

California *History Action*

All Aboard for the Gold Country!

By Pam Conners, CCPH President.

For twenty-nine years CCPHers have headed to destinations all over California to attend the annual conference: Murphys, San Diego, Redding, Arcadia, Eureka, Bakersfield, Sacramento, Riverside, Willets, San Jose and Nevada City, to name a few.

The Mother Lode will host CCPH's 30th annual conference, making stops at Jamestown, Sonora and Columbia. The theme of this year's gathering, "What's So Funny about History," is sure to draw a crowd and will explore the strange, the quirky, the ironic, the peculiar and the unbelievable episodes that have shaped and spiced California history.

Board member Cedar Phillips heads-up the conference program arrangements, and she reports that she has a fascinating, attention-grabbing and decidedly out-of-the-ordinary array of presentations on-tap. The local arrangements committee—Terry Brejla, Meta Bunse, Charlie Dyer, Charla Francis, Sherrin Marinovich, Judith Marvin, Betty and Joe Sparagna, and I—have lined-up an extraordinary set of venues and events that complement the program and that we hope will provide conference-goers with a unique and enriching Mother Lode experience.

Archives Workshop, Archive Open House & Conference Reception, October 21:

Your conference gets off to an early start Thursday morning with a Basic Archives Workshop taught by State Archives Deputy Director, Laren Metzger. Stay tuned for details. Interested in how a rural county has created a top-drawer archive operation? Visit Tuolumne County's Carlo DeFerrari Archive's open house and tours. Vendors specializing in document restoration and preservation and in large and small scale storage solutions will be on-hand to answer your questions. The evening reception, at Railtown 1897 State Historic Park, features a steam-powered train ride and ogling over the newly restored Sierra #3 locomotive, in addition to tastes of spectacular foothill wines accompanying light hors d'ouvres and camaraderie.

Sessions, Tour and Banquet, October 22:

Kicking off the conference sessions, we are thrilled to have Western historian and noted author JoAnn Levy, as our plenary speaker. Sessions continue in Sonora until late afternoon, when we decamp to Columbia State Historic Park. A 'dead history tour' will be followed by frivolity (on your own) at the Jack Douglass Saloon. The annual banquet will serve-up a dramatic as well as a culinary treat, with a performance of Rick Foster's play, *The Stephen Hill Affair*, by acclaimed actor Tom Maguire.

Sessions and Awards Luncheon, October 23:

Concurrent sessions continue in Columbia, punctuated by the Annual Awards Luncheon.

Watch the CCPH website and newsletter for updates about the conference.



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A newsletter for history advocacy published by the
California Council for the Promotion of History
Bridging the Past, Present, and Future

History Action News

Watts Towers Preservation Issues

Adapted from the Los Angeles Times, April 7, 2010 and www.culturela.org



Conserving Simon Rodia's iconic landmark Watts Towers is an ongoing and endless task with no permanent solutions. Water penetrates through mortar cracks and rain and heat accelerate deterioration, as do natural disasters. The basic conservation goals adopted in 1978, the year that the State of California Department of Parks and Recreation acquired ownership, are to repair cracks in the mortar, remove rust, replace damaged reinforcements, and clean, reattach and preserve ornaments.

The City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs manages preservation under a 50-year lease agreement, but impending severe staff reductions will impact the Department's ability to conserve the towers after July 1. After an encouraging meeting with Los Angeles Museum of Art President Melody Kanschat and General Counsel Fredric Goldstein, Department of Cultural Affairs Executive Director Olga Garay is hopeful that the Museum's expertise at conservation and fundraising will help fill the gap, though the City would still have to fund manpower and materials. Exploratory talks also included the Getty Conservation Institute. Ms. Garay estimates that putting the Towers in prime shape would require about \$5 million.

Photo by Carol M. Highsmith, Library of Congress

CCPH Members Can Help Preserve America's Historical Record Legislation

Adapted from the National Coalition for History

U.S. Senators Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and Carl Levin (D-MI) recently introduced the Preserving the American Historical Record Act (PAHR) (S. 3227). PAHR seeks to establish a new federal program of formula grants to states and territories to support archives and the preservation of historical records at the state and local level. Nearly 60 Members of Congress have signed on as co-sponsors, including California Representatives in the House Zoe Lofgren (D) and Jackie Speier (D). The Council of State Archivists, the Society of American Archivists (SAA), and the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administration have been working for many years seeking the introduction and passage of the PAHR bill. In addition, the National Coalition for History has endorsed the PAHR bill and urges people to contact their Senators and House members to ask that they co-sponsor the bills, particularly members of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, which for California include Representatives Brian Bilbray (R), Judy Chu (D), Darrell Issa (R), and Diane Watson (D).

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) would administer the PAHR program. The legislation itself authorizes \$50 million a year for five years for the initiative to preserve and provide access to historical records by supporting the creation of a wide variety of access tools, including archival finding aids and indexes; preservation actions to protect historical records from harm, including digitization projects and disaster preparedness and recovery; initiatives to use historical records in new and creative ways to convey the importance of state, territorial, and community history, including the development of teaching materials for K-12 and college students; and programs to provide education and training to archivists and others who care for historical records. To learn more about what you can do to support PAHR, go to www.archivists.org/pahr.

President Obama Names California State Historic Preservation Officer Chairman of Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

Adapted from the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

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CSU, Sacramento
Department of History
6000 J Street

Sacramento CA 95819-6059

(916)273-0317

ccph@csus.edu

www.csus.edu/org/ccph

President Barack Obama has named Milford Wayne Donaldson to be the next chairman of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP). "I am honored by President Obama's appointment and look forward to working with the federal government's historic preservation programs and its partners to share the many benefits of preservation more broadly throughout the nation," Donaldson said. He continued, "Most importantly, I will build on the ACHP's valuable efforts integrating sustainability and historic preservation, taking an active role in the Section 106 process as it pertains to alternative energy development, and building a new generation of preservationists by engaging youth in service learning programs."

Donaldson currently serves as the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) for the state of California. Prior to his appointment as SHPO in 2004, Donaldson served as president of the award winning firm, Architect Milford Wayne Donaldson, since 1978, specializing in historic preservation services. *(continued on page 4)*

Annual Legacy Oral History Workshop

Adapted from the Museum of Performance and Design in San Francisco

A three-day oral history workshop will be held August 5-7 in San Francisco. It will be relevant to anyone interested in learning more about doing oral history, whether first-timers or experienced researchers who want to update their skills. Each workshop is carefully planned to match the experience levels of all participants: beginning, intermediate, or advanced. Led by Dr. Jeff Friedman and Basya Petnick, the workshop will provide the training necessary for participants to launch their own oral history projects. While drawing on references and examples in the performing arts, the workshop is equally appropriate for those involved in institutional history, social history, family history, master's or doctoral studies, or other projects.

The workshop will cover project design, legal and ethical issues, technology, funding, interviewing, transcription, editing, and creating a research-quality document. E-mail legacy2010@mpdsf.org or call 415-255-4800, ext. 823 for information and registration. For more details, see www.mpdsf.org/legacyworkshop.

The Basics of Archives

Presented by the California Historical Records Advisory Board and the California State Archives

This one-day workshop will be held in conjunction with the CCPH annual conference, on Thursday, October 21st at the Tuolumne County Library in Sonora, California.

The Basics of Archives is for people who work or volunteer in organizations that deal with the past – whether it's a museum, historical society, local government office, local library history room, or a college archives. You'll get practical advice, sample forms and policies, and learn basic practices for collecting, organizing, protecting, and helping people use the records in your care. Taught by Deputy State Archivist Lauren Metzger and archival and historical consultant Teena Stern, this workshop can help you learn how to deal with challenges faced daily by staff and volunteers in historical organizations, institutions, and agencies.

For more information, contact Jennifer Janes, ccph@csus.edu, 916-273-0317.

University of Texas Launches TEKSWatch Initiative: Events in the Lone-Star State Still Relevant to the Golden State

Adapted from TEKSWatch

Texas is currently revising its K-12 social studies curriculum. The process began with an examination of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards and will move on to testing, educator certification, and, of course, textbooks. Media coverage has emphasized the emotionally-charged ideological controversy about proposed curricular changes in the treatment of, for example, Thomas Jefferson and the Enlightenment, the free-market economy, and the separation of church and state. In March the National Council of History Education sent a letter to the Texas State Board of Education urging that the history curriculum be kept separate from current ideology, and in April more than 1,000 historians, most of them college and university history professors, signed a letter to the Texas State Board of Education urging its members to delay approval of some of the proposed changes. The State Board of Education, however, passed the final draft in May. Texas is one of the largest textbook markets in the country, so Texas curricula will affect how material will be presented in textbooks that are offered in California and elsewhere. (California recently suspended the ordering of new textbooks until 2014).

The Center for History Teaching & Learning at the University of Texas El Paso (UTEP) has created the TEKSWatch Initiative. The TEKSWatch website, tekswatch.utep.edu, provides answers to frequently asked questions, an overview of the entire process, information about participants in the process, and recommendations for setting current developments into the broader picture of education in Texas and America. The site tracks media coverage and commentary—including humor—and also features a page listing opportunities for interested citizens to get involved.

CCPH Committee Openings

Legislative Action: Currently the CCPH Board is looking for an individual willing to chair the Legislative Action committee, as well as committee members. The Legislative Action committee tracks legislative bills that potentially affect the public history community and recommends actions to the Board of Directors.

If you are interested, please contact the CCPH office: ccph@csus.edu or (916) 273-0317.

The Making of America (MOA) Project Is Free and On-Line

Adapted from Cornell University and University of Michigan MOA websites.



The Making of America (MOA) Project makes digitized nineteenth-century primary source materials available to researchers on-line and without charge. The Project began in 1995 with a collaborative effort by Cornell University and the University of Michigan and was originally funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The Cornell collection offers 109 monographs and 22 journals from the period 1840-1900, including general interest materials as well as more specialized materials focused on such areas as agriculture. As of June, 2007, the University of Michigan offers monographs focused on education, psychology, American history, sociology, science and technology, and religion. As of 2007 the University of Michigan on-line holdings included 12,257 volumes.

The MOA project is ongoing. It is a way of preserving deteriorating material of high scholarly and educational importance. This material is not covered by copyright, but users are asked credit the collection. For more information, visit Cornell's MOA website at dlxs2.library.cornell.edu/m/moa and University of Michigan's at quod.lib.umich.edu/m/moagrp/.

The MOA Project collection includes *Scientific American* issues from 1846-1869. Pictured is September 26, 1846, volume 2 issue 1, page 1

Hidden Stories Series Website Launched

Adapted from material provided by California State Parks

- The ongoing California State Parks "Hidden Stories" series shares the fascinating but often overlooked histories of California's varied ethnic and gender groups. The series began last May with a conference at USC's Doheny Library, 100 Years Since Allensworth: Is California Living up to the Legacy? The conference took its title from the



The Monroe-Gooch Family of Coloma, <http://www.calparks.org/hiddenstories/>

centennial of the 1908 attempt to create a self-sufficient African-American agricultural community in the Tulare Basin, though its topics went beyond that. The conference later broke into four discussion groups focused on media, education, historic preservation and parks and led by experts in these fields.

These discussion groups generated ideas about how African-American contributions to California could be incorporated into programs at our State Parks, which led to the creation of the Hidden Stories Series website, www.calparks.org/hiddenstories. Menus on the website lead to a summary of the conference and to Friends of Allensworth, a volunteer organization that works with California State Parks to promote educational and interpretative events in Allensworth State Historic Park. They sponsor events that include talks, tours, and celebrations featuring an arts and crafts market, ethnic food, music, activities for children.

California State Parks intends additional conferences that will explore the contributions of Asians, Hispanics and women to the state's rich and complex history, but budget cuts have reduced staffing and services. Hoping to remedy this, the California State Parks Foundation (www.calparks.org), a statewide independent nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting, enhancing and advocating for California's magnificent state parks, is a major sponsor of the State Parks and Wildlife Initiative, which would provide independent funding for state parks and wildlife and marine areas. You can find information about the initiative at www.yesforstateparks.com, and access the Friends of Allensworth website directly at www.friendsofallensworth.com.

(California SHPO named to ACHP, continued from page 2)

- Donaldson is licensed to practice architecture in California, Nevada, and Arizona and holds a certified license from the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards. He is affiliated with several historical and preservation organizations and is a past president of the California Preservation Foundation and past chair of the State Historical Building Safety Board, the State Historical Resources Commission, and the Historic State Capitol Commission. He holds a Bachelor of Architecture and a Bachelor of Science in Engineering from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo. Donaldson received a Master of Science in Architecture from the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, Scotland, and a Master of Arts in Public History and Teaching from the University of San Diego.

IMLS Awards \$3 million For Critical Conservation

Adapted From Institute of Museum and Library Services

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) has announced 33 museum recipients of the 2010 Conservation Project Support (CPS) grants, totaling \$3,184,977. Since 1984, IMLS grants have helped 1,338 museums to identify their conservation needs, priorities, and preserve their collections. CPS grant recipients will also match their awards with an additional \$4,261,753. "We are thrilled to see the rising number and caliber of conservation applications," said Marsha L. Semmel, the acting director of IMLS. She continued, "There's a clear correlation between states' increased conservation efforts, which have been stimulated by IMLS's Connecting to Collections conservation initiative, and museums taking action at the institutional level." In 2010, there were 148 applications for conservation project support, compared to 129 applications in 2009 and 109 applications in 2008.

Three California museums received CPS grants this year: Gamble House; Pacific Asia Museum; and the Museum of Ventura County.

The arts-and-crafts Greene-and-Greene **Gamble House**, owned by the City of Pasadena and operated by the University of Southern California, received \$126,821 with a matching amount of \$152,935. The grant funds will help to treat 305 objects in the Gamble House's collections and 30 select architectural features. For further details, see www.gamblehouse.org.

The Pacific Asia Museum in Pasadena was awarded \$48,144 with a matching amount of \$48,147 to protect approximately 300 noted ceramic works from possible seismic damage in the museum's storage facility. For further details, see www.pacificasiamuseum.org.

The Museum of Ventura County in Ventura was awarded \$150,000 with a matching amount of \$264,658 to safeguard its collections from the effects of seismic activity. The Museum plans to purchase and install compact shelving for its research library's historical collection of books and manuscripts, images, maps, architectural plans and drawings, government documents, and other rare materials from the nineteenth century and early twentieth century and beyond. For further details, see www.venturamuseum.org.

Still Time to Catch the California Historical Society's Think California Exhibit

Adapted from the California Historical Society

The California Historical Society's (CHS) ongoing exhibit, "Think California," highlights the colorful history of California through the CHS's remarkable collection of artwork, artifacts, and ephemera. This ambitious exhibition asks the question "What do you think about when you think of California?"

The exhibit's themes include: "Coming to California," which focuses on the discovery and phenomenal impact of the Gold Rush; "Scenic Splendors," which focuses on California's scenic beauty and wonderful parks; "Bounty of the Golden State," which highlights both California's agricultural abundance and its sometimes destructive agricultural industries; "Earthquakes, Floods, and Volcanoes," which includes fascinating artwork and stories about the Mt. Lassen 1914 volcanic eruption and Hayward's Great Earthquake of 1868; "Freeways, Traffic, and Early Transportation," which includes railroads, trolley cars, the Pony Express, and automobiles; "Seeing the Sites," which focuses on California's iconic travel destinations such as beaches, Disneyland, the golden Gate Bridge, and includes some unexpected sites as well; and "Drama, Harmony, and Hollywood," which looks at California's contributions to theater and music as well as film making.

The exhibition will continue through February 5, 2011, at the California Historical Society, 678 Mission Street in San Francisco. CHS is open Wednesday through Saturday, 12:00 noon to 4:30 p.m.. Admission to the exhibit costs \$3 for general public; \$1 for students and seniors, and is free to members.

California Museums Advocacy Day Recap

Adapted from Californian Association of Museums CAMeNews

The California Association of Museums (CAM) hosted its annual Museums Advocacy Day this May in Sacramento, and museum representatives from across California joined in affirming the importance of the unique value of museums to California's citizens and communities. If you want to find out more, a Museums Advocacy Day Toolkit (pdf, 8 MB) is available online at www.calmuseums.org. The Toolkit includes briefs on two bills—AB 1777 (Portantino) and SB 1076 (Price)—that would increase funding for the California Arts Council, and on a bill—SB 1034 (Ducheny)—that increases protection for archaeological and historic sites. Also included in the Toolkit are CAM's positions on why museums should share in the economic stimulus, on the need for state bond support for museums' capital projects, and on green policies for museums. The website also includes generic material on the mission of the Association.

Archives

Civil War Sesquicentennial Exhibit Opens at the National Archives

Adapted from the National Coalition for History

On the eve of the Civil War sesquicentennial the National Archives opened the exhibit "Discovering the Civil War" on April 30. Shown in two parts, part one, "Beginnings," will run from April 30, 2010 through September 6, 2010 in the Lawrence F. O'Brien Gallery in the National Archives Building in Washington, D.C. Part two, "Consequences," will open in the O'Brien Gallery on November 10, 2010. After the Washington venue closes on April 17, 2011, the two parts of "Discovering the Civil War" will be combined and travel to seven additional venues around the country beginning in June 2011. To learn more about the exhibit, see www.archives.gov/exhibits/civil-war.

Director of the National Archives National Declassification Center Announced

Adapted from the National Archives News

Archivist of the United States David S. Ferriero recently announced the appointment of Sheryl Jasielum Shenberger as the first director of the National Archives National Declassification Center (NDC). Her appointment is effective June 7, 2010. Shenberger brings unique qualifications to the position of director of the NDC. She comes to the National Archives from the intelligence community where she served both as an analyst and as a desk officer. She has also worked closely with the National Archives, the intelligence community, and Department of Defense agencies to coordinate review of historically valuable records that contain CIA information. She also led the CIA's declassification review efforts at the National Archives. As a declassification program manager at the CIA, she spearheaded efforts to improve processes that resulted in a more efficient release of information.

Ferriero established the National Declassification Center at National Archives College Park, MD in accordance with Executive Order 13526. Its mission is to align people, processes, and technologies to advance the declassification and public release of historically valuable permanent records while maintaining national security. For more information, see www.archives.gov/declassification.

Autry Center Gets Roy Rogers and Dale Evans Archive

From The Autry National Center, www.theAutry.org

The Autry National Center recently acquired the Roy Rogers and Dale Evans Archive, containing 120 boxes of materials from their 50-year career, including clipping files, programs, sheet music, photographs, licensed merchandise such as puzzles and coloring books, as well as business records. The collection will be catalogued, conserved and digitized for research purposes, and some artifacts are currently on display in the Museum's Imagination Gallery and lobby. The Autry plans to incorporate materials from the collection in an exhibition on the cultural and social history of television westerns.

Twitter Donates Its Digital Archive to the Library of Congress

On April 14, Twitter announced that it will donate its digital archive of public tweets to the Library of Congress. Twitter is a social networking service that enables users to send and receive "tweets," which consist of web messages of up to 140 characters. Twitter processes more than 50 million tweets per day from people around the world. The Library will receive all public tweets, which number in the billions, from the 2006 inception of the service to the present, including those sent by Iranian protesters during last June's disputed presidential election and subsequent reporting ban. The announcement came on the same day the Library's own Twitter feed (@librarycongress) totaled 50,000 followers.

Keep up with the news in California History
Follow your favorite organizations on Twitter:

Autry National Center
California Association of Museums
California Digital Library
California Genealogical Society
California Railroad Museum
California State Library
California State Parks
California State Parks Foundation
Fresno Historical Society
J. Paul Getty Museum
Marin History Museum
Mendocino County Museum
Mission San Juan Capistrano
Museum of the African Diaspora (SF)
Muzeo Museum in Orange County
Oakland Museum of California
Phoebe Hearst Museum
San Diego History Center
Santa Barbara Museum
San Diego Air and Space Museum
San Diego Archeological Center
Sonoma County Museum

Upcoming Events

Association of Art Historians Conference, "Architectural Objects: Discussing Spatial Form across Art Histories," will be held **June 24-25, 2010**, in Leeds, UK. For details, see www.aah.org.uk/page/2883.

Aberystwyth University's Conference, "Recycling Myths, Inventing Nations," will be held **July 14-16, 2010** in Newtown, Powys, UK. For details, see www.aber.ac.uk/myth2010.

The Historical Society of Southern California (HSSC) will host its annual "Celebrate-Our-Scholars" reception from 6 until 8 p.m. on **Sunday, July 18**, at the Lummis Home and Garden, 200 East Avenue 43, next to the Arroyo Seco in Los Angeles. The reception honors recipients of the 2010 HSSC/Haynes Foundation Summer Research Stipends. Also, the Jonathan Foundation will present its second annual award for Los Angeles business and cultural history. Those who attend will receive an attractively-produced commemorative booklet. There is no charge for the event, and there will be refreshments and music. For more about the historic Lummis Home or contact information visit socalhistory.org.

The 2010 **Joint Annual Meeting of the Council of State Archivists, the National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators, and the Society of American Archivists** will take place **August 10-15** in Washington, DC. For more information, see www.archivists.org/conference.

Regional Oral History Office Summer Institute, will take place at The Bancroft Library on the Berkeley campus from **August 16-20, 2010**. See bancroft.berkeley.edu/ROHO for details.

The 2010 **American Association for State and Local History Annual Meeting**, in partnership with the Oklahoma Museums Association, will take place **September 22-25** in Oklahoma City, OK. For more information, see www.aaslh.org/am2010.htm.

The 2010 **California Council for History Education Conference** will take place **September 24-25** at the California State University, Sacramento campus. For more information, see www.csuchico.edu/cche/conference.htm.

The 2010 **Western Museums Association Annual Meeting** will take place **October 17-20** in Portland, OR. This year's theme is "75 Years: Reflecting on the Past, Envisioning the Future." For more information, see www.westmuse.org.

The 2010 **California Council for the Promotion of History Conference** will take place **October 21-23** in Sonoma, CA. This year's theme is "What's So Funny about History." For more information, see www.csus.edu/org/ccph/Conference.

The 2010 **National Preservation Conference** will take place **October 27-30** in Austin, TX. For more information, see www.preservationnation.org/resources/training/npc.

The 2010 **Oral History Association's Annual Meeting** will take place **October 27-31** in Atlanta, GA. This year's theme is "Times of Crisis, Times of Change: Human Stories on the Edge of Transformation." For more information, see www.oralhistory.org/annual-meeting.

The next **California Association of Museums Conference** will take place **March 2-4, 2011** in Pasadena, California. For more information, see www.calmuseums.org.

The next **National Council for History Education Conference**, "The Causes and Consequences of Civil Wars," will take place **March 31-April 2, 2011** in Charleston, SC. For more information, see www.nche.net/index.html.

The 2011 **National Council on Public History Annual Meeting** will take place **April 6-10, 2011** in Pensacola, FL. The theme is, "Crossing Borders/Building Communities – Real and Imagined." For more information, see www.ncph.org.

Obituary: Edgar Wayburn

Adapted from the Los Angeles Times, March 8, 2010

Long-time Sierra Club President Edgar Wayburn passed away in March at age 103. Wayburn was a citizen-conservationist whose untiring efforts helped create the Redwood National Park, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and the Point Reyes National Seashore. He also promoted the 1980 Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. He was president of the Sierra Club five times in the 1960s, and in 2006 Sierra Club Deputy Director Bruce Hamilton said that Wayburn had "doubled the size of the park system, ... the wild and scenic rivers system, [and] ... the wilderness system." President Clinton credited him with saving "more wilderness than any other person alive" when presenting him with the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1999. Wayburn was also awarded the Albert Schweitzer Prize for Humanitarianism in 1995..

Originally from Georgia, Wayburn trained as a physician (MD, Harvard, 1930) and began his medical career in California, where he joined the Sierra Club in 1939 to enjoy the Club's burro trips in the Sierra Nevada. During WWII Wayburn served in the Army Air Force then returned to San Francisco, where he taught medicine at Stanford and UC San Francisco. He married Peggy Elliott in 1947. Their first date was a hike up Mt. Tamalpais, and she shared his enthusiasm for environmental causes.

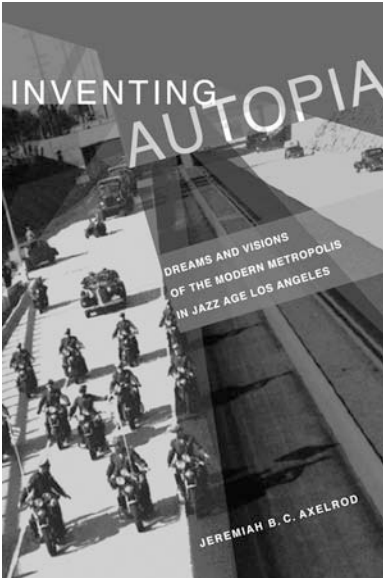
Wayburn is survived by three daughters and a son and three grandchildren; his wife passed away in 2002.

Inventing Autopia

Dreams and Visions of the Modern Metropolis in Jazz Age Los Angeles

By Jeremiah B. C. Axelrod

Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2009, xii + 401 pp., maps, illus., notes, references, index, \$24.95 paper



This thoroughly researched, complex and analytical book focuses on the conflict during the 1920s between city planners' and developers' emerging ideas about what kind of city Los Angeles should become. Some Los Angeles businessmen liked the aesthetic of a densely-built downtown of skyscrapers served by rail rapid transit and futuristic multi-decked streets. On the other hand, Los Angeles city planners hoped to create a horizontal, decentralized city of semi-autonomous suburbs full of single family bungalows on the Garden City model. What emerged, Professor Axelrod finds, was a new kind of city, one not envisioned by either group.

Axelrod's critical command of the existing literature is impressive. Throughout the book he utilizes contemporary city planner Kevin Lynch's idea that people understand their cities by recognizable features of the built environment. The ability to find one's way around a city by use of these features makes the city intelligible. Axelrod broadens Lynch's ideas to include class, ethnic and gender boundaries and argues that rapid demographic changes, traffic congestion, and chaotic suburbanization made Los Angeles unintelligible during the tumultuous 1920s, a period when the city's population nearly tripled.

Los Angeles had begun the 1920s as an intelligible medium-sized city in which a network of streetcar and electric interurban railway lines linked semi-rural suburbs to a densely built central business district and land use was strongly segregated by class, ethnicity and gender. By 1920 Angelenos' enthusiastic adoption of private automobiles for commuting and shopping had congested the city's narrow and chaotic downtown streets so that streetcars couldn't keep their

schedules. After a 1920 ban on downtown parking produced a populist revolt, the city's new planning department focused on alleviating traffic congestion through rationalizing the street system and on regulating development by zoning.

In 1924 consultants created a Major Traffic Street Plan in which radial streets would carry traffic focused on downtown, and ring streets would by-pass it. While the plan didn't directly implement either the skyscraper vision or the garden city vision of what Los Angeles should become, it offered something for everyone. The automobile-oriented electorate voted for the necessary bonds, though implementation was piecemeal and some of the plan's key elements, such as opening Olympic Boulevard through downtown, were later frustrated by legal action initiated by disgruntled property owners. (No book can do everything, and Axelrod omits the important uniform legal regulatory framework, developed in the mid-1920s, which included the boulevard stop, turn limitations, lane striping, curb painting, pedestrian crosswalks, and the automatic traffic signal. Though these didn't end congestion, they did regularize the flow of traffic, and the accident rate declined dramatically.)

On the other hand, in 1925 a plan for an extensive rapid transit system that downtown business interests supported was quietly shelved after the Los Angeles Times argued vigorously that elevated tracks would be unsightly and dangerous, and the influential City Club argued that rapid transit would make downtown congestion worse by increasing centralization: the future shape of Los Angeles, the City Club argued, shouldn't be modeled on densely-centralized eastern cities. Abandonment of the rapid transit plan was a victory for planners who envisioned a decentralized, dispersed city.

Business interests had also envisioned Wilshire Boulevard as Los Angeles's equivalent of New York's Fifth Avenue, but planners had wanted to keep Wilshire Boulevard residential. Planners won the zoning battle, but piecemeal zoning variances effectively made Wilshire into a linear shopping district anyway, now focused on the automobile. Western Avenue, which didn't go downtown, soon developed similarly. These destinations served the whole west side of Los Angeles, not local neighborhoods, heralding the city's evolution into a web of multiple destinations in which a person's social interaction doesn't usually take place in his or her neighborhood, and workplaces and shopping destinations are often miles distant from home.

High costs doomed a 1930 plan for an elaborate network of limited-access, landscaped parkways intended to make sprawling Los Angeles a pleasant place to drive. By the time that the Arroyo Seco and Cahuenga Pass parkways were built, the idea of a parkway as a pleasure drive had evolved into the idea of a utilitarian freeway, beginning the system that today helps make post-modern Los Angeles intelligible.

Axelrod has a gift for making the ideas that shaped the period come alive, often dramatically, and his book will repay a close reading.

A. C. W. Bethel is Professor Emeritus at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo

Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma

By Ethan Carr

University of Massachusetts Press, in Association with the Library of American Landscape History, Amherst; 2007.
424 pp, photos, illustrations, index; cloth \$39.95

Recently I read an obituary in my local newspaper of a man who was a heavy equipment operator. His family noted that he had helped build both the Tioga Road in Yosemite National Park, and the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant in San Luis Obispo County. I found the confluence interesting: these two events as bookends of the post-World War II era, both public utility projects of long-standing controversy and continued environmental implications. For example, the realignment of the Tioga Road, completed in 1961, was regarded as "catastrophic damage" by Ansel Adams, and a violation of the principles of the National Park Service Organic Act of 1916. In contrast, the Sierra Club (and Adams) voted to not oppose the siting of the nuclear power plant at Diablo Canyon by Pacific Gas and Electric Corporation, in order to preserve the nearby Nipomo Dunes. Such was the nature of the Sierra Club in the 1950s and 1960s, when it came to issues surrounding growth, development, population, and the environment.

The National Park Service was no less subject to the same strong (and, at times conflicting) viewpoints and forces during this time, hence the subtitle of Ethan Carr's excellent study of the Mission 66 era (1956-66). Mission 66 was the brainchild of Director Conrad Wirth, a career NPS employee who worked his way up from landscape architect to Director. It was devised in response to years of anemic funding during and after World War II and an overwhelming and unprecedented rise in national park visitation that corresponded with the GI Bill, the Interstate Highway Act of 1956, the baby boom and a more affluent and mobile population. Total NPS budgets over a ten year period (1956-66) would exceed one billion dollars.

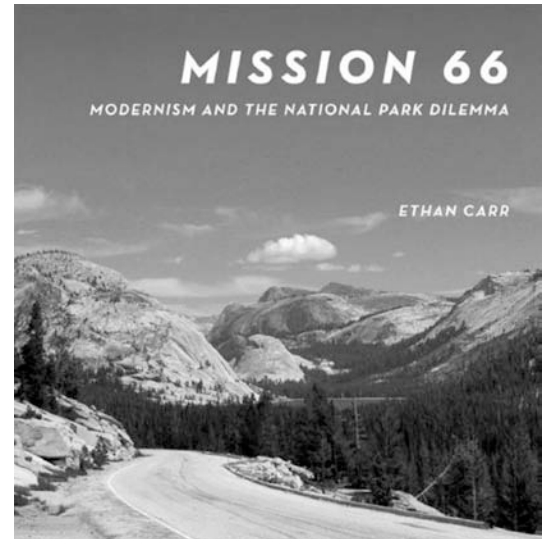
The ten year program was intended to redefine how national parks would function as public spaces. But scientific studies were not part of the program, an omission that would result in decades of delay in fully implementing widespread scientific management of the parks. And despite a public information program to convince the public that Mission 66 was a conservation effort and not a park development program, much of the initial planning was done without any input from the general public, interest groups, or park concessionaires.

Despite the disclaimer, Mission 66 did involve considerable park development. In fact, the book's cover photo features not a streamlined visitor center, but a view of the Tioga Road, looking toward Tenaya Lake from Olmsted Point, illustrating the destruction of the granite domes in the 1950s in order to accommodate more and faster automobile traffic. Also, employee housing in the parks in the early 1950s was substandard by any measure. Employees and their wives wanted a level of housing commensurate with their civilian counterparts. This was most readily fulfilled by the ubiquitous ranch house, deemed to be commodious, affordable, and predictable. If they did not match the style and character of the NPS Rustic Style bungalows built in the 1920s and 30s, it was because the size of the workforce had greatly increased, necessitating a more economical approach to workforce housing, and the general style and tastes of the larger society had evolved and changed with the advent of Modernism. NPS architects were simply reflecting those changes and keeping up with the modern era.

This expansion program was not just for employee housing and visitor serving facilities, but the educational and interpretive programs of the national parks as well. The NPS arrowhead logo (along with new uniforms) was rolled out with Mission 66. One enduring legacy of the Mission 66 era is Freeman Tilden's book, *Interpreting Our Heritage* (1957) that continues to guide and inform park employees everywhere. In addition, Wirth's legacy includes two training centers, Albright at Grand Canyon and Mather at Harpers Ferry.

This book is a critical study, not only of a style and an era but of a conundrum. The question was, and remains, how can the National Park Service accommodate the rising number of visitors that began to flock to the parks in the postwar era, and that continues to this day. Their needs and interests and desires change, but the national parks are inviolate places, free from fad and whim. Ethan Carr has brought a great deal of clarity and understanding to this important era in the history of our national parks.

Robert Pavlik is the founder of Slanted Anvil, and the author of Norman Clyde: Legendary Mountaineer of California's Sierra Nevada.



CCPH Contacts

Leadership

President

Pam Conners
pconners@rocketmail.com

Vice-President/President-Elect

Meta Bunse
mbunse@jrphistorical.com

Treasurer

Paul Spitzzeri
p.spitzzeri@homesteadmuseum.com

Recording Secretary/ Administrative Assistant

Emily Conrado
ccph@csus.edu

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Linn McLaurin

State Historical Resources Commission

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Committee Chairs

Awards

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Mini-Grants

Meta Bunse (mbunse@jrphistorical.com)

Nominations

Ty Smith (tysmith@parks.ca.gov)

Public Sector CRM

Open

Publications/Newsletter

Paul Sandul (paulsandul@gmail.com)

Standards and Professional Register

Chuck Wilson (chuckw@ucr.edu)

Website

Heather McCummins (irishlass_99@hotmail.com)

Standing Conference Committee

Chuck Wilson (chuckw@ucr.edu)

Local Arrangements, 2010 Conference

Pam Conners (pconners@rocketmail.com)

Meta Bunse (mbunse@jrphistorical.com)

Program, 2010 Conference

Cedar Phillips (cimboden@hotmail.com)

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Issues will be produced quarterly, with submission deadlines at the first of the month of March, June, September, and December. Material must be received prior to the deadline to be printed in the current issue and should be submitted directly to the editors at the address below.

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Department of History
Stephen F. Austin State University
PO Box 13013, SFA Station
Nacogdoches TX 75962

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California Council for the Promotion of History
California State University, Sacramento
Department of History
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