# SANTA MONICA CONSERVANCY

# NEWS VOL 4 NO 4

ENSURING THAT THE PAST HAS A FUTURE

OCTOBER 2006

The Santa Monica Conservancy presents the return of the

LANDMARKS OF SANTA MONICA: A GUIDED BUS TOUR, SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2 PM

Join Santa Monica Conservancy president Ken Breisch for a comprehensive tour that highlights the city's rich and diverse architectural heritage. The tour route includes visits to many of the most beautiful and fascinating historic sites in Santa Monica, described by a most knowledgeable architectural historian and preservationist. Mr. Breisch has served on both the Santa Monica Landmarks Commission and Planning Commission, and currently is Director of the Graduate Program in Historic Preservation at USC.



### PALEVSKY TRIBUTE AT AERO A HUGE SUCCESS



Peter Bart (moderator and Editor-in-Chief of Variety), Ed McMahon, Jane Fonda, Max Palevsky (producer of the movie) and George Segal.

The tribute to Max Palevsky at the Aero Theatre in July, attended by a near-capacity crowd, was a fabulous evening. Max Palevsky himself introduced the movie he produced, "Fun with Dick and Jane" (the 1977 version) and the film still played well for the audience almost thirty years later. The highlight of the evening was the question and answer session after the movie. Peter Bart served as moderator and Jane Fonda, George Segal and Ed McMahon answered questions with candor and humor. It was an honor to have them all appear in person.

Proceeds from the benefit will be used for operational expenses of the Conservancy. Thanks to organizations and individuals who purchased "ads" for the tribute book: Coldwell Banker (Santa Monica Offices), Keith and Ingrid Agre, Baldwin & Company.

Planet Blue, Betty & Stanley K. Sheinbaum, Moondance, Lynda and Stewart Resnick, Wendy and Mel Kohn, Robert Greenwald and Brave New Foundation, Kitchens on Montana, the Avant Family, and the Palevsky Family. Thanks also to the many volunteers who made the event possible: Sherrill Kushner, Event Chair: Ruthann Lehrer, Program Committee Chair; Kitty Bartholomew, Ken Breisch, Mike Deasy, Dwight Flowers, Martha Goode, Ursula Kress, Kara Litzelfelner, Gail Myers (Publicity), Dick Orton (Graphics and Publications), Judy Parsons, Pamela Rikkers (Publicity), Thomasine Rogas, Ruth Shari, Doris Sosin, Jeff Sturges, Elizabeth Terry, J. Todd, Anne Troutman, Rolfe Wyer, and John Zinner. And finally thanks to American Cinematheque for its hospitality and assistance.

# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BUS TOUR INCLUDE:

- Landmark homes on Adelaide Drive
- Palisades Park and the Pier
- Landmark trees and sculpture
- Historic hotels such as the Embassy, the Georgian and the Casa del Mar
- Historic apartments such as the Sovereign and Charmont
- Santa Monica Civic Center
- Historic homes from the vernacular to the monumental
- Ocean Park including the Third Street Historic District

The tour takes place aboard a chartered bus, and includes an informational packet. Space is limited so reserve early!

Tickets are \$25 for Santa Monica Conservancy members, \$30 for non-members, and \$40 for a ticket plus first-time membership. To purchase tickets, send a check to the Santa Monica Conservancy, P.O. Box 653, Santa Monica, Ca. 90406-0653, with a self-addressed stamped envelope. Or use paypal on our website, www.smconservancy.org. Questions? (310) 485-0399.

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Those interested in supporting the Conservancy at the highest Patron or Circle levels can learn more by calling our president, Ken Breisch at (310) 458-5984.

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#### **CONSERVANCY BOOK NOOK**

#### EARLY SANTA MONICA

by Louise Gabriel and the SM Historical Society Museum

Congratulations to Louise Gabriel, president and longtime board member of the Santa Monica Historical Society Museum, on the publishing of her book, *Early Santa Monica*. The 128-page paperback features more than 200 vintage photographs, dating from the city's founding in the late 1800s to the midtwentieth century. It's a nice companion to Paula Scott's book, *Santa Monica: A History on the Edge*, published two years ago. Both books were published by Arcadia Publishing for its Images of America series.

Prior to World War II, Santa Monica was a collection of distinct neighborhoods—Santa Monica Canyon and Ocean Park among

them—and our pier, built in 1909 became a regional draw, especially after the nation's largest dance emporium, La Monica Ballroom, was built on it. The vintage

photographs in the book were selected from the archives of the Santa Monica Historical Society Museum.

If you purchase the book from the Santa Monica Historical Society Museum, proceeds benefit the museum's educational program. Call the Museum at 310-395-2290 or visit at 1539 Euclid Street.

# HOLLYWOOD ESCAPES

by Michael Medved

Santa Monican author, SMC member, and entertainment publicist Harry Medved has written a new book with another inveterate movie buff, Bruce Akiyama entitled Hollywood Escapes: The Moviegoer's Guide to Exploring Southern California's Great Outdoors. This the first comprehensive guide to Southern California's outdoor filming locations with more than 50 most cinematic beaches, mountains, deserts, lakes, hot springs and waterfalls. They interviewed dozens of actors, filmmakers, location scouts and rangers to help explore Hollywood's most spectacular scenery. Illustrated with over 100 scenic photos and

maps, this 400+ paged paperback book takes the reader to movie history's most memorable destinations, and recommends places to dine and lodge along the way. Medved is also available to conduct tours in

20 easy-to-read



connection with the topics covered in his book. To find out more about the book, visit www.hollywoodescapes.com."

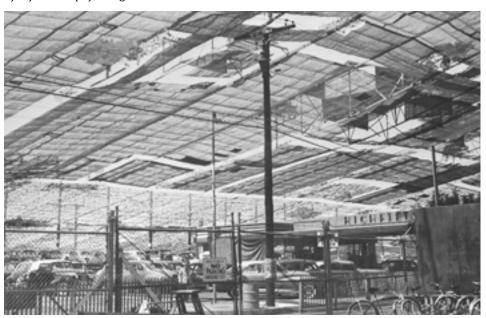
#### WHERE IN SANTA MONICA IS THIS? Answer at bottom of Page 3



From the Santa Monica Public Library Image Archiv

# S.M. PUBLIC LIBRARY IMAGE ARCHIVES: NEW COLLECTIONS

By Cynni Murphy, Image Archives Librarian







Above: Underneath the camouflage covering the Douglas Aircraft Company Santa Monica Plant during World War II (Santa Monica Public Library Image Archives #171); Top right: Rand Corporation Headquarters 1700 Main Street, Santa Monica (constructed 1953-57) photographed in 2001 by Tavo Olmos (Santa Monica Image Archives #A1011); Bottom right: Looking east on Colorado Avenue from the Sunset Inn photographed late 1920s by Geo. Herrmann PhotoArt (Santa Monica Public Library Image Archives # N152)

The Santa Monica Public Library Image Archives holds more than 4,000 images illustrating the Santa Monica Bay area from 1875 to the present day. The Archives include photographs, slides, postcards and other types of images in its collections which are digitized and available online from the Library website www.smpl.org Images have been donated to the Library by local photographers and private collections as well as historical images received from City Departments.

The Image Archives are dynamic, adding new images every year that expand the scope of the visual history of Santa Monica preserved by the Library. Examples of collections added in recent years include several important collections donated by City Departments which illustrate construction, demolition and natural disasters among other subjects reflecting changes in the City's landscape. Selected series of these photographs already available online include the construction of the Santa Monica Civic Auditorium in July 1957 (donated by Community and Cultural Services); landslides of the Palisades Park bluffs in August 1956 (donated by Environmental and Public Works Management): and a 1920s survey of the arroyo south of Colorado (donated by Civil Engineering). The photographs of the arroyo show Victorian homes, Craftsman bungalows, the Patten and Davies Lumber Company, the Sunset Inn and the old Southern Pacific tracks. The City Planning Department has donated images of buildings slated for renovation or demolition such as the original RAND facility on Main Street prior to the construction of the new RAND building; the Santa Monica West Health Center on Euclid Street, built in 1928; and the Shotgun house photographed at 2712 Second Street before it was moved. The City commissioned photography to document each



Underneath the camouflage covering the Douglas Aircraft Company Santa Monica Plant during World War II (Santa Monica Public Library Image Archives #171)

of these structures and the images are now available in the Archives online. Other recent collections include selected photographs from the Museum of Flying collection. A series of these photographs illustrate the camouflage neighborhood designed by landscape architect Edward Huntsman-Trout to conceal the manufacture of military aircraft at the Douglas Aircraft Company during World War II among other images in the collection portraying the history of the Santa Monica Douglas plant.

This year, the Archives added a collection of images of the new Main Library that documents construction from the cistern underneath the parking garage to the belvedere overlooking Santa Monica Boulevard. The Library had its grand opening January 7, 2006. The new Main Library provides a climate-controlled archival storage room for the original images with space to add collections. The Archives are utilized for personal, civic and professional research, including real estate provenance, legal research, architectural research and family history. They may be accessed by logging on to the Library's website at www.smpl.org and clicking on Image Archives link on the left side.

Donations are eclectic, but the intent of the Library's Image Archives is to collect and provide a visual history of the City of Santa Monica and its surrounding landscape. Those who have images that they are interested in donating to the Archives can contact Cynni Murphy at (310) 434-2608.

The Archives staff is currently participating in a pilot project to make the Archives available through a digital archive cooperative that includes public and university libraries nationwide, providing wider access to users interested in the history of the Santa Monica Bay area

Where in Santa Monica is this?
Tips Restaurant, Fourth and Wilshire, 1950s

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# AUTUMN OFFERS A VARIETY OF PRESERVATION EVENTS AND A HOST OF CEMETERY TOURS

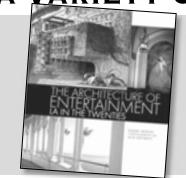


MODERNISM'S AUTEUR: L.A. THROUGH THE LENS OF JULIUS SHULMAN

Date: Sat., Nov. 4, 4:00 pm The Sidney D. Gamble Lecture Series Gamble House Call: 626-793-3334 x 52

This first lecture of a 5-part series (continuing into 2007) is about Julius Shulman who rose to prominence for his classically dramatic images of modern buildings for fashionable folk. At the Ahmanson Auditorium, Art Center Design, 1700 Lida St. Pasadena

Cost: \$25 for individual lecture: \$100 for series



ROBERT WINTER BOOK SIGNING AT HENNESSEY & INGALLS

Date: Sat., October 14, 3:00pm-4:00pm Hennessey & Ingalls, 214 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica Call: (310)-458-9074

Robert Winter, author of The Architecture of Entertainment: LA in the Twenties and venerable historian, explores this thesis through discussion of city planning, domestic architecture, multi-tenant housing, garden design, and public buildings. Includes introductory chapters on the diverse nature of Los Angeles and end with a look at the influence of Modernism. Illustrated with historic photos and documents and current photography, Winter gives Angelenos a fresh look at revered spaces. Free to the public.

www.sahscc.org



15TH ANNUAL CRAFTSMAN WEEKEND Dates: Oct. 20-22 Pasadena Heritage

#### Call: 626-441-6333

Includes a tour of significant Craftsman-era houses, exhibits by antique dealers specializing in the Arts & Crafts Movement and modern craftsmen specializing in the period style, and a lecture series by nationally prominent Craftsman Movement experts. Bus tours with interior visits of historic homes along the way, walking tours plus a special tour of the Fenyes Mansion, a 100-year-old Beaux Arts home, designed by Robert D. Farguhar and filled with original wall coverings, woodwork and decorative arts from around the world

www.pasadenaheritage.org



HOLLYWOOD FOREVER CEMETERY TOUR Date: Sat., Oct. 21

10 am - 12 pm (every 15 minutes) The Art Deco Society of Los Angeles 6000 Santa Monica Blvd. (east of Gower), Hwd

Annual walking tour of the Hollywood Forever Cemetery, final resting place of the saints, scoundrels and sinners who called Hollywood home. Includes an Art Deco mausoleum-ADSLA's most popular walking tour.

Tour takes 1 1/2 to 2 hours. Cost: \$13 for non-ADSLA members, payable at the door



LIVING HISTORY TOUR 2006 ANGELES ROSEDALE CEMETERY

Date: Sat., Sept. 30, 9am - 1:25pm West Adams Heritage Association

#### Call: 323-732-4233

In one of the city's oldest, most historically significant cemeteries, 5 costumed actors portray an early California rancher, a wireless operator who was a shipwreck victim, publisher of The Eagle newspaper, L.A. Times bombing victim, and a murderess at their gravesides.

Cost: \$22: children under 10 free: no walk-ins



WOODLAWN CEMETERY TOUR IN SANTA MONICA Date: November date to be announced

Venice Historical Society and SM Historical Society Museum

#### Call: 310-395-2290 for further details

The Santa Monica Historical Society Museum and the Venice Historical Society will cohost a Woodlawn Cemetery Tour in November (exact date TBD). This tour will be a living history that will highlight noted people that were influential in the Santa Monica Bay communities. This tour will also include the history of Woodlawn Cemetery.

www.gamblehouse.org

www.adsla.org

www.santamonicahistory.org

# NEIGHBORS & CITY MAKE DEAL: 415 PCH MOVES FORWARD





In July, Friends of 415 PCH threw a Beach Party. Parents, kids and City officials munched pizza, flew kites, and built a sand castle near the mothballed remains of the 1920s mansion.

The public beach club proposed for Santa Monica's coast took a giant step forward in September when city officials announced a settlement had been reached which would end a lawsuit filed by neighbors fighting to block the renovation and reuse of the historic former Marion Davies Estate.

The Palisades Beach Property Owners Association and neighbor Jonathan Ornstein filed a lawsuit in June asking a judge to stop the project, despite the City Council's unanimous approval and months of input by more than 200 community members in both the design and mitigations.

"This project is truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and we are elated that the neighbors have agreed to drop their attempts to stop it," said Joel Brand who chairs the Conservancy's Friends of 415 PCH committee. "It is gratifying to see that cooler heads have prevailed and we can all work together to ensure that the beach club becomes and remains a true crown iewel of public facilities."

City officials say that design and preparations for construction remain on schedule, despite the lawsuit, and site work could begin as early as a year from now on what

will become the only public beach club in

The historic renovation and the club's new facilities will be funded almost entirely by a \$28 million private grant from the Annenberg Foundation.

Special thanks and congratulations go to the dozens of residents who volunteered for the campaign to draw attention to the benefits of the club and the hundreds who came to the two "beach party" rallies held on behalf of the project.

# www.WestAdamsHeritage.com



Carol Lemlein and Ursula Kress check out the plaque on the 1875 Rapp Saloon on Second Street

Would you like to learn more about Santa Monica's history as told through its historic buildings? Do you like meeting people and sharing good stories? If so, consider joining our new docent training program, scheduled to start in January 2007.

To be launched in spring 2007, the guided tours will be held Saturday mornings at 10 a.m., and last approximately an hour and a half. A grant from the City has funded production of a walking tour brochure and marketing materials, and a team including Carol Lemlein, Ruthann Lehrer, Ursula Kress, Kara Litzelfelner, Dick Orton, and Nelson White is hard at work on the research for the program. The Santa Monica Historical Society is providing valuable

Six classes will be offered that will cover Santa Monica's history, the people who influenced its development, its architectural history, its landmark buildings, and practice tours for becoming a docent. Trainees will learn about our first city halls, pioneering commercial buildings, our early theaters, and our first skyscraper. The classes will be held on Saturday mornings at a location to be

announced. The commitment for leading these tours is estimated at approximately four to six times a year.

"I love being a docent." says Marcello Vavala, SMC Secretary, Board Member and long-time docent for El Pueblo in Los Angeles. "It's a great feeling to share your knowledge and bring alive the history and architecture of these everyday places. It really brings new meaning to people's perception of the area."

Becoming a docent is a voyage of discovery in many ways, and we hope you will jump on board. For information or to register, call the SMC at (310) 485-0399, or send us an email message to info@smconservancy.org.



Junipher Building (1912), Third & Santa Monica Blvd.

WWW.SMCONSERVANCY.OR



### PROPOSED ALTERATIONS THREATEN PIER

For several years, the City has been exploring ways to improve automobile access to the Santa Monica Pier with the pier businesses and the Pier Restoration Corporation. In September, several proposals were presented to the Landmarks Commission, which involve potentially serious alterations to the piers' historic character. One Commissioner compared it to making the pier entryway into a freeway.

The pier's pedestrian quality is a fundamental part of its character, and is recognized as a primary asset. At its entryway is a bridge built in 1939 under the WPA program, with an iconic neon sign marking its entry point, a sign with a view corridor on Colorado Boulevard. The bridge requires seismic strengthening, and improvements for disabled accessibility. That program has been expanded into new roadway construction that improves automobile access at the expense of the pedestrian experience and the pier's historic character

The city proposes widening the bridge to accommodate wider sidewalks, slightly wider traffic lanes, and a new ramp descending from the edge of Colorado Avenue down to parking lot #1 just north of the pier. This proposal involves relocating the neon sign to the north, altering its historic alignment with Colorado Avenue. It also tips the balance between people and cars at the entryway to the pier, and alters views of the pier from the beach and Palisades Park. It chops off a piece of Palisades Park at its southern edge. In fact, the Landmarks Commission felt that the bridge and sign were both parts of the same project historically and that the bridge should be evaluated as a historic resource.

The city is currently engaged in an environmental review of five project alternatives. highway funds. The Landmarks Commission not currently available for this construction.

The environmental impact report will be reviewed in public hearings in the near future....

because the project would utilize state and federal has taken a position favoring alternative #5, which does not contain the roadway expansion and new automobile ramp, but rather converts the existing bridge into a pedestrian-only bridge and removes cars from the pier altogether. The sign would not be moved nor Palisades Park impacted. The problem with this option is that the loss of pier parking (278 spaces) would have to be compensated by providing replacement parking elsewhere nearby. One possibility would be for the city to construct a two-story parking structure adjacent to Lot #1; however, funds are



Shotgun House just before the move from Santa Monica Airport

# SHOTGUN HOUSE **PROGRESS**

On July 12th at the Santa Monica Conservancy's request, the City Council directed

- Pursue ownership of the house.
- · Identify an appropriate site on designated city property for the permanent relocation of the house in Ocean Park.
- Initiate a process to select a nonprofit organization to raise funds and potentially lease the house for public benefit purposes.
- Create a lease agreement that clearly delineates responsibilities of both lessor and lessee.

At the meeting, Councilman Richard Bloom encouraged the Conservancy to continue its work on what he called "this little run-down piece of treasure" which would "provide a legacy for the city for many years." Councilman Herbert Katz agreed.

The Conservancy hopes that it will be selected as the nonprofit organization to lease

"It's really up to the City Council to decide where it's going to go," Kushner said. "So we're doing the legwork in the hope that they will see us as a very vested entity that's willing to move forward with this so that local residents and tourists have the opportunity to learn about early Santa Monica.'

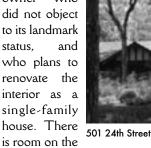
In the meantime, the house sits at the former site of Fisher Lumber as it waits to be relocated, rehabilitated and reused for the public to enjoy.

# LANDMARKS COMMISSION NEWS

by Ruthann Lehrer

A number of new buildings have joined the growing ranks of Santa Monica landmarks. Two vernacular wood-frame buildings that date back to Santa Monica's emergence as a beach resort community were recently designated by the Landmarks Commission. One, the Sandy Bay Apartments at 1401 Palisades Beach Road, just north of the pier, is the last survivor of early small apartments or rooming houses that served as beachfront vacation housing. Today, surrounded by oversized and over-styled three-story modern homes, it serves to remind us of our beginnings as a beach town. Old photographs show the house overlooking the ocean, with almost nothing around it. Built in 1909, it's a simple structure with a gable roof, wood shingle and siding exterior and wood-framed windows. It faces the beach with a band of windows that enclose the originally open front porches on its two stories.

The property was purchased by an owner who did not object to its landmark status, who plans to renovate the interior as a single-family house. There



back of the lot for an addition. The current tenants were strongly supportive of landmark status, even though they must vacate the building.

An even smaller reminder of these early times is embodied in the late Victorian cottage in Ocean Park at 2219 Ocean Avenue, also designated by the Landmarks Commission. Built c. 1905, it's a one-story rectangular house with a hipped roof, narrow clapboard siding, wood sash windows, angled corner, stained glass window, with a front-facing bay window and door dating from an early 1920s alteration. Oriented to the west and visible from the beach, it's the last surviving early 1900s cottage on Ocean Avenue in Ocean Park that provides a tangible link to that neighborhood's birth as a beach town. Dwarfed by larger scale multifamily buildings that surround it, the property is a window back in time to Ocean Park's earliest history. The preservation of this building generated a tremendous amount of community support, with neighbors writing letters and signing petitions in favor of landmark designation showing that people do care about preserving these last survivors of our history.

Two other unusual buildings that were nominated for landmark status by their owners were recently approved by the Commission. One of them, 501 Twenty-fourth Street, was featured in an article in a previous newsletter. This monumental Tudor Craftsman house was built in 1912 as a pioneering home in an area known then as Brentwood Place. It stood alone for a long time, as infill housing construction did not take off north of Montana until the 1920s. The architect is not documented, but the contractor was the brother of architect Frank Tyler, who designed numerous homes in the West Adams neighborhood, which this house resembles. An eminent resident of the property from

> was Hugh Evans, pioneering horticulturalist who introduced many exotic plant species to the region have profoundly influenced

landscape design in Santa Monica and Los Angeles, such as the bougainvillea, hibiscus, and coral trees on San Vicente. Owners Ann Payson and Rob Ulin did considerable research for the nomination, and have done a magnificent iob of restoration.

The house at 2323 Fifth Street in Ocean Park also stands out from its neighbors, and has a most unusual history. Built c. 1925, it was originally located on beachfront property that later became the "Gold Coast," and was moved up the California Incline to a vacant site on Fifth Street to make way for movie mogul Darryl Zanuck's new residence. The house is Colonial Revival in style, with fine detailing, similar in style to the Marion Davies estate which was built a few years later nearby. The house has been owned by one family since its relocation in 1936, and they are very proud of look and feel that makes Santa Monica such a its special story.



### **VOLUNTEER PROFILE DICK ORTON**

It seems that Dick Orton has always had a creative flair and an early awareness of architecture. So it's understandable why he joined the Conservancy and lends his creativity as art editor of our quarterly newsletter, invitations, and

Dick grew up in a big old house in a Detroit suburb, with leaded windows, built-in bookcases, window seats and crown moldings. "At first I didn't want to move there. I wanted a brand new tract house but my mother wanted a house with character; and she prevailed. I'm a happy to say."

He looks back fondly on the summers he "produced" 8mm movies - making family and friends "stars" of his productions. "After editing and creating music tracks, we'd have a big premiere party on Thanksgiving weekend."

It was no surprise that Dick majored in television at Michigan State and later went to UCLA Film School moving to Santa Monica in 1970. "I worked in the film business only a few years before becoming an art director at the May Company. Now I'm a designer at Belkin Corporation in Dominguez Hills, creating graphics for a wide variety of computer products, and producing the in-house newsletter that is distributed to our offices worldwide."

Today, Dick is appalled that so many tall buildings have no setbacks at the sidewalk level in Santa Monica. "We are creating canvons. Too much overbuilding to maximize the return on the investment threatens our city. We too often lose the buildings and open space that makes Santa Monica magical. I like the idea of Santa Monica moving forward, but not when it means sacrificing the small town look and feel that makes this city so special."

"I hope the Conservancy can be a voice in our community -to promote the small town special place to live."



# SANTA MONICA CONSERVANCY

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# LOOK WHAT'S INSIDE!

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MBERS HOLIDAY PARTY AT THE CAROUSEL

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Our annual holiday celebration for SMC members will be held this year on Sunday, December 3rd, 3 - 6 PM, at the historic Looff Carousel on the Pier. This cherished icon of Santa Monica is a National Historic Landmark, the highest level of significance for landmarks in the U.S. And the city's preservation movement historic launched by the Save the Pier campaign in the early 1970s. Watch for more details on your invitation - and bring a friend to join our growing membership.

■ SMC Holiday Party at the Carousel

Designed and built in 1916 by Charles I.D. Looff, it was faithfully restored in 1981 through 1984. Its Byzantine-Moorish California style, its setting overlooking the beautiful California coastline and the ocean, attracts celebrities and tourists from all over the world.

The present carousel has been owned since 1977 by the City of Santa Monica and is a reminder of those golden times in California. Motion picture directors, TV writers, fashion photographers, painters and the public have been bewitched by it for three generations. Paul Newman and Robert Redford perpetrated their "sting" at the carousel.



Carousel at the Santa Monica Pier

Looff's original merry-go-round was replaced by one from the old Ocean Park Pier in 1939. The current merry-go-round was built by the Philadelphia Toboggan Company in 1922; its original home was Nashville, Tennessee. The carousel arrived on the west coast before World War II and in 1947 it was moved from Venice pier to the Santa Monica pier. The fanciful and elegant old machine with its horses, painted ponies and chariots, lights, brass poles, and mir-

rors turns as smoothly now as ever because it is kept in prime condition. In 1990, each of the horses was taken apart, restored, reassembled and newly painted by The Carousel Works of Mansfield, Ohio, using a team of some of the foremost carousel craftsmen in America.

More information about the event will be forthcoming.

Source:www.santamonicacarousel.org

WWW.SMCONSERVANCY.ORG