



# THE GLENDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CELEBRATING OUR HISTORY AND CONSERVING OUR HERITAGE

SUMMER 2014



## Tickets on Sale Now for Annual Gala & Benefit!

Invitations have been mailed and tickets are now on sale for The Glendale Historical Society's first ever annual Gala & Benefit. If you have not already purchased your tickets, please do so by August 10. Space is limited!

This sure-to-be-memorable event will take place on August 23 at the historic Brockman Clock Tower Estate, a local landmark and the centerpiece of the newly designated Brockmont Park Historic District. Don't miss this rare experience to tour one of Glendale's most exclusive homes and support TGHS's preservation efforts.

This year's Gala & Benefit is sponsored by G&C Properties, Glendale News-Press, Whole Foods Market and The Spot Gourmet, which is catering the event. There will also be a silent auction where you may very well find your next dream vacation or outbid your neighbor on a new piece of art.

At the Gala & Benefit, TGHS will also be recognizing outstanding work in the community with the presentation of its annual Preservation and Volunteer Awards. The recipients of the 2014 Preservation Awards are the newly established Brockmont Park Historic District and the recently restored and rehabilitated Brand Library and Art Center, the former home of Mr. and Mrs. Leslie C. Brand. TGHS will also be recognizing three exceptional volunteers who consistently go above and beyond the call of duty. Recipients of the 2014 Volunteer Awards are Sonia Montejano and Peter Rusch, who will be honored for their continued dedication to the Doctors House Museum, and Paul Ayers, who will be recognized for his outstanding contribution to our popular Speakers Bureau program and helping to promote and preserve Glendale's rich heritage.

Tickets to the 2014 Gala & Benefit are \$125 for TGHS members and \$150 for the general public and can be purchased directly from our new website at [www.glendalehistorical.org](http://www.glendalehistorical.org).

We look forward to seeing you there!

## Romantic Revivals Home Tour Set for September 28

Plans are well underway for The Glendale Historical Society's 2014 Home Tour, "Romantic Revivals," which will take place on Sunday, September 28, 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Sponsored by G&C Properties, The Walt Disney Company and Whole Foods Market, this year's tour will feature six magnificent Period Revival homes from the 1920s to 1940, representing a variety of architectural styles including Mediterranean Revival, Spanish Colonial Revival, American Colonial Revival, French Revival and Storybook.

Tickets will be sold through Glendale Arts beginning in mid-August. Advance tickets are \$25 for TGHS Members and \$35 for the general public. After September 22, ticket prices will increase to \$30 for members and \$40 for the general public. Tickets can also be purchased on the day of the tour at the historic Alex Theatre.

If you would like to help support the 2014 Home Tour by placing an advertisement in this year's program, please contact President Greg Grammer at [greg.grammer@glendalehistorical.org](mailto:greg.grammer@glendalehistorical.org) for options and rates. Businesses that place an ad in the program receive two complimentary tickets to the tour.

For more information, check out our website at [www.glendalehistorical.org](http://www.glendalehistorical.org) or contact us at [events@glendalehistorical.org](mailto:events@glendalehistorical.org) or 818-242-7447.



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Photo: Elizabeth Cohen

Since the publication of our last newsletter, I was pleased to see that the Glendale City Council took the first step toward preserving the beloved Rockhaven Sanitarium by

approving the issuance of a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to solicit interest and ideas from experts in the historic property development field on how best to restore and rehabilitate the site.

While I had been familiar with and intrigued by Rockhaven for years, my first opportunity to visit the property, located at 2713 Honolulu Avenue, didn't come until May 2012 when it was one of the featured stops on TGHS's historical bike ride in Montrose (although I must confess that a bad knee prevented me from actually getting on a bicycle!). Last summer, at the invitation of the Historical Society of the Crescenta Valley (HSCV), I was fortunate to join my fellow Board Members and several other TGHS members for an extensive tour of the abandoned property led by Joanna Linkhorst, head of the Friends of Rockhaven (FOR), a wonderful non-profit group that formed earlier last year in an effort to call attention to and save this historic place.

During the tour, many of us marveled at stories of Rockhaven's past as an all-women mental health care facility, the charming interior and exterior architectural details of the 1920s and 1930s Craftsman and Spanish bungalows and the remains of what was once a lush and beautiful garden. We were disturbed, however, by the poor condition of the property and the lack of proper maintenance. It was clear that the buildings were suffering from decay due to years of neglect and that something needed to be done – and not a moment too soon. That is why, after consulting with representatives from HSCV and FOR, TGHS contacted City officials to schedule a meeting to talk about our concerns

and explore possible opportunities for Rockhaven. With input from all three groups, City staff put together an RFQ to solicit interest from potential development partners, particularly those with experience in rehabilitating and adaptively reusing historic properties. Responses to the RFQ are due this month, and those deemed most qualified will be invited to submit specific proposals for the property. TGHS looks forward to being actively involved in the selection process.

When the City of Glendale purchased Rockhaven in 2008, I believe it had every intention of fully restoring the property and developing the grounds, to include perhaps a public library and a community park. But that was before the Great Recession and

I understand there will likely be some hesitation – and perhaps some skepticism – about this approach, especially from the surrounding neighborhoods as they weigh in on what type of development or use is appropriate for the site. TGHS's mission – indeed our responsibility as a preservation advocacy organization – is to ensure that architecturally and historically significant properties, such as Rockhaven, are protected and preserved for future generations.

To that end, TGHS has been very clear in its discussions with the City that any project for Rockhaven must:

1) identify, retain and preserve historic structures, features and landscaping in accordance with the Secretary of the

“[T]he most viable option for saving Rockhaven is for the City to enter into a public-private partnership.”]

the statewide dissolution of redevelopment agencies, a double hit to the City's coffers. It is unfortunate, but the reality is that in this era of cutbacks, the City is simply not in a financial position to provide the funds needed to restore the site properly or hire additional staff for ongoing maintenance of the property. However, allowing Rockhaven to languish is not an acceptable option either, as further deterioration will eventually lead to the loss of the historic structures.

My view, and one shared by my colleagues on the TGHS Board of Directors, is that the most viable option for saving Rockhaven is for the City to enter into a public-private partnership. Proposals may include some compatible, low-rise construction on the vacant portion of the site in order to make the project financially feasible, but this does not mean that the City will “turn Rockhaven over to developers,” as some have construed.

Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation of historic properties; 2) ensure that any alterations and additions to the property not radically change, destroy or obstruct character-defining spaces; 3) result in the placement of Rockhaven on the Glendale Register of Historic Resources and nomination to the National Register of Historic Places; and 4) provide public access so the community, at long last, has an opportunity to experience and enjoy the historic property.

I hope you will join us in supporting a future for Rockhaven that fully honors and preserves its past while giving the historic property a much-deserved new lease on life.

*Greg Grammer*

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 (Rossmoyne Properties, Inc.)  
 Arlene Vidor  
 Elaine & Bill Wilkerson

## TGHS Opposes Demolition of Historic District Contributor

The Glendale Historical Society is aggressively opposing plans to demolish a contributor to the recently established Brockmont Park Historic District.

The owner of 1555 Valley View Road has applied to demolish a 1954 Ranch-style house in order to construct a new 4,530 square foot, two-story, single-family residence. The existing house was found to retain high integrity in the historic district survey.

The Staff Report on the proposed demolition concludes that the project is exempt from environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) because: 1) the house's demolition "would not impact the district," since the historic district would remain above the 60 percent threshold for contributing houses; and 2) the structure was deemed ineligible for individual listing on the Glendale Register.

According to this argument, any contributing structure in a historic district could be torn down so long as 60 percent of the houses remain contributors and it is individually ineligible for listing!

Because the structure was identified as a contributor to the Brockmont Park Historic District and was recognized as historically significant when the City created the historic district, TGHS maintains that the structure cannot be demolished without an appropriate environmental review under CEQA.

Additionally, TGHS asserts that the City failed to adequately assess the impact of demolition of the house under the Glendale Historic District Overlay Zone ordinance.

The proposed demolition will be considered by the Historic Preservation Commission on July 17. TGHS will continue to oppose demolition, as demolition of a historic district contributor would undermine the work of all who have labored so hard to create Glendale's wonderful historic districts.



## Bank of West Lighting Fixtures Replaced

Bank of the West at 400 North Glendale Avenue is an eye-catching modern style building harkening back to the mid-20th century. Several months ago, The Glendale Historical Society noticed that the distinctive exterior light fixtures had been removed. A call to the City resulted in a stop-work order and citation for unpermitted modifications. Unfortunately, the original fixtures were already gone, but even though the structure is

not a designated historic resource the City was successful in getting the Bank to replace the fixtures with reproductions on the Glendale Avenue facade.

While this case ended in a good result, it serves as another example of the importance in educating property owners of the need for sensitivity and appreciation of Glendale's resources. And everyone needs to keep an eye open for any work taking place in the community, as irretrievable history can be whisked away in a matter of hours.



Photo: Glenn Ward. Courtesy of Glendale Public Library.

## Historic District Contributor Lost to Unpermitted Alterations *City Ignores Preservation Protections*

**A**lterations to a contributing house in the North Cumberland Heights Historic District will be allowed to remain, despite clear evidence that it no longer qualifies as a district contributor. The Glendale Historical Society believes the City has ignored its own Guidelines and ordinances as well as state law in this case, and its actions suggest that historic districts in Glendale are at great risk.

Owners of a 1936 Minimal Traditional-style residence on Grandview Avenue illegally changed windows, removed shutters and demolished their house's brick façade, all character-defining features identified in the district's Historic Resources Survey. By the time TGHS learned about the situation, City staff had already recommended that the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) approve the changes. Staff also suggested the Commissioners reject another proposed alteration: the addition of six-foot-high metal gates blocking the front porch.

The members of the HPC had a long and thoughtful discussion (March 2014 meeting video available at the City's website). Based on the staff recommendation, and assurances that the changes were minor and acceptable, the HPC decided to allow the window and façade alterations, required the installation of new shutters to match the new windows and disallowed the metal gates.

At the next HPC meeting, TGHS read a statement, written in consultation with historic preservation professionals active in the organization, criticizing the Staff Report for failing to comply with the City's own Design Guidelines for properties in historic districts as well as the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Glendale's guidelines state that replacement windows "should match the historic window[s] as closely as possible." The new and quite heavy aluminum-clad windows are noticeably different in several respects from their slim, elegant steel predecessors, as the Staff Report even noted. Likewise, the guidelines state that "[s]tucco or brick cladding should be preserved and maintained," not discarded or exchanged at will. Staff should never have recommended approving alterations that destroyed character-defining features. The owners should have been compelled to honor their obligation to the district and restore the property. In addition, staff should also have pointed out to the Commissioners that installing new shutters would only create "a false sense of historical development"; the original shutters should therefore have been replaced too.

The owners appealed the decision on the metal gates at the June City Council meeting, where TGHS asked the Council to reverse the HPC's decision on the other alterations. Unfortunately, the Council voted 2-0-1 (two members were absent) not only to uphold the HPC's original decision but to permit the gates as well.

City staff  
apparently  
think that  
significantly  
altering  
historic district  
contributors  
to the extent  
that they lose  
their character  
is not a matter  
of public  
concern.

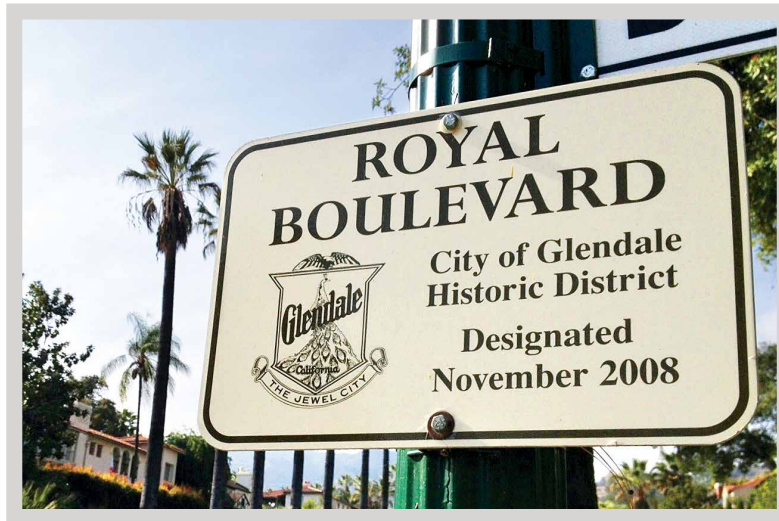
This was a terrible day for historic districts in Glendale. City staff deny that the house has ceased to be a contributor; however, a half dozen preservation professionals insist that its 2014 Spanish-style exterior now lacks the integrity to convey the district's period of significance and thus no longer qualifies. City staff have said on multiple occasions that it does not even matter if contributors are altered beyond recognition or demolished, so long as the district remains above the 60 percent threshold for contributing properties. Is this why so many people have worked so hard in Glendale to create historic districts? This argument would be laughable if it were not so potentially destructive.

Such thinking demonstrates once again how far, in TGHS's opinion, the City is out of compliance with state law. The City declared the property on Grandview categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), even though the California Public Resources Code (PRC) unmistakably establishes that a historic district contributor is presumed to be historically significant under the City's own internal documentation and counts as a historic resource under CEQA.

TGHS will continue to pressure the City to comply with its own laws, CEQA and the PRC and national standards for historic preservation. This development presents a real threat to historic districts. TGHS was dismayed to discover that if the owners of the

house had simply tried to get permits for the windows, shutters and façade, they would have been granted at the staff level. No HPC, no City Council, no public discussion. In other words, City staff apparently think that significantly altering historic district contributors to the extent that they lose their character is not a matter of public concern.

We urge you to let the Planning Department, the HPC Commissioners and City Council know, loudly and often, that historic districts are one of Glendale's treasures, and they must be preserved.



## City Council Rejects Exorbitant Preservation Fee Increases

In May, the City Council asked to hear from residents and The Glendale Historical Society about the effects that proposed fee increases would have on Glendale's Mills Act and historic district programs. TGHS and its members and supporters gave an earful. Articulate, informed letters – from those currently involved in these programs or hoping to join them, and those who simply know their value to our city – persuaded the Council that steep increases would create significant disincentives to participation and likely spell the end of new historic districts in the city. It unanimously decided to leave the rates at current levels for another year.

City staff had recommended raising the Mills Act fee from \$1,285 to \$3,000. The Mills Act enables properties listed on the Glendale Register to qualify for significant property tax deductions. The fee to apply for a historic district would have increased from \$2,083 to \$6,500 (grants are currently available from TGHS to cover one-half this cost). There are no immediate and direct financial incentives to creating a historic district.

In its letter to the City Council, TGHS noted that neighboring cities strive to keep these fees low to encourage participation. For example, Pasadena charges \$1,099 for the Mills Act and nothing to apply to create a historic district; at present Burbank charges nothing for either the Mills Act or historic districts; Mills Act property owners in Los Angeles only pay \$250, with a variable rate to become a historic district.

Letter writers described the work they had done on historic houses, which the property tax reduction made possible. Indeed, the rationale behind the state's Mills Act, passed in 1972, is that owners invest that amount and more into such properties, which are often extraordinarily expensive to repair and maintain. Sometimes they must spend tens or even hundreds of thousands of dollars restoring them even to qualify. Owners of Mills Act properties sign a legally binding contract with the City to maintain them at the highest preservation standards.

The proposed fee increase to more than 300 percent of the current rate for historic districts was especially prohibitive. It would certainly have precluded the formation of small districts and was poised to eliminate applications altogether. The increase did not take into account that residents themselves necessarily invest far more time in the process of forming historic districts than City staff do. Volunteers devote hundreds of hours to these neighborhood projects that contribute to the attractiveness and vibrancy of Glendale and to the welfare of all residents. Many people argued that Glendale should be doing everything in its power to encourage their formation (and protect them once established).

Council members had at first raised the possibility of increasing the fee for the Mills Act even higher; Councilmember Ara Najarian floated the figure of \$10,500, the amount that staff claims it costs them to process and administer each successful application. But he and others who seemed to favor large increases quickly withdrew their support by the second Council meeting on the matter. TGHS was prepared to speak against the increases, but it proved unnecessary.

It was the letters from TGHS and its members and supporters that educated Council about the very real public benefits that the preservation of historic properties confers on Glendale and its residents. The City Council noted the impact of these letters and expressed gratitude to all who weighed in on an issue that is so important to the preservation of the past and thus to the future of our community.

Councilmember Najarian did say that he would like to study the Mills Act further, to get a sense of what the reductions are and the uses owners put them to. TGHS will closely monitor any proposal to increase Mills Act fees.

This experience is an excellent example of what involved citizens can do through concerted action at the grass roots level. The City asked for TGHS's input, TGHS gave it, and the Council listened.



## Doctors House Report

**A**aron and Devonna Reichert celebrated their 11th wedding anniversary by enjoying dinner for two in the beautifully decorated dining room of the Doctors House Museum as a result of their winning this year's Candlelight Dinner raffle.

The Reicherts first toasted with champagne, then were escorted on their own private tour of the museum, courtesy of Doctors House Director Sonia Montejano and Assistant Director Peter Rusch. The five-course meal was prepared and elegantly served by Montejano and Rusch, assisted by Scott Halloran, and was followed by an appropriate tea ceremony served the Victorian way. Music wafted gently through the rooms to supplement their dining experience.

Aaron commented that he will try extra hard to win next year's raffle so that he and Devonna may return to celebrate their 12th anniversary.

## Get Involved! Help Plan and Produce TGHS Events

**W**hile the list on the back page of this newsletter details this year's confirmed events, volunteers are hard at work behind the scenes conjuring up plans for 2015 and beyond. The Glendale Historical Society has always produced a wide array of events. We would like to do even more, but often it is not possible to take advantage of every opportunity due to a lack of people to plan and produce the events.

We are pleased to report that several sub-groups of the Events Planning Group have taken the initiative to organize and pursue the following future activities:

### WALKING TOURS:

Jackie Davis, Steve Hunt, Catherine Jurca, John LoCascio, Bruce Merritt, Erik Yesayan

### MOVIE NIGHTS:

Kathryn Engel, Peter Rusch, Bill Shepherd

### MIXERS AT LOCAL AND HISTORIC BARS:

Laura Crook, Greg Grammer

### PRESERVATION FAIR/EXPO:

Kathryn Engel

You can join one or more of these groups and help get more dates on the TGHS calendar.

Send an email to: [events@glendalehistorical.org](mailto:events@glendalehistorical.org) or leave a message at 818-242-7447.



## TGHS Unveils New and Improved Website

The Glendale Historical Society has revamped its website to make it easier to navigate and find information about events and critical preservation activities. While we are still making adjustments and enhancements, you can check it out at [www.glendalehistorical.org](http://www.glendalehistorical.org).



A lot happens between newsletters, so The Glendale Historical Society posts updates on the TGHS Facebook page.

“Like” us at [www.facebook.com/GlendaleHistoricalSociety](http://www.facebook.com/GlendaleHistoricalSociety) to get keep current on TGHS activities and make sure you don't miss anything.

# WELCOME

## NEW & RENEWING MEMBERS: APRIL 2014-JUNE 2014

### JEWEL CITY PATRON (\$500)

Rima & Donnell Cameron - R  
Catherine Jurca & Scott Fraser - U

### VERDUGO PATRON (\$250)

Peggy Dionne - U  
Pam & Jim Elyea/History for Hire - U  
Nancy Hathaway/The Wine Vault - R

### TROPICO SUPPORTER (\$100)

Jeri Anderson - R  
Irene Blore - R  
Pam & Bruce Devine - R  
Elizabeth Morris &  
Rebecca Maxwell - U  
Jim Newman & Michael Williams - N  
Zara Rostomian &  
Varand Balasanian - N

Curtis Schwab & John Sims - U  
Larry Tison - R  
Lorna Vartanian - U

### SUSTAINING (\$50)

Cathy Billings - N  
Barbara & John Conry - R  
Timothy Foy - R  
Hilary Lile - N  
Maureen & Sheridan Palladini - R  
Janna Siftar - R  
Djanet Stumreiter - N

### DUAL (\$40)

Cindy & Jonathon Beres - N  
Natalie Chaidez & Scott Lowe - R  
Paula & Art Devine - R  
Anita & Russell Harnden - R  
Carol & Richard Heyes - R  
Shanna & Scott Igoe - R  
Wendy Juleff - N  
Patricia Marsh & Michael Morgan - R  
Patricia Messina & Terrance Hines - R  
Adam Price & Gregory Salmon - N  
Lisa Schulz & Ayre Gross - R  
Julie Webber - N  
Sharon & William Weisman - R  
Sandy & Woody Wise - R  
Katherine Wolfe - R  
Kate Wynn - N

### INDIVIDUAL (\$25)

Ute Baum - R  
Rita Cárdenas - R  
Nadia DeWees - R  
Linda Dorn - N  
Brett Godwin - N  
Elizabeth Lopez - N  
Isabelle Meyer - R  
Robin Oates - R  
Lila Sanden - U  
Diana Schillinger - U

Ron Scott - R  
Raymond Shinn - N  
Damian Sullivan - N  
Mona Vasiloiu - R

### SENIOR/STUDENT (\$15)

Ross Adams - R  
Patricia Bates - R  
Margaret Bickmore - R  
Joyce Briscoe - N  
Sona Davitan - R  
Sharon Hyder Dorris - R  
Daniel Fagen - R  
Joyce Goodwin - R  
Sandra Haggerty - R  
Beverly Heyler - R  
George James - N  
Erika Jarjour - N  
Claudia Jefferies - R  
Carol Kopf - N  
John Mayhew - R  
Kumiko Mayhew - R  
Don McDonald - R  
Mary McVay - R  
Michael Mohill - R  
Irene Munafo - R  
Perry Reel - N  
Jane Shaffer - N  
Dian Shamhart - N

George White - R  
Bella Yegian - R

### PAST PRESIDENTS LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Deborah Dentler  
Carole Dougherty  
Andrea Humberger  
John LoCascio  
Marie Luft  
Steve Preston  
Bill Shepherd  
David Smith  
Arlene Vidor

N - New Member  
R - Renewing Member  
U - Upgrading Member

PLEASE CONSIDER A MEMBERSHIP UPGRADE THE NEXT TIME YOU RENEW.

## Join The Glendale Historical Society and Support Historic Preservation in Our Community

THE SOCIETY IS A NON-PROFIT tax-exempt organization, and we encourage you to join and volunteer. Please complete this form and mail it with a check payable to:  
The Glendale Historical Society, PO Box 4173, Glendale CA 91202-0173

Brand Patron (\$5,000)

Goode Patron (\$2,500)

San Rafael Patron (\$1,000)

Jewel City Patron (\$500)

Verdugo Patron (\$250)

Tropico Supporter (\$100)

Sustaining (\$50)

Dual (\$40)

Individual (\$25)

Individual Senior  
or Student (\$15)  
Nonprofit (\$35)

Nonprofit organizations are encouraged to join  
TGHS as Associate Members (No voting rights)

Name ..... Phone .....

Street Address .....

City/Zip Code ..... Email Address .....

WANT TO GET INVOLVED? WHAT ARE YOUR INTERESTS?

Preservation Advocacy

Historic Districting

Fundraising

Special Events/Tours

Outreach/Education

Doctors House Volunteers

Historic Research/Surveys

Archiving/Organizing

Membership/Outreach



PO Box 4173, Glendale, CA 91202-0173  
www.glendalehistorical.org



# 2014 EVENTS CALENDAR

## **SATURDAY, AUGUST 23, 7:00-10:00 P.M.**

TGHS GALA & BENEFIT  
Brockman Clock Tower Estate  
Tickets on Sale Now!

## **SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 11:00 A.M.-4:00 P.M.**

ROMANTIC REVIVALS HOME TOUR  
Tickets on Sale after August 15

## **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26, 6:00-9:00 P.M. (NEW DATE)**

BENEATH THE VEIL!  
A Special Exhibit on Victorian Mourning and Death  
Doctors House Museum, Brand Park  
1601 West Mountain Street, Glendale  
\$5.00 Donation Requested

## **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13 & SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20 6:30-8:30 P.M.**

CANDLELIGHT TOURS  
Doctors House Museum, Brand Park  
1601 West Mountain Street, Glendale  
\$5.00 Donation Requested