



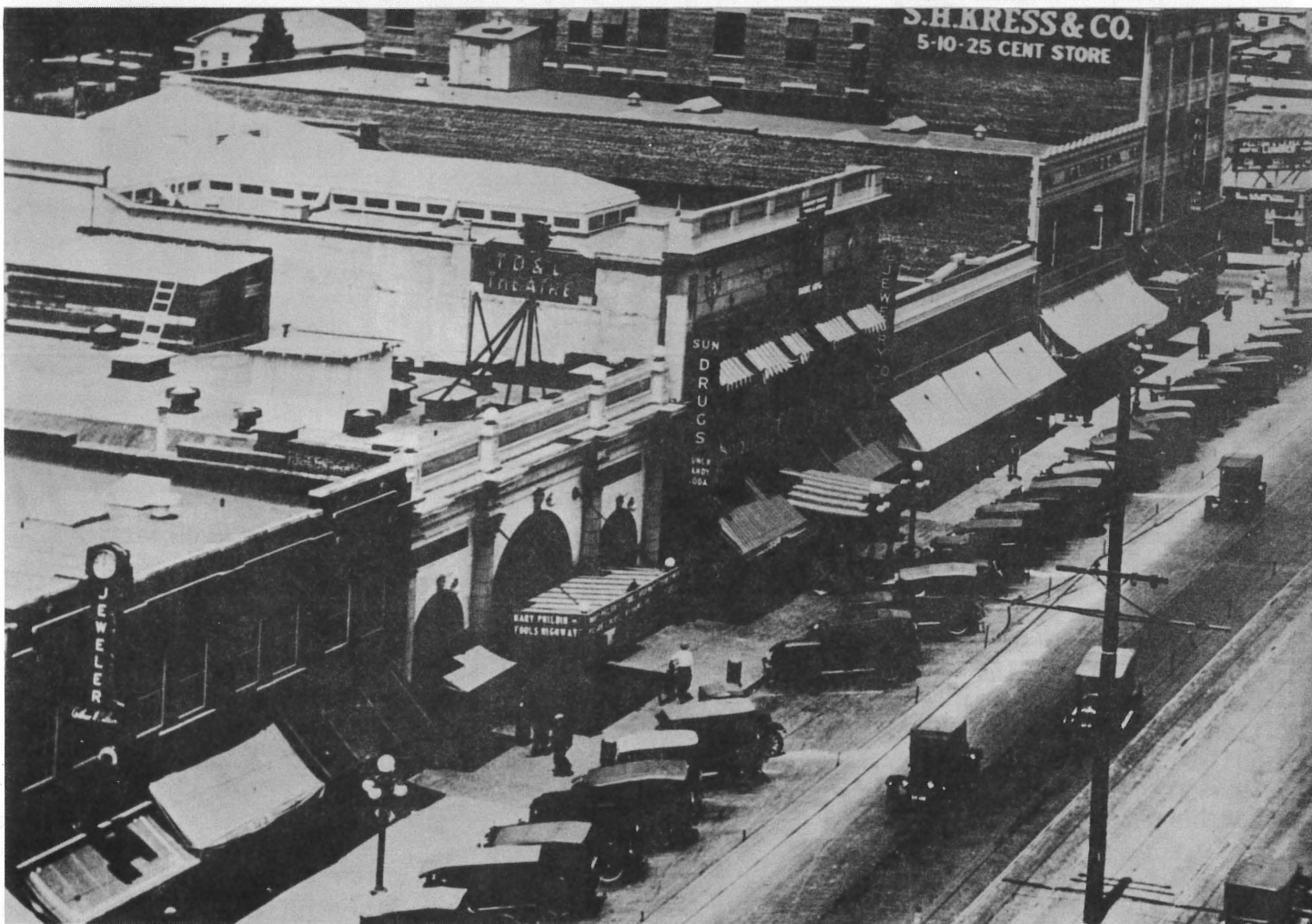
The Glendale Historical Society

NEWSLETTER



VOL. I, NO. 4, 1980

Preservation Can Make Profits from the Egyptian Village Cafe



The historic setting of Jensen's Palace Grand Shops and the Egyptian Village Cafe on North Brand Boulevard in the mid-1920's. Flanked by the TD & L Theatre and Safeway Store No. 49, Jensen's was very much a part of Main Street USA. (Photo from *Special Collections, Glendale Public Library*)



Jensen's Palace Grand Shops presented an impressive front to Brand Boulevard in this photo which pre-dates the 1922 conversion. (Photo from Special Collections, Glendale Public Library)

The site of Jensen's Palace Grand Shops at 131 - 133 North Brand Boulevard, which includes the remains of the Egyptian Village Cafe, is significant for its unique Egyptian/Grecian/Roman flavored and eclectic architecture as well as for its associations with the early recreational and commercial activities of Glendale. The original building and its surviving interior today commemorate the exuberant flowering of amateur architectural tastes during the post-World War I boom period of the 1920s in Southern California.

The ground floor was originally a glass-roofed arcade which anticipated the architecturally and commercially successful modern glass-roofed Galleria Shopping Mall which has been built two blocks to the southwest of Jensen's Palace Grand Shops. Jensen's thus provides an historic link between the individualistic commercial properties of the past and the massive, corporate shopping facilities of today.

In 1922 the basement of the Jensen complex was converted into Glendale's first bowling alley and billiard parlor. This combined enterprise continued functioning on this site until 1937 at which time the facilities were relocated and the remaining space was converted into commercial shop storage.

THE GLENDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- MARCH 4 Art historian and popular lecturer and teacher at Glendale Community College, Dr. Leonard DeGrassi will present a slide show on the "Romantic Movement in Architecture" relating the movement to the architecture of the Egyptian Village Cafe.
7:30 p.m. - Carillon Room, Glendale Federal, 401 North Brand
- MARCH 29-
APRIL 1 Sixth Annual California Historic Preservation Conference, Theme: "Strengthening the Local Process" at the University of California, Riverside. Pre-registration: \$35.00.
For more information, write:
Conference Coordinator
c/o History Department
University of California
Riverside, CA 92521
- APRIL 1 Part II of TGHS member Zane Haag's slides of interesting architecture in Southern California
7:30 p.m. - Glendale Federal, 401 North Brand
- APRIL 25 Palms Depot Benefit Silent Movie Evening, "The Great K & A Train Robbery" starring Tom Mix at the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium, 13 North First Street, Alhambra, 289-3826. Donation: \$4.00. 8:30 p.m.
For more information and tickets, write:
Cultural Heritage Foundation
P.O. Box 8726
San Marino, CA 91108
- APRIL 26 Walking Tour of Downtown Glendale
Visit the Masonic Temple being rehabilitated to a Louis XV interior decor; the 1921 Pendroy Building, built as a department store and now adapted to use for the architecture offices of Symonds/Feola Partnership; the Brand Building where a trussed redwood ceilinged room is reputed to be the first place of worship of Glendale's Church of the Latter Day Saints and where presently the architecture office of Jones & Walton is located; and the exotic 1922 abandoned restaurant, the Egyptian Village Cafe.
Donation of \$3.50 mailed to the Glendale Historical Society, P.O. Box 4173, Glendale, CA 91202, by April 19 will confirm reservations for this tour. Guided tours will run every half hour from 1:00 to 3:00 with a limited number of people in each group and will last about two hours.
- MAY 17 The Glendale Historical Society tribute to Glendale's Diamond Jubilee
A fashion show and ice cream social featuring historic costumes modeled by prominent Glendale ladies and gentlemen interspersed with contemporary designer's fashions from Le Jardin modeled by John Powers models.
2:00-5:00 p.m. - El Miradero Art Center patio, Mountain and Grandview.
\$5.00 donation to benefit Doctors' House restoration.

Also in 1922 the arcade shops of the second floor of Jensen's were remodeled as the arresting premises of the Egyptian Village Cafe. The decorative themes of the restaurant reflected the Egyptomania that spread throughout the world after the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb in Egypt. In the heart of downtown Glendale the architectural style of pure Egyptian Revival evolved into an expression which was eclectic to the point of becoming an original and unique example of this genre in Southern California. A well recognized city spot, the prosperous and prominent of Glendale were the clientele of the Cafe until its closure in 1927. Although the exterior and ground floor of Jensen's have been much altered, the second floor retains most of its original character and is well worth preserving.

The total effect of the surviving portions of Jensen's Palace Grand Shops is one of a strikingly original architecture. The scale of Jensen's, while befitting the demands and resources of a small town, also serves to convey the human proportions of the community and the capacities of one of its citizen-merchants. A unique landmark of commercial architecture was produced here.

It is still a landmark in the memories of long-time Glendale residents, and it can be rescued from the past for newer arrivals by means of period photographs and historic restoration. The Glendale Historical Society, among other interested parties, feels that the preservation of at least the remarkable interior of the Egyptian Village Cafe will assure that this precious legacy from the commercial history of our city can endure to play a key role in the economic and artistic revival of the Brand Boulevard business district.



The arresting contemporary interior of the Egyptian Village Cafe is clearly both a rich legacy from Glendale's past and a potential resource for imaginative urban renewal.
(Photo by Marie Luft TGHS)

As one of the more inaccessible historic resources of Glendale, the Egyptian Village Cafe has enjoyed a limited press as is reflected in the following short, selected Bibliography compiled by Society member Carole Dougherty.

City of Glendale, Building Permits Division, building permits dating from 1922 to 1979.

City of Glendale, Building Permits Division, Blue print of Exterior Remodeling, 1964.

City of Glendale, Planning Division, Historic Preservation Element, Glendale, California, 1977.

Clark, Alson. Architectural Historian, Librarian, Fine Arts and Architecture Library, University of Southern California, Letter to Glendale City Council, December 4, 1979.

Gebhard, David & Robert Winter. A Guide to Architecture in Los Angeles and Southern California. Peregrine Smith, Inc., Santa Barbara, 1977.

Goshorn, George. "Magic Land of Past Bared by Remodeling", Glendale News-Press, Glendale, California, June 22, 1964.

Munson, Arthur C. Architect, Blue print, Remodeling, Building Permits Division, City of Glendale, 1937.

Progressive Architecture, November 1980.

Sunset, August 1980.

The future of Jensen's Palace Grand Shops and the Egyptian Village Cafe has not yet been determined. The Fall and Winter of 1980 were fascinating times for preservationists in Glendale as the periodic open hearings of the Glendale Redevelopment Agency aired successive and very different proposals for the economic and architectural restoration of the portion of Brand Boulevard which contains the remains of Jensen's. The range of proposals was from an international financial package to robust, local Glendale resources of finance and ideas. The Press, including the Glendale News-Press, the Glendale Ledger, and the Los Angeles Times has been effective in providing a public record of these proceedings.

Although the Glendale Historical Society focuses its primary attentions upon the Doctors' House Project, the Society will continue to devote a portion of its energy toward promoting a balanced and historically responsible future for the Egyptian Village Cafe.

The Glendale Historical Society
P.O. Box 4173
Glendale, California 91202