



The Glendale Historical Society

VOL. 9, NO. 1, 1988

Benefit Launches Doctors' House Centennial



The Doctors' House, Christmas 1987

As the first in a year-long series of special events marking the centennial of The Doctors' House, a Victorian-style afternoon benefit will be held by the Docent Guild in The Doctors' House parlor on Friday January 22 and Saturday January 23 at 1:30 pm. A program "Life Styles of the '90s" will feature slides, a talk, and costumes by Merry Franzen.

Mrs. Franzen is a Doctors' House docent, a member of the Los Angeles Conservancy, and a Heritage Square docent. In addition to learning about the 1890s, guests will have the opportunity to socialize over refreshments and take a tour of the house.

As seating is limited to 30 people each afternoon, advance reservations are required. Reservations may be made by telephoning Mary Sheppard at 244-7646 and by sending your check (\$7 payable to The Glendale Historical Society) to Mary at 1515 Grandview, Glendale, 91201.

PRESERVATION ISSUES UPDATE

The TGHS Preservation Action Task Force has been busy working on issues affecting the future of three of Glendale's major historic buildings: the Alex Theatre, the E. D. Goode House, and the former Masonic Temple. Separate sub-task forces have been formed to handle these three issues, and have been meeting with various parties involved with the three structures.

In anticipation of possible City proposals for a change in use of the Alex, the task force members have been gathering data on major restored movie palaces, especially those with a 1,200 - 2,800 seating capacity like that of the Alex. They have been talking with, getting ideas from, and getting letters of support from members of the Southern California preservation community and from experts on historic theatres. Additionally they are examining prior Alex studies - by Mitze Theatre Consultants, Glendale Partners, and by our organization in its 1986 Alex position paper. Such a paper would, with the aid of a slide program, become a means of establishing and promoting our position.

The task force's written evaluation of Mr. Joe Ayvasi's proposal for the E. D. Goode House was presented to the City Planning Department on December 3. The Department subsequently issued a staff report stating that a full environmental impact report would be needed if Mr. Ayvasi was to proceed further with his proposal, which included building a U-shaped office building surrounding the house. The Staff had determined that the plan would have potential adverse affects on both the historic resource and the neighborhood, which is presently a residential zone.

Due to this decision, Mr. Ayvasi has decided to pursue a totally new development course, possibly residential or office/residential (retaining the Goode House on the site). He will be submitting his plans for approval by the various City departments. Since he wants the new project to satisfy both planning and preservation standards, we look forward to the creation of a proposal which will merit our full support.

The sub-task force for the former Masonic Temple on Brand has met with owners Robert and Dennis DePietro to review their plans for adaptive re-use of the building. The DePietros also presented their plans at a slide presentation for TGHS general membership, held December 1 on the third floor of the Temple. With the assistance of the California State Office of Historic Preservation, the sub-task force is compiling an evaluation of the proposal to rehabilitate the 9-story building for commercial use. The plan includes the removal of some interior walls, the addition of an exterior elevator shaft, and the creation of new windows. The developers also propose to construct buildings on the north and south sides of the Temple. Specific alterations depend on the tenants, whom they are currently seeking.

To aid in re-creating certain historic aspects of the Masonic Temple, the DePietros are also looking for old photographs showing the building's exterior and interior.

Persons interested in serving on the TGHS Preservation Action Task Force should contact TGHS at 242-7447.

Suzanne McKay
Sue Lazara
TGHS Preservation Task Force



Serena and Carole Meyer and Audrey Hales helped children enjoy Christmas at The Doctors' House.

CHRISTMAS AT THE DOCTORS' HOUSE

A Victorian Christmas was recreated for the holidays at The Doctors' House, beginning on December 12 with children's activities in the morning and open house for all in the afternoon.

Doctors' House docents gave special children's tours through the rooms, which had been beautified throughout with Victorian and Victorian-style decorations. The young visitors received home baked cookies made from traditional recipes and created their own ornaments to take home. For the open house, docent Michael Kouri and friends entertained guests with seasonal music. Docents served as hostesses and offered the home-baked treats for sale.

The house was open for extended hours on Sundays during December so visitors could linger and enjoy the festive atmosphere. Our Docent Guild provided a delightful experience to all who visited The Doctors' House during the holiday season. Many thanks to Docent Chairman Mary Sheppard and to docents Audrey Hales, Isabelle Meyer, Lorraine Zabaro, Helen Wrede, Betty Zilmer, Rita Stafford, Almetta Hames, Billie Knox, Mary McVay, Merry Franzen, Grace Geary, Carole Dougherty, and "junior docents" Serena and Carole Meyer.



*Parlor,
The Doctors' House*

*All Doctors' House photos by
Sid Gordon*

CHEVY CHASE ESTATES - A DREAM COME TRUE

"Chevy Chase Estates" was the dream of farsighted developer Bert Farrar, who in 1925 owned all of the land in the canyon from the gates up to the present-day La Canada-Flintridge border at the crest of the San Rafael Hills. Subdivided in 1922-23, the tract's development gained momentum with the extension of Chevy Chase Drive into Pasadena in 1926. Bert Farrar described the tract in brochures as "a close-in exclusive rural setting with equestrian trails, country and fine homes" whose designs were reviewed by an architectural review committee.

The tradition of country and fine homes continues, although the architectural controls are no longer applied. The equestrian trails exist still as undeveloped ten feet wide "walks", the best known of which is Stuart's Walk, adjoining 2501 E. Chevy Chase. It ascends and crosses St. Andrews, then continues to Cascadia. Water flows year round on or near Stuart's Walk, allowing it to support many live oak trees and ferns.

The first inhabitants of the area were probably native American Indians. There is suspicion that a colony of Gabrielinos lived in the canyon which has access from Laird Drive at 2500 E. Chevy Chase. Corporal Jose Maria Verdugo and his descendants owned the land from 1798 until "The Great Partition of 1871". In that year the courts determined ownership of various parcels which the Verdugos had sold or traded off in order to pay their taxes and debts. Until 1915 the area was owned by the Sierra Land and Water Company and various other parties.

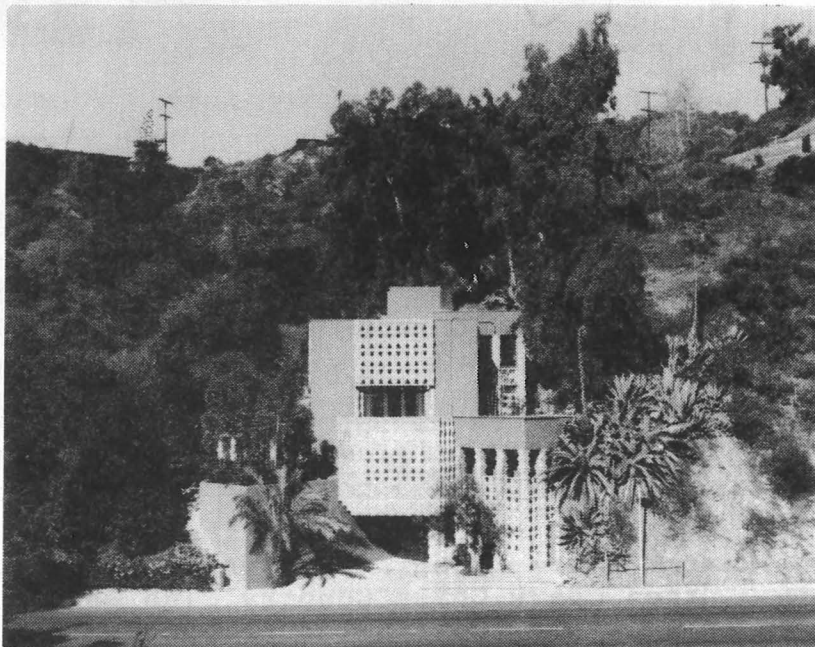
Accounts tell of Indians and others mining for gold and silver in the canyons during the nineteenth century. In 1964, a Glendale fireman penetrated a mine located in an area midway between Figueroa and the present-day Chevy Chase branch library, about 100 yards west of Chevy Chase Drive. Ore was reputedly packed out on a trail leading to Pasadena, transferred to a wagon train, then sent to Los Angeles for smelting.

Because of its dense growth of trees and the stream which ran through it, the canyon, known then as Sycamore Canyon, was a popular picnic spot. Eventually a road known as Sycamore Canyon Road extended through it as far as the broad meadow where the Chevy Chase Country Club is now located. The road follows the course of a natural river bed, which, until recent years and the construction of a giant underground storm drain, was a cause of much trouble for the residents of the canyon. The original road was cleared by mules which were grazed in the meadow.

In 1915, Crampton Anderson, a wealthy oil man and a brother-in-law and business associate of E. L. Doheny, purchased 1647 acres from Clairvue Land Company for \$500,000. Within the acreage generally bounded by present-day Colorado Boulevard in Eagle Rock, Verdugo Road in Glendale and Montrose, and Figueroa Boulevard in Flintridge, Sycamore Canyon was the largest of about 1,000 canyons. Anderson's announced plan was to subdivide the acreage into sites of from five to fifty acres. Instead he erected gates to block all entrances to the property and employed watchmen to keep a constant guard.

Development of the canyon halted until Bert Farrar bought the property and began development of Chevy Chase Estates in 1923. The name change of the canyon and its main road reflected its importance to the city of Glendale, of which the existing Chevy Chase Drive was already a main cross-town artery.

On January 29, 1925, the first lots went on sale. All lot buyers were entitled to membership in the planned Chevy Chase Country Club, with its golf course designed by Billy Bell. The first house completed beyond the gates was the English Tudor style home at 2500 E. Chevy Chase Drive. The hills and terrain of the canyon evoked various architectural responses, ranging from woodsy Craftsman bungalows to imposing Spanish-Colonial Revival hilltop villas. There was a handful of rustic English Tudor style homes, and a number of bold experimental modern residences. Lloyd Wright, son of Frank Lloyd Wright, designed several homes for the canyon. However, only three were built. The Derby House (1926), 2535 Chevy Chase, features a liberal use of pre-cast concrete blocks whose pattern was inspired by Southwest Indian designs. The Calori House (1926), 3021 Chevy Chase, is a dramatic, free interpretation of the Spanish-Colonial Revival style. The Lewis home (1926), 2948 Graceland Way, has been modified yet retains its similarity to the prominent verticality of the Millard House designed by Frank Lloyd Wright.

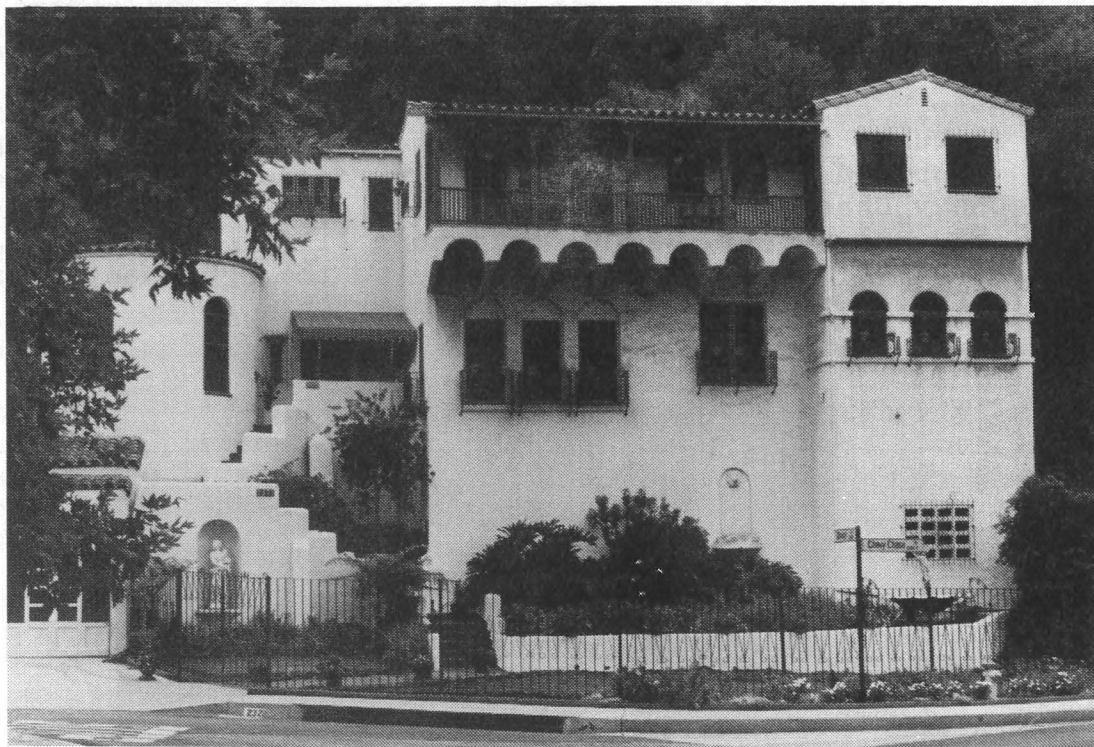


Southwest Indian designs provided inspiration for Lloyd Wright's Derby House (1926) at 2535 E. Chevy Chase. Photo courtesy Carole Dougherty.

The postwar houses commissioned by Arts & Architecture magazine illustrate the modern experimental house: the Fuller House (1948-49), 3068 East Chevy Chase Drive, and the Kett House (1948-49), 1709 Golf Club Drive. The houses, designed by A. Quincy Jones and Frederick E. Emmons, were built as part of the innovative Case Study program. The sole goal of the program was to produce designs for a good living environment while it encouraged architects to experiment with forms and materials. Thirteen houses were built during the first five years of the program (1945-50) and proved so acceptable to the home-buying public that the features which were introduced--glass walls, open floor plans, kitchens facing the street, slab floors--are now commonplace.

In 1927 Mr. Farrar had flowering plants put from the gates to the country club. They were watered at his expense by a sprinkler truck which made regular trips up and down the boulevard for a number of years. Another sight frequently seen by the early residents was the Biltmore bus, which ran from the Flintridge Biltmore Hotel (now Flintridge Sacred Heart Academy) to the Biltmore Hotel in downtown Los Angeles. The drivers of the Biltmore buses would obligingly stop at a resident's hail and would transport those in Chevy Chase to and from Los Angeles, accepting a nickel tip for their trouble.

Chevy Chase was the home of many people of wealth and fame. Among them were Art Baker, star of radio and early television: Dennis Day, who was Jack Benny's famous crooner for many years: Dr. and Natalie Calmus, inventors of the Technicolor film process: and T. R. Knudsen owner of Knudsen Dairy.



This 1928 Spanish Colonial Revival home at 2322 E. Chevy Chase dramatizes its hillside setting with a winding staircase, balconies, and a tower. Photo courtesy Carole Dougherty.

Chevy Chase was not untouched by the great depression of the thirties, and Mr. Farrar's dream began to crumble. The remaining unsold property including the Chevy Chase Country Club went into receivership, and the bank began to sell and auction the property. In 1937 the country club was threatened by subdivision, but through the efforts of the residents the Chevy Chase Estates Association was formed and the club was saved. Since that time it has been saved several more times by the Association's efforts.

Chevy Chase Canyon is no longer what we would consider "out in the country", but it retains much of its rural feeling and reminds us of our rugged past of not so long ago.

Editor's note:

*This article was written by Bill Troiano, long-time resident of Chevy Chase Canyon, who now lives in Santa Barbara. It is based on Bill's research and oral interviews with two other long-time canyon residents: Eleanor Staar (now living in Pacific Grove) and Sylvia Moody (who served as secretary to the Chevy Chase Estates Association for 44 years).

*We also wish to thank Barbara Boyd, Special Collection librarian, for making additional information available to us for this article.

TGHS CELEBRATES THE HOLIDAYS IN STYLE

A convivial holiday spirit prevailed as TGHS members and friends gathered for our annual Yuletide celebration, held this year the evening of December 6 at "The Network" in downtown Glendale. Greeted by the festive Christmas lights of Brand Boulevard, guests enjoyed the pub-like ambience of the recently renovated downstairs level of the 1929 Masonic Temple.

The Christmas party was a great opportunity to get together with those we've worked with over the past year, and to make fresh acquaintances. Many thanks to event co-ordinators Margaret Hammond and Jamee Harasick; to Tom, Linda, and Mark Sorensen of "The Network"; to building owners Robert and Dennis De Pietro; to members for their delicious food contributions; and to committee members Dan and Barbara Leimeter, Audrey Hales, Dorothy West, Sid Gordon, Fred Hammond, Suzanne McKay and Evelyn Hansen.

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WELCOME TO NEW DOCTORS' HOUSE DOCENTS

A warm welcome to five new docents who have recently joined the Docent Guild following training sessions in the fall. In this newsletter we spotlight two of these new docents, Isabelle Meyer and Barbara Johnson.

Isabelle Meyer and her family have been involved with The Doctors' House since it was tagged for demolition. Becoming a docent is her way of staying in touch with the present and future of this community treasure.

Isabelle is a full-time student at Cal State L.A. in order to work toward a teaching degree. She especially hopes to make the young aware of what can be accomplished by a caring community devoted to preserving its history.

Barbara Johnson was born and raised in Long Beach but came to Glendale almost 35 years ago. She's always been a bookworm with a heavy interest in history and biography, but it wasn't until she participated in the historical survey of downtown Glendale a few years ago that she began to learn about her adopted home town. Says Barbara, "I wish I'd been in on the restoration of The Doctors' House, but I did put in enough time in the fund-raising yard sales to earn one of the last cut-nail awards to be given. I'm very pleased to have it."

She has been a docent at the Fenyes Mansion in Pasadena and worked in the textiles and collections areas of the Pasadena Historical Society Museum. In her free time Barbara enjoys quilting: "There is a lot of history in quilting as well as happy hours while you watch a pattern come alive as you piece and quilt."

We hope all the new docents enjoy helping others enjoy The Doctors' House.

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Newsletter Editor: Suzanne McKay Assistant Editor: Dr. Robert Newcomb

Thanks to Helen Wrede for typing the newsletter, and to Bob Woodring and Daphne Lindstrum for their help in the bulk mailing.

THE GLENDALE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Calendar of Events for Winter and Early Spring, 1988

- JANUARY 6
Wednesday General meeting of TGHS. Theatre historian John Miller will be giving a slide presentation, "California Movie Palaces in the Eighties".
- JANUARY 22
Friday and "Life Styles of the '90s." Program by Merry Franzen including slides, costume display and walk-through house tour.
JANUARY 23
Saturday Doctors' House parlor, 1:30 pm. Reservations \$7. Phone Mary Sheppard, 244-7646. (See related newsletter article.)
- JANUARY 24
Sunday "Your Old House." On-site restoration workshops / demonstrations at five historic homes in Highland Park. 12 noon-4:30 pm. Presented by the Highland Park Heritage Trust and Los Angeles Conservancy. \$20 for Trust or Conservancy members, \$30 general public. For details contact the L.A. Conservancy at (213) 623-CITY.
- FEBRUARY
Antique jewelry exhibit at The Doctors' House. Sundays 2pm-4pm.
- FEBRUARY 3
Wednesday General meeting of TGHS. Reports from committees and planning for Doctors' House centennial events. Preservation issues updates.
- FEBRUARY 12
Friday "Reel Love: Romantic Images of the Silver Screen." Maurice Chevalier and Jeannette MacDonald in the 1932 classic "Love Me Tonight" at the Million Dollar Theatre in downtown L.A. Presented by the Los Angeles Conservancy and the L.A. County Museum of Natural History. Doors open at 7:30 pm. Tickets \$15 each or \$25 per couple. Send check and stamped self-addressed envelope to the museum at 900 Exposition Blvd., L.A. 90007.
- MARCH 2
Wednesday General meeting of TGHS. A representative from the Pasadena Historical Society will present a film about the Mt. Lowe Railway.
- MARCH AND
APRIL "The Doctors' House Centennial." Displays of Doctors' House photographs and memorabilia in each branch of the Glendale Public Library.
- APRIL
Special spring event for children at The Doctors' House. Further details will be announced.
- APRIL 6
Wednesday General meeting of TGHS. Vic Pallos of the Glendale Unified School District will present a slide program about the history of schools in north Glendale.
- Continuing ---
- Sundays The Doctors' House, Brand Park. Open free to the public from 2pm to 4pm. Docent-guided tours of the restored Queen Anne-Eastlake style home.

TGHS PUBLISHES CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY BOOK

"The Early Glendale Fun Book", a 32-page coloring and activity book for children, has been published by The Glendale Historical Society. The pictures and puzzles, many of which are based on early photographs and popular Victorian children's activities, convey life in "Rancho San Rafael" and turn-of-the-century Glendale from a child's point of view. Featured is the story of The Doctors' House and its young resident Dorothy Hunt, daughter of Dr. David Hunt.

The text was written by Glendale Historical Society members Audrey Hales and Karen Lynn. Karen Kull Cline drew the illustrations, and Suzanne McKay provided production assistance. The activity book is priced at \$3 and may be purchased at The Doctors' House in Brand Park from 2 pm 4 pm Sunday afternoons or by contacting TGHS at 242-7447.

Congratulations and many thanks to Audrey Hales, who did the research and nurtured this project from start to finish. The book is a fine offering to the children of Glendale.

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ODE TO A TEE SHIRT
By Bill Sheppard

Please get it straight
For the year '88:
Tee shirts are style
For walking that mile!
The color is blue;
Shows Doctors' House too.
The miniscule cost?
Nine dollars to you.

Tee shirts are available at The Doctors' House from 2 pm to 4 pm on Sunday afternoons and at Glendale Historical Society monthly meetings.

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DID YOU GET YOUR MAIL?

Occasionally a member will notify us that he or she has not received a particular item of Historical Society mail. We are sorry! Our mailing list includes all paid-up members, who receive all mailings; lapsed members, who receive certain mailings (come back!); and additional persons or groups who receive items we believe would be of interest to them. Our mailing labels are produced from the lists by Bob Woodring and his trusty computer, and the articles are faithfully mailed by Daphne Lindstrum. Unfortunately, beyond that point we have no control -- the Postal System takes over.

If you hear that a fellow member has received an announcement or newsletter and you have not, let us know (242-7447). We will be glad to send one to you.

MEMBERSHIP

Welcome to new members Simone Straser, Grace Geary, Michael Kouri, Carmel Massafra, Mary Belle Clark, Edna Lanier, and Barbara Briskin.

Membership in the Glendale Historical Society is open to all persons interested in learning about, promoting, and preserving aspects of Glendale's history. Members receive quarterly newsletters, announcements of events, discounts on TGHS tours, and the opportunity to work on a variety of projects. Annual dues are \$15 for single active, \$25 for family active, \$50 for sustaining, \$5 for student/senior, \$25 for non-profit organization, and \$100 for corporate.

General meetings are held monthly (except December, July and August) at 7:30 p.m. on the first Wednesday of the month, in the Carrillon Room, Glendale Federal Savings, 401 North Brand Boulevard. Telephone: 242-7447

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ () New Member () Renewing Member

I would like to assist in the following area(s):

EDUCATION
RESEARCH
CLERICAL

PRESERVATION ACTION
PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT
NEWSLETTER

MEMBERSHIP
WAYS AND MEANS
OTHER _____

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