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# The Southern Californian

The Historical Society of Southern California Winter 2010 Volume 22 Number 4

## In Memoriam: Doyce Blackman Nunis, Jr.

HSSC has lost a beloved member, for 43 years the brilliant editor of our *Southern California Quarterly*, Professor Doyce Blackman Nunis, Jr. He was 86 years of age. He had been in failing health for the past year and died January 22, 2011 of complications following abdominal surgery.

After briefly teaching at El Camino College, Doyce was offered the post of field historian at UCLA, assigned to locate and acquire manuscripts and papers and to create a program in oral history. He subsequently accepted a professorship at USC where he continued teaching history and heading the department for the rest of his academic career. He was the recipient of USC's Award for Teaching Excellence and USC's Distinguished Emeriti Award.

He was a passionate advocate of original research, setting an example for his students in using primary documents such as personal letters, journals and public records to construct an understanding of the past. As a Guggenheim Fellow in 1964 he searched in London through documents of the Hudson's Bay Company and, with the assistance of fellow teacher and life-long companion, E. Peter Mauk, Jr., went on to search the files of the London Public Records Office, the archives of the House of Lords and the papers at the House of Commons. He drew upon these materials to write his first book, *Andrew Sublette, Rocky Mountain Prince, 1808-1835*. In all, he authored more than seventy articles and wrote or edited over forty books.

His subjects ranged from the history of the frontier west to the history of science and medicine to American political thought.

In a recent interview Professor Nunis said, "I have found historical research to be an unending chain of questions with one link drawing you on to the next. It is a grand pursuit."

Memorial service to be announced.



Doyce Blackman Nunis Jr. May 30, 1924- January 22, 2011



# Discovery Tour 2010

The 18th annual Arroyo Arts Collective Discovery Tour, dubbed "North by Northeast," kicked off at the Lummis Home on November 21, 2010. From there, participants drove or took shuttles to galleries, studios, and homes throughout Northeast Los Angeles to view the work of over 100 artists working in a variety of media.

1. Resident Troubador Oscar Rospide entertains the crowd with his accordion.

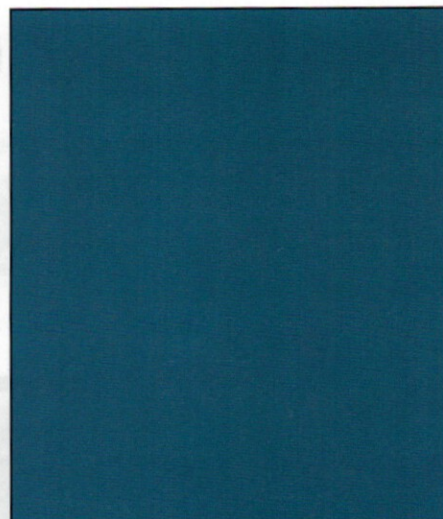
2. Pot made by a local artisan, Marcela Ciszewski, in a home kiln.

3. Discovery Tour organizer, Edith Abeyta, second from left, discusses upcoming events and activities with visitors.

4. Local artisan, Shery Miljoner displaying her homemade jewelry and decor at the Lummis Home.







# Dunning Lecture 2010

It was a grey, cold, windy Sunday afternoon in Los Angeles on November 7, 2010. In contrast, the Community Room at the Los Angeles Times building in downtown was filled with warmth and brilliancy as HSSC held its annual Dunning lecture. The venue was perfectly in tune with the subject of the lecture: the Chandler family and its influence over Los Angeles.

After a few words from HSSC President John Pohlmann, board member Cecilia Rasmussen took the podium to introduce lecturer Bill Boyarsky, author of *Inventing L.A. – The Chandlers and Their Times*, and L.A. Times writer for many years. Cecilia, herself a successful writer who also worked at the paper for a long time, had heartfelt words of praise for Mr. Boyarsky.

Mr. Boyarsky delivered a steady flow of fascinating information about the evolution of the Times and its relationship with the city's history, interspersed with anecdotes of the Chandlers and the newspaper that made the audience laugh frequently throughout the lecture. Afterwards, Bill took questions, which he answered with precision and wit.

Then it was time for coffee, cake, and lively conversation. A wonderful time was had by all.

In his 30 years with the Los Angeles Times, Bill Boyarsky was a political writer, featured columnist, and city editor. He was a member of reporting teams that won three Pulitzer Prizes. He is the author of two biographies of Ronald Reagan, *Big Daddy: Jesse Unruh and the Art of Power Politics*, *Inventing L.A.: The Chandler's and Their Times*, and *Backroom Politics* which he coauthored with his wife, Nancy.



***Inventing L.A.***  
***The Chandlers and Their Times***  
by Bill Boyarsky

*Inventing L.A.: The Chandlers and Their Times* is the tale of the Chandlers' reign over Los Angeles with the help of their mighty scepter, the Times, and their entwinement with politics, family feud, and fortune. This is truly the story of the building of one of the most famous, populated, and culturally rich cities in the world.

*Inventing L.A.* is available at the El Alisal Book Store and online at [www.socalhistory.org](http://www.socalhistory.org). \$35.



# Holiday Open House 2010



Members and friends enjoying a seat inside the Lummis home before the celebration started. Refreshments and appetizers were served.

**HSSC celebrated the holidays with friends and members at the Lummis Home. If you were there, reminisce. If you weren't, we hope to see you next year.**



Members sharing an anecdote over appetizers.



Lummis home docent Julian van Zandweghe playing guitar for the guests.



Pepper Tree to emulate the original tree put up by Lummis.



# El Alisal Front Door Restoration



John Griswold and associates survey doors at the Lummis Home.

The Historical Society of Southern California has commenced the El Alisal Front Door Preservation Project as a result of the generous \$5,140 grant by the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Los Angeles County Preservation Fund, with local matching funds raised in partnership with HSSC, Highland Park Heritage Trust, Arroyo Seco Neighborhood Council and Arroyo Arts Collective.

The \$10,500 project will preserve the one-of-a-kind entrance door to "El Alisal," former home of noted author, ethnologist, editor and cultural activist Charles Fletcher Lummis. Lummis handcrafted the doors from yellow pine and red birch timbers, while the wrought iron hardware with pre-incan motifs, and the decorative "CL" monogram were designed by artist Maynard Dixon. Project funds will support the cleaning of all wood and metal surfaces and hardware, as well as treating rotted and deteriorated areas, based upon the critical needs identified in the Griswold Conservation assessment report. An education video documenting the work will also be produced as part of the project.



Griswold's assistants begin taking preliminary measurements and making drawings of the doors.



Architect Frank Parello, HSSC Executive Director Patricia Adler-Ingram and Preservation architect Frank Griswold outside of the Lummis Home.

Local matching partners include Highland Park Heritage Trust (\$1,500), Arroyo Seco Neighborhood Council (1,500), Arroyo Arts Collective (\$500) with the balance provided by HSSC. The project will be made possible with the support of Los Angeles City Councilmember Ed P. Reyes.



## L.A. History Conference at The Autry

April 2, 2011

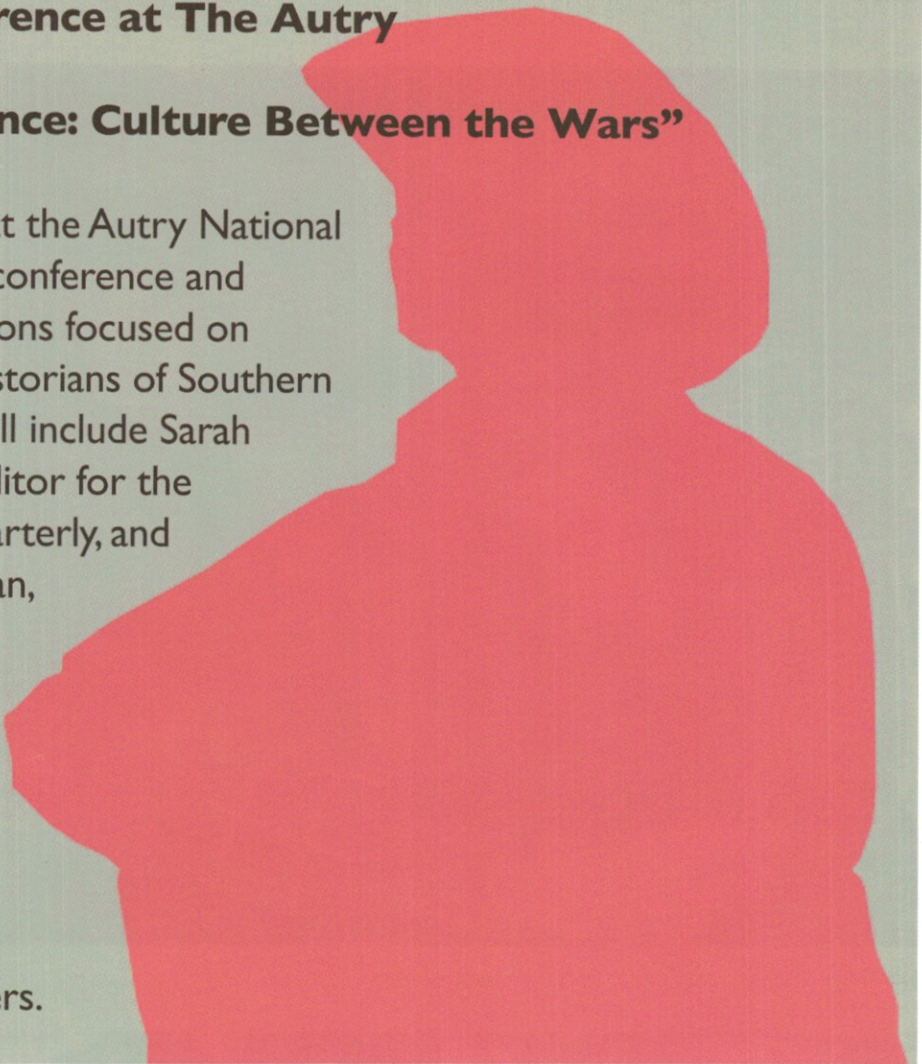
### "The L.A. Renaissance: Culture Between the Wars"

HSSC will again gather at the Autry National Museum for a day-long conference and special award presentations focused on works-in-progress by historians of Southern California. Presenters will include Sarah Schrank, book review editor for the *Southern California Quarterly*, and musicologist and historian, Kenneth Marcus of the University of La Verne, with a versatile musical group.

Admission:

**\$35.00** for members

**\$45.00** for non-members.



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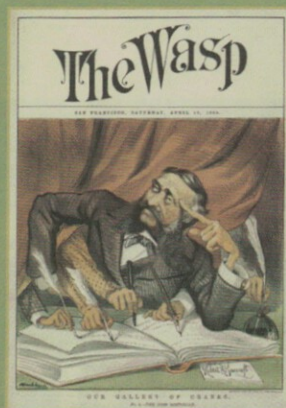
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SPRING  
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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY



# SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY

SPRING 2010 (vol. 93, no. 1)

## A Preview

JOHN WORK, J. J. WARNER, AND THE NATIVE AMERICAN CATASTROPHE  
OF 1833  
BY PETER AHRENS

TOWARD AN ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY OF THE BOOK: THE NATURE OF  
HUBERT HOWE BANCROFT'S WORKS  
BY THOMAS G. ANDREWS

"I AM ALMOST MORE AT HOME WITH BROWN FACES THAN WITH  
WHITE": AN AMERICANIZATION TEACHER IN IMPERIAL VALLEY,  
CALIFORNIA, 1923-1924  
BY BENNY J. ANDRÉS JR.

THE HISTORIAN'S EYE: WHAT DOES A HISTORIAN SEE IN A PICTURE  
FROM THE PAST?

**Peter Ahrens** studied mathematics and philosophy at the University of Houston and earned a Master's Degree in History from California State University East Bay. After a long career in advanced telecommunications networks, the focus of his current research is the role of Humboldtian science in nineteenth-century American medicine.

**Thomas G. Andrews** is the author of *Killing for Coal: An Environmental History of America's Deadliest Labor War* (Harvard, 2008), which was awarded the prestigious Bancroft Prize in American History in 2009. He is an assistant professor of history at the University of Colorado Denver specializing in the fields of environmental and western history and is a member of the editorial board of the *Southern California Quarterly*.

**Benny J. Andrés Jr.**, born and raised in the Imperial Valley, earned his Ph.D. at the University of New Mexico in 2003, where his dissertation, "Power and Control in Imperial Valley, California: Nature, Agribusiness, Labor and Race Relations, 1900-1940," won the W. Turrentine Jackson Dissertation Award from the Pacific Coast Branch of the American Historical Association. He is an assistant professor of History and Latin American Studies at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, where he teaches Latino history, the U.S.-Mexico border, the U.S. West, Immigration and Americanization, and Environmental Justice. He is currently writing an article titled, "The Invisible Borderlands: Braceros in the Imperial-Mexicali Valley of Greater California during the Era of Repatriation," and revising his dissertation into a book manuscript.



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## KNOTT'S PRESERVED



Knott's Preserved: From Boysenberry to Theme Park, the  
History of Knott's Berry Farm  
by Christopher Merritt and J. Eric Lynxwiler

For everybody who ever put their arms around Whiskey  
Bill and Handsome Brady, screamed in terror at Knott's  
Scary Farm, or marveled at the Calico Mine, this is the  
book that's filled with as much nostalgia as the Farm  
itself. Knott's Preserved is a must for every theme park  
lover and all those kids at heart.

# Save The Date

## March 12, 2011

History Day LA  
Hosted by Azusa Pacific University

## April 2, 2011

L.A. History Conference at The Autry  
The L.A. Renaissance: Culture Between the Wars