



# The Southern Californian

The Historical Society of Southern California Spring/Summer 2009 Volume 21 Number 1 and 2

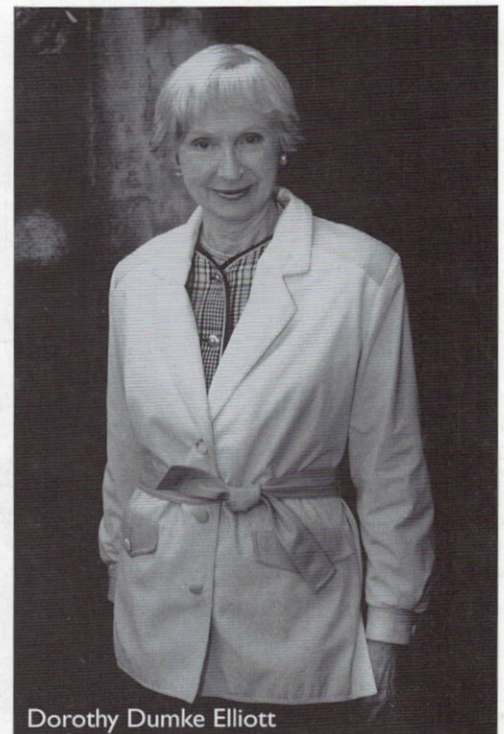
## Dorothy Dumke Elliott: Her Million Dollar Gift

**T**he Historical Society of Southern California is very pleased to announce that we have received a most generous bequest of \$1,000,000 from the estate of Dorothy Dumke Elliott. This gift is in addition to the \$200,000 endowment previously received. The endowment has been restricted to supporting the publication of the Southern California Quarterly in the honor of Dorothy Dumke Elliott and her husband, Glenn Dumke, author of *The Boom of the Eighties* and distinguished chancellor of the California State University system.

The new gift memorializes Dorothy's own interest in history and education as it was demonstrated during her tenure as a member of the HSSC Board of Directors. It will afford HSSC a chance to enliven our programs, to create a strong presence in the 21st century and to continue our service in the preservation and publication of the history of the communities of Southern California.

President John Pohlmann and the members of the Board of Directors are deeply aware of the opportunity this represents to demonstrate careful and sensitive stewardship in the handling of the funds.

We look forward to strengthening our educational outreach programs—such as Keeping History Alive—and improving our website. We also plan to present on-line our *Quarterly* and *Annual* publications, eventually back to 1884. In addition, we shall be able to build our docent program for volunteers.



Dorothy Dumke Elliott

Photo: Suzanne Huddleson

## Arias Troubadours at the Lummis Home



Photo: Ariel van Zandweghe

**S**ixty-five paying guests, some from as far away as Santa Barbara—as well as a couple of gate-crashers who had to be ejected—gathered at the Lummis Home on a balmy June evening which highlighted the uniquely Californio style of music played and sung by the Arias Troubadours. As soon as we assembled inside, Board President John Pohlmann presented Executive Director Pat Adler-Ingram with a small plaque to be affixed to the side of the refurbished piano, which Pat recently donated to HSSC and the Lummis Home.

TROUBADORS continued on page 2



# A Unique Musical Evening



Dr. Ken Marcus spoke about the Lummis recordings of early California music



Pat Adler-Ingram at the 1892 piano restored and gifted to the Lummis Home

Ropelt and Sons, makers of the piano, were well respected piano builders from 1892 until the Great Depression, a period remarkably similar to the time Lummis was either constructing El Alisal or living there. Board Member Ken Marcus's rendition of a Scott Joplin favorite, "Maple Leaf Rag," demonstrated that the piano is definitely a "keeper." Ken, who is also a noted music historian, then provided fascinating details about the history of the Arias Troubadours, who specialized in the Californio music of the nineteenth century. He told us how Charles Lummis himself had recorded this style of music on wax cylinders, and then we were privileged to listen to one of Lummis' actual recordings from 1904, "La Serenata," performed by the sisters Rosa and Luisa Villa. Next up was Jose Arias Jr., whose father Jose Arias Sr., was a close friend and frequent guest of Charlie's at the legendary "noises," which Lummis called his musical-themed parties. A highlight of the evening was when Jose Arias Jr. read a letter from Lummis to his father whom Charlie obviously considered one of his best and closest friends. The Troubadours followed with lively and distinctive music and song, after which guests piled their plates with delicious Los Tacos-catered food and moved outside to enjoy further musical performance and dance from the Troubadours. At the end of the evening, several of us pronounced the event one of the most rewarding and enjoyable HSSC events ever.

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10-4

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The Lummis Home is open  
to the public  
Fri-Sun 12-4  
Group Tours  
Fridays by appointment

Photo: Arel Van Zandweghe



# Lummis Day June 7, 2009

The Historical Society of Southern California joined in celebrating Lummis Day for the 4th consecutive year on June 7, 2009.

The celebration brings together more than 15 organizations including Occidental College and the Autry National Center to focus on the shared history and culture of this part of Los Angeles--where HSSC maintains its offices.

The day starts off with poetry reading in the forecourt of the Lummis Home. At noon the Arroyo Arts Collective's Puppet Pageant begins a procession leading visitors and participants to Sycamore Grove Park on Figueroa Street.

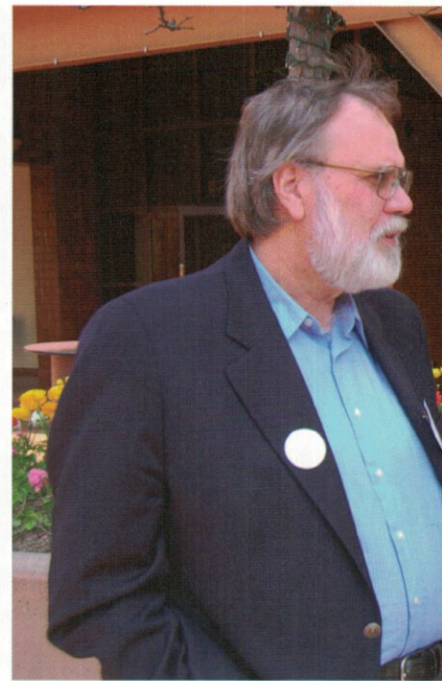
There the festivities continue. Families picnic and enjoy Folklorico dancers and puppet shows. The music includes something for everyone—blues, jazz and rock. Food vendors add to the color of the event.



- 1 Poet Suzanne Lummis, Charles Lummis's granddaughter, reads her poetry in the forecourt of the Lummis Home on Lummis Day.
- 2 Arroyo Arts Collective, Puppet Parade, Lummis Day.
- 3 Answering questions at the book table at Lummis Day: Julian van Zandweghe and Remy Valenzuela, HSSC staff.

Photo: Ariel Van Zandweghe





## History Conference at the Autry National Center

By John Pohlmann

**T**he title of 12<sup>th</sup> annual History Conference presented by HSSC and held at the Autry National Center April 4 was "Southern California Collage: Backroads, Parklands, Waterways."

University of Nevada at Las Vegas architectural and environmental historian Greg Hise delivered the keynote address, "Landscape as History: Environment and City Building in Southern California." Virtually all authorities agree that the Los Angeles region has long been a leader in terms of the "first and most," but as Professor Hise noted, there is no agreement as to whether these many changes have produced the "best or worst." Illustrating his lecture with fascinating historical photographs, he emphasized four major aspects of our environmental history: nature's beauty, speculation, styles & patterns, and infrastructure and engineering. Especially enlightening were his slides and information about the late 19<sup>th</sup> century influx of investment from British syndicates and Chicago capitalists, the transformative and fast paced change of the "second industrial revolution" in the 1920s, and the ever-present magic of the environment's natural beauty first noted by Fray Crispi's description of the Rio de Los Angeles in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. For the many professional and amateur historians in the audience, Professor Hise noted numerous topics remain to be explored through serious historical scholarship.

Next on the agenda, LA Ranger and UCLA research scholar Jenny Price chaired a panel discussion of art and activism,

past and present, followed by unusually good questions and comments from the audience. At least one of those in the audience was so enthralled that he later described the exchange as "electrifying," which was at the time a good thing as the auditorium's air conditioning malfunctioned so that even the hearty and often hilarious Ranger Jenny was in danger of freezing. "Arteologist" Mark Chamberlain regaled us with his adventures as a guerilla artist, photographer, and environmentalist; photographer Kim Stringfellow illuminated the unique history of the Salton Sea and Mohave Desert; and Brad Willey offered insight into the environmental history of the Inland Empire.

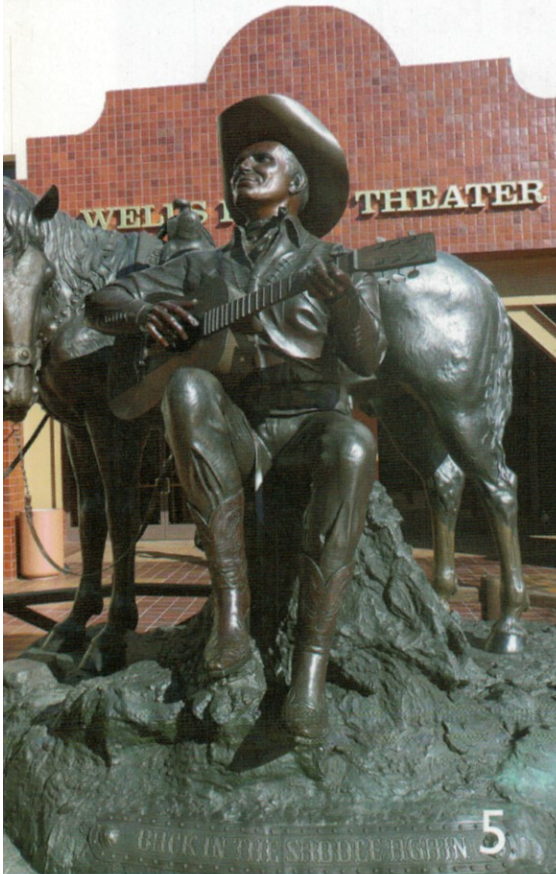
After lunch Eileen Wallis of Cal Poly Pomona chaired a panel which focused on various aspects of San Diego's water history, highlighted by Jim Taylor's fascinating firsthand insights from decades as a water professional. San Diego's early efforts to secure a plentiful water supply failed to match the success of Los Angeles, and even after joining MWD in 1946 the southern city has struggled to keep up with growing demand.

A fitting conclusion to an exciting day was provided by documentary filmmaker and HSSC Board Member Jon Wilkman, who screened "L.A. Harbor and Its Environmental Impact," the final episode of a four-part documentary. After Director Wilkman fielded questions, we adjourned to a nearby room for the traditional wine and cheese reception, door prizes, and resource packets.





Photos: Michele Clark

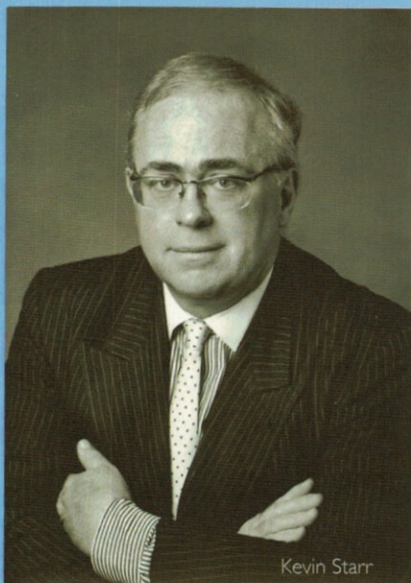


Clockwise:

- 1 HSSC Board Member Linda Mollno, event organizer Päivi Hoikkala, and panel chair Eileen Wallis during a break.
- 2 Documentarian Jon Wilkman and environmentalist/author Jennifer Price relax in the courtyard of the Autry Museum during a break in the History Conference.
- 3 Nancy Wilkman, Carol and Kenneth Pauley and author Michele Zack outside the Wells Fargo Theater at the Autry National Center.
- 4 Historian Päivi Hoikkala, who teaches at Cal State Poly Pomona, received a bouquet in appreciation for organizing the conference.
- 5 A larger than life size bronze statue of the museum's founder is a centerpiece of the courtyard.

HSSC's History Conference was inaugurated in 1996 to bring current research on Southern California history to scholars, teachers and history buffs. Except for the first year the conference has been presented at the Autry National Center. For a nominal fee, every spring the conference offers coffee and pastries, two sets of presentations, lunch, a wine and cheese reception and resource packets.





## HSSC Salutes Kevin Starr

**T**he Historical Society of Southern California salutes professor Kevin Starr, advisor to the HSSC Board of Directors, on the occasion of the publication of *Golden Dreams*. This is the eighth and final volume of his magnificent series, *Americans and the California Dream*, that has given us a sweeping analysis of the social, cultural, political, and philosophical history of our state.

Not since the "Literary Industries" of Hubert Howe Bancroft in the 19th century has the history of California been illuminated to such depth. Both Bancroft and Starr produced multi-volume narrative accounts and drew upon a broad range of oral testimonies and cultural indicators but the special appeal of Starr's work lies in its sensitivity to the changing moods of the state. He does a brilliant job in analyzing the cultural ramifications of water and power projects, of environmental campaigns, of political maneuvering, and even the trappings of our lifestyle.



## Festival of Books

**T**his April, for the first time, HSSC took part in the LA Times Festival of Books on UCLA's campus. HSSC had a prime location on the campus near the LA Times stage in Dickson Court.

Author and former LA Times columnist Celia Rasmussen organized the event inviting authors who came and signed their books for pleased purchasers. Besides selling books, HSSC enjoyed great exposure to the huge numbers of book lovers and history buffs at the two-day event.

We acquired several new members and provided brochures to a large number of potential members.

Former LA Times columnist and HSSC Board Member Cecilia Rasmussen organized the event and signed copies of her books at the LA Times Festival of Books. Flanking Cecilia are a focused volunteer and HSSC staff Victoria Romero.





# FALL 2009 Quarterly Articles

## SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY SUMMER 2009 (vol. 91, no. 3)

### A Preview:

A GOLD RUSH SALVADORAN IN CALIFORNIA'S LATINO WORLD, 1857

By David E. Hayes-Bautista, Cynthia L. Chamberlin, and Nancy Zúñiga

DAVID E. HAYES-BAUTISTA is Professor of Medicine and Director of the Center for the Study of Latino Health and Culture (CESLAC), David Geffen School of Medicine, UCLA. He is the author of *La Nueva California: Latinos in the Golden State* (California, 2004). Under his direction, the Center's research agenda has expanded to include the development of historical Latino demographic and epidemiological databases, as well as social history for the period 1850-1930 in California.

CYNTHIA L. CHAMBERLIN is a professional researcher and a translator of Spanish and Latin texts from the Middle Ages through the nineteenth century. Currently she is a historian and researcher at the Center for the Study of Latino Health and Culture, David Geffen School of Medicine, UCLA. With David Hayes-Bautista, she co-authored "Cinco de Mayo's First Seventy-Five Years in Alta California: From Spontaneous Behavior to Sedimented Memory, 1862-1937" in the Spring 2007 issue of the *Southern California Quarterly*.

NANCY ZUNIGA, served as a student researcher at CESLAC. She received her B.S in chemistry, with a minor in Latin American Studies, from UCLA in 2008. As a first-generation Salvadoran student, she has been a close observer of the political, social, and economic environment of contemporary El Salvador. She plans to pursue graduate school in public health and Latin American studies, in order to better understand the dynamics of Latino health through community research.

PASADENA, 1900-1910: THE BIRTH OF ITS CULTURE

By Robert Winter

ROBERT WINTER is Arthur G. Coons Professor of the History of Ideas, Emeritus at Occidental College. He is the co-author, with the late David Gebhard, of a succession of authoritative guidebooks to the architecture of Southern California, the latest edition titled *An Architectural Guidebook to Los Angeles* (Gibbs-Smith, 2003). Of his many other books, the most recent is *At Home in the Heartland: Midwestern Domestic Architecture* (Gibbs-Smith, 2008). With unflagging enthusiasm, good humor, and a discerning eye, he has taught multiple generations, both inside and outside academia, to love history.

THE HALLIBURTON HOUSE AND ITS ARCHITECT, WILLIAM ALEXANDER

By Anthony Denzer

ANTHONY DENZER is Assistant Professor of Architectural Engineering at the University of Wyoming. He is the author of *Gregory Ain: The Modern Home as Social Commentary* (Rizzoli, 2008). His article, "Community Homes: Race, Politics and Architecture in Postwar Los Angeles," appeared in the Fall 2005 issue of the *Southern California Quarterly*. He is a former president of the Southern California Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians.

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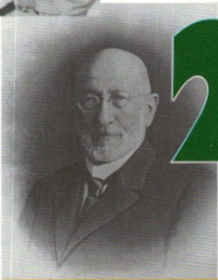
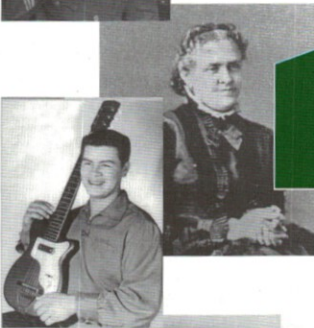
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# MOVIE NIGHTS at the Lummis Home three Saturdays in AUGUST

A program of films about the history of Los Angeles produced by Emmy Award-winning documentarians Jon and Nancy Wilkman  
Gardens open at 7:30 pm and films begin at 8:00 pm. Popcorn, Nachos, and Sodas  
Admission at door: HSSC Members - \$10.00 per screening; Non-members - \$15 per screening



## 1 LOS ANGELES IN SUNSHINE AND SHADOWS

"TROUBLE IN ANGEL CITY: RAYMOND CHANDLER'S LOS ANGELES" — a 30 minute exploration of the underside of LA in the 1930s and the relationship with the work of Raymond Chandler.

"LOS ANGELES: CITY OF DREAMS" — a glowing 40 minute 1930s travelogue of Los Angeles.

## NATIVE ROOTS

"RAMONA: A STORY OF PASSION AND PROTEST" — a 30 minute examination of the novel *Ramona*, by Helen Hunt Jackson. The facts and fictions behind the book that created a myth that transformed Southern California.

"CHICANO ROCK! THE SOUNDS OF EAST LOS ANGELES" (60 minutes) — winner of the 2009 Best Documentary at the Reel Rasquache Festival of U.S. Latino Experience in Film & Art. Sponsored by the California Council for the Humanities, Latino Public Broadcasting and the Historical Society of Southern California. Broadcast on national PBS.

## A LIFE IN LOS ANGELES AND A HOME IN THE SUN

"HARRIS NEWMARK'S LOS ANGELES" — a 30 minute Emmy Award-winning documentary, starring Academy Award nominated actor Theodore Bikel, tracing 60 years in the life and times of Harris Newmark. Based on Newmark's chronicle of the history of Los Angeles from 1853 to 1913.

"WITH HEART AND HAND: THE RESTORATION OF THE GAMBLE HOUSE" — 60 minutes. More than three years in the making, this documentary follows the painstaking preservation and restoration of the best example of American craftsman architecture in the world.

**PLEASE R.S.V.P. by July 27, 2009. Limited seating.**

We will also be accepting reservations online: [hssc@socalhistory.org](mailto:hssc@socalhistory.org)

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