



## 2021 NEWSLETTER



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO THE HSSC COMMUNITY

By JIM TRANQUADA

As it has been for every organization, the past year, with all the twists and turns created by the pandemic, has been a challenge for the Society. But with every challenge comes opportunity. The pandemic has required the Society and its leadership to rethink how it carries out its mission. Our switch to virtual programming, led by our energetic and effective Programming Chair Dawn Dennis, has enabled us to reach an audience over a much wider geographic area. Similarly, we hope that moving the Quarterly to a new digital platform will position us to reach a wider audience for the oldest history journal west of the Mississippi.

Reaching a broader audience and exploring a more inclusive, more complex, more challenging history of Southern California, California and the West is what we hope to achieve. Readers of the Quarterly have had the opportunity to do that for years, thanks to long-time editor Merry Ovnick; we are now working to ensure that our programming does the same, and that our Board and our membership reflect the diversity that has shaped the region from the beginning.

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A key to making that possible is the work being done by the Society's new executive director, Lauren Levy. Lauren, who joined us at the beginning of the year, has been working quietly and effectively behind the scenes to position the Society for success. The sophisticated systems she has put in place, her success in obtaining grants, and her ability to work with the Board have given the Society a real momentum that we will build on in the months ahead, pandemic or no pandemic.

Jim Tranquada, *HSSC President*

## A THANK YOU TO JOHN AND LYN POLHMANN

HSSC was proud to honor John and Lyn Pohlmann as Fellows of the Society for exceptional lifetime achievement that has brought distinction to the history of California and the West. A distinguished historian, teacher and scholar who retired from Cal Poly Pomona in 2015, John published his master's thesis on oil tycoon and developer Alphonzo Bell in the *Southern California Quarterly* in 1964. He joined the HSSC board and served eight years as its president (2006-2014), successfully leading the Society through a major turning point when the city of Los Angeles declined to renew the Society's lease for the landmark Lummis House, the HSSC's headquarters for 50 years. We are delighted to be able to recognize John's leadership and John and Lyn's generous support of the Society for half a century.



## BECOME A MEMBER OF HSSC

Your membership helps the Society in our mission to interpret and promote the diverse history of Southern California and the West through education and publications.

Membership contributions are tax-deductible within the limits allowed by law. The society is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation.

To make a donation go to [thehssc.org](http://thehssc.org) or email us at [hssc@thehssc.org](mailto:hssc@thehssc.org).

DECEMBER 2021

## EVENTS HELD IN 2021

In response to the impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic, HSSC and its outstanding program committee created an online webinar series for 2021 which allowed us to safely continue offering our educational programs.

On April 27th, 2021 HSSC hosted our first event at no cost to the public, *#StopAsianHate*. The online seminar was a discussion about the origins and repercussions of Asian prejudice in California with preeminent scholars Dr. Gordon Chang and Dr. Weiling Deng.

Dr. Dawn Dennis, chair of the program committee, went on to moderate events such as *An Evening with Gustavo Arellano*; *Collecting Testimonios: A Plática* with Dr. Lani Cupchoy & Azalea Camacho, facilitated by Dr. Jorge N. Leal along with much more.

HSSC is planning a new webinar series for 2022 and hope all of you can join us! To stay apprised of upcoming events email us at [hssc@thehssc.org](mailto:hssc@thehssc.org) or keep an eye on our upcoming events page on our website.



### An Evening with Gustavo Arellano

Join us **November 17th at 5:00PM PST** for an evening with Gustavo Arellano, as he discusses writing about the history of Southern California and the West.

To Sign Up, Click [HERE](#).



HSSC Ahmanson Foundation Speaker Webinar  
Presents Dr. Susan Phillips  
September 15th, 2021  
5:00PM PST

To sign up, click [HERE](#).



Susan A. Phillips has studied gangs and the US prison system since 1990. Phillips received her Ph.D. in anthropology in 1998 from UCLA, where she taught for four years before coming to Pitzer College. Phillips is interested in theories of violence, in the

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Dear HSSC Community,

It has been an honor and an extraordinary opportunity to become the Executive Director here at the Historical Society of Southern California. At this moment, it is important we recognize and recommit to the crucial role the Society plays in preservation of the history of Southern California and the West through education and our publications.

I am proud of the work that the Society has accomplished in 2021 and look forward to the new year. This last year, HSSC introduced some major changes to our own infrastructure and continued our longstanding tradition to preserve and collect materials relating to the history of Southern California. HSSC has adopted a new database, began to host a new series of online programming, and continued producing our flagship journal, *Southern California Quarterly*.

The work performed this year within the Society will help us reach a wider and more diverse audience than we have ever been able to before.

In all aspects, HSSC is actively seeking to remove barriers to engagement and create new access points that enable all to discover and develop the understanding of Western history. With enthusiastic support of the board, my goal for the upcoming year will be to continue to find new opportunities for previously disenfranchised communities to contribute to academic scholarship and in the collection of historical records.

I am delighted that our community shares the same goals as the Society, and I want to personally thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,  
Lauren Levy  
HSSC Executive Director



## THANK YOU TO THE HSSC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jim Tranquada (2019-2022), President

Eileen Wallis (2018-2021), First Vice President

Marguerite "Peggy" Renner (2019-2022), Second Vice  
President

Kim Walters (2020-2023), Secretary

Lara Godbille (2015-2021), Treasurer

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Peter Sebastian Chesney (2019-2022)

Dawn Dennis (2020-2023)

David Hayes-Bautista (2019-2022)

Donna Schuele, (2020-2021)

Peter Vaughn (2020-2023)

## CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNER OF THE DOYCE B. NUNIS AWARD

Michael Aguirre, "Identities, Quandaries, and Emotions: Labor in the  
Imperial-Mexicali Borderlands, Southern California Quarterly 102, no. 3  
(Fall 2020): 222-249.

Honorable Mention: Jan-Eric Hansen, "Water Infrastructure and Practical  
Knowledge in Progressive-Era Los Angeles," Southern California Quarterly  
102, no. 4 (Winter 2020): 385-419.

## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONOR AND ALL CURRENT HSSC DONORS

