum's ethnobotanical garden and the Spanish garden at Casa de Adobe, the 1914 reconstructed adobe on Figueroa Street.

City Provides Improvements

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY applauds the City of Los Angeles, the owner of the Lummis Home, for re-roofing the house. In January, the City will provide a full-time gardener.

There is a movement, under the leadership of Councilman **Ed Reyes** and **Mark Mariscal**, regional director for the L.A. Department of Parks and Recreation, to change the name of East Avenue 43 to Lummis Drive. We'll keep you posted.

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\$10 Future Historians Ages 5-12

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Membership contributions are tax-deductible within the limits allowed by law. For further information call HSSC at (323) 222-0546

Save the Date

Saturday
January 26, 2008
10:00am to noon
a reception at
Azusa Pacific University
honoring
recipients of the
Keeping History Alive
grants

Azusa Pacific University is located at
901 East Alost Avenue
Azusa California 91702

Remember VROMAN'S Gives Back

REGISTER AS A SUPPORTER of HSSC and VROMAN'S Bookstore will give back one percent of your purchases directly to the Historical Society. At the time of purchase make sure to let the cashier know you want to support HSSC.

VROMAN'S Bookstore, a Pasadena landmark founded in 1894, has long been an active location for author events, lectures, book discussions, workshops, and, with its vast book selection, a book browser's dream.

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Keeping History Alive

Funded by The Ahmanson Foundation, The Bannerman Foundation and The Wells Fargo Foundation

In 2004 the Historical Society of Southern California initiated an outreach program to provide cash grants to outstanding teachers in Los Angeles County for needs they themselves identified. Teachers reported they needed funds for professional development, for field trips and for class resources. Three foundations enthusiastically responded to the program: **Ahmanson, Bannerman and Wells Fargo.**

“What a rewarding experience it has been for me to interact with these dedicated teachers and assist them in their efforts to keep history alive and present it in and outside the classroom to their students with excitement, meaning, purpose, and value.”

Tom Andrews, HSSC Executive Director 1986-2005

The grand total of the Keeping History Alive grants is \$47,500 and will be given to 74 K-12 teachers on January 26, 2007. Thirty-three teachers will receive \$22,500 from HSSC (funded by Bannerman and Wells Fargo foundations) and 41 teachers will receive \$25,000 from Azusa Pacific University (funded by Ahmanson Foundation).

The grants go to teachers in elementary, middle, and high schools; to public, parochial and private schools. In addition to the City of Los Angeles, schools receiving grants cover much of the landscape of Los Angeles County. The grants range from \$200 to \$850.

Azusa Pacific University is joining HSSC in the administration of the program under the leadership of former HSSC Executive Director Tom Andrews who spearheaded development of the program.

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